

Though Our Outward Man Perish, Yet The Inward Man Is Renewed Day By Day

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Preacher: Malcolm Macdonald

- [0 : 00] The Lord and all that it contains, the world that is inhabited, and all that it remains.
For the nations let all be on the sea, strictly, and he has its establishment.
Upon the blood to see, who is the man that shall attain?
Then to the help of God, the King who is in this holy place shall have a firm accord.
Whose hands are clean, whose heart is due, and unto the king.
- [2 : 07] Who have not left the God, the soul nor sworn is he fully.
He from the earth now shalt receive the blessing.
The Lord and all that it contains. The Lord and all that it contains. The Lord and all that it contains. The Lord and all that it contains. The Lord and all that it contains. The Lord and all that it contains.
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- [3 : 19] The Lord and all that it contains. All that it contains.
The Lord and all that it contains. All that it contains. Bye now, Jesus. For Him places the ever.
Your people has their Chuck. His people clearly known. I have and all that it contains. The children of each of the nations. The Lord and all that it contains. The ShRaver. Let us join together in prayer. Let us pray.
Gracious God, as we come before you, this evening out of worship, we give thanks that we can assemble in your name and that we can consider ourselves to be in your presence whether we are aware of it or not.
We do not deserve to enjoy the least of your mercies and it would be a mercy to us not to experience your presence in any other way except in your grace and in your favour for we know from your word that you are a God who dwells in light that is without equal.
- [5 : 02] It is a glory that belongs to the divine alone. How God, another of your servants, confessed is an all-consuming fight.
And we recognise that the very angels of heaven unfallen as they are, build their faces in your presence. So, in a sense, there are many who would fear being found in the presence of God in your holiness in an unprepared state.

and who of us feels a state of preparedness in and of ourselves. we consider ourselves to have sinned against you in thought, in word and in deed and when you bring before our mind's eye not just the fact of sin but the nature of it as it permeates as very being that there is no facet of our humanity that is not polluted and stained in a way that leaves us in fear and trepidation when we think of being met by the all-seeing eye of the one with whom we have to do grant to us an understanding that we cannot conceive of being in your presence other than through the mediation of Christ Jesus who is our great intercessor and who is our intermediary

He stands between us and you and were this not so there would be no expectation but one of absolute horror we give thanks that we can meet together as we do expecting that you would bless us abundantly far above our asking we crave that you would reveal yourself to us in mercy so that when we do read the scripture that you speak to us through that word that is your own a word that you have given to us make our activity here may it be ever so lethargic may it be meaningful so that we would strain to see the face of God with the eye of faith grant to us that eye by which we can discern by which we can discern the one who is at your right hand who your people see as the altogether lovely one the one to whom your people turn in all their needs and with all their wants even with their expressions of love and gratitude for your mercy towards them we know that for many he was a root out of a dry ground until that was changed by yourself and we give thanks for all who have experienced that change and who are now bound up with him and as they are in him by faith they are bearing fruit in his name to the glory that is alone his and throughout the endless ages of eternity they will return to that glory by their presence in his company because he has come to bring such to himself so hear our prayers and grant to us that experience of knowing that we are in company with a goodly number even though there are so few present in this place we pray that we would remind ourselves that at any given moment there are countless members who are consumed with the thought of worshipping

Christ and that there are those in eternity who have not hindered us we are in his presence who are enjoying the unshackled ability to fill their mouth with praises until such time as they will be united body to soul and bound up as one in the praise and magnifying of your name as the church of Christ glorified we give thanks for the victory that he has secured that death could not hold him and that the grave was but his for a time and he vacated it and rose from the dead and ascended to glory and there his interest in the world beneath is an avid interest because as long as he has a people here his attention will be wrapped and his desire will be unsatisfied until he secures their presence with him as he has promised we pray that you would bless the gospel bless the proclamation of it in our midst and beyond our borders to the far corners of the earth bless those you have sent out with it even such as the one of them we're going to speak this evening who had to deal with enmity and hostility and opposition to fulfill his calling as an apostle of Christ so it is to this day that those who go out will meet with those who will challenge the word that they proclaim who will defy it and ridicule it because they defy and ridicule the one in whose name they are sent be merciful to us so that we would appreciate the fact that those who have gone out have gone out to reap even where they have not sowed and that the harvest is plentiful and the labourers are few but we pray that the Lord of the harvest would send still others who would be like-minded and desirous of seeing men and women great or small young or old brought into the kingdom visit us in mercy to that end remember the needs of the congregation here remember every home and household visit the sick healed and we pray remember those hospitalized or confined to homes for the elderly we pray for those who are concerned for them those who are concerned in their welfare we pray for the grieving and the sorrowful and we ask Lord that you would magnify your presence to them in the dark hour of need we pray for our nation those who govern us and those who serve in the parliaments we pray for the queen and the royal household we pray for the nations of the earth and those who govern them remember the war-torn regions of the earth we pray for these dark benighted souls that govern and who oppose the grace of the gospel who serve gods that are no gods and who do their utmost who persecuted the name

[14 : 14] of christ we pray Lord for mercy and that you would give a hearing here to the petitions of your people grant mercy to us now and pardon us in jesus name amen we're going to read the word of god as we have it in the new testament scriptures the second epistle of paul to the corinthians and we're going to read chapter 4 the whole chapter second corinthians chapter 4 reading the whole chapter second corinthians chapter 4 therefore seeing we have this ministry as we have received mercy we faint not but we have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of god deceitfully but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of god but if our gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not lest the light of the glorious gospel of christ who is the image of god should shine unto them for we preach not ourselves but christ jesus the lord and ourselves your servants for jesus sake for god who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of god in the face of jesus christ but we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of god and not of us we are troubled on every side yet not distressed we are perplexed but not in despair persecuted but not forsaken cast down but not destroyed always bearing about in the body the dying of the lord jesus that the life also of jesus might be made manifest in our body for we which live are always delivered unto death for jesus's sake that the life also of jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh so then death worketh in us but life in you we having the same spirit of faith according as it is written i believed and therefore have i spoken we also believe and therefore speak knowing that he which raised up the lord jesus shall raise up us also by jesus and shall present us with you for all things are for you sakes that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of god for which cause we faint not but though our outward man perish yet the inward man is renewed day by day for our light affliction which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory while we look not at the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen for the things which are seen are temporal but the things which are not seen are eternal amen and may the lord add his blessing to a reading of his word and to his name be the praise we shall sing now verses from psalm 34 psalm 34 at

verse 16 the face of god is set against those that do wickedly that he may quiet out from the earth cut off their memory the righteous cry unto the lord he unto them gives ear and they out of their troubles all by him delivered are the lord is ever nigh to them that be of broken spirit to them he safety doth afford that are in heart contrite the troubles that afflict the just in number many be but yet at length out of them all the lord doth set him free he carefully his bones doth keep whatever can befall that not so much as one of them can broken be at all ill shall the wicked slay laid waste shall be who hate the just the lord redeems his servant souls none perish that him trust we shall sing these verses and 34 from verse 16 to the end the face of god is set against those that do wickedly that he may quiter from the earth cut off their memory the righteous cry unto the

Lord he asked to them to see view and the age of their zeugoke other views James■ says The Lord who he had whose past he by to W The regardez, these jsem nowdebred, The fallen heart of gold's pride, the troubles that affect the just, the numb but many, but yet a plan for God's love, the Lord of seven free.

He carefully his bones just keep, whatever can be wrong, that not so much as one of them can broken be at all.

Who shall the wicked's favorite ways, shall be who hates the just, the Lord redeems this heaven's soul, now pay his last in Christ.

[23 : 04] Amen.

Someone has said of the apostle at this point that he is emotional and that he speaks with tears of grief in his eyes and speaks more with the heart than with the head and more experiential than theological.

Of course that's just a matter of opinion. When you read what he has to say you can come to your own conclusions. But I'd like us to think about these words that we read last of all and look at them purely from four simple perspectives.

First of all, ask the question, what does Paul mean by the perishing outer man? Our outward man perish, he says.

[27 : 10] This is what is happening. Secondly, what does he mean by the inward man being renewed day by day?

Thirdly, what is it that he means by light affliction, which is momentary?

And fourthly, what we are to understand by this enduring glory, the exceeding and eternal weight of glory of which he speaks.

So what does Paul mean by the outward man perishing? I don't think it requires much scholarly attention for us to understand that Paul is there referring to something that stares us all in the face.

The physical body and all the faculties that mark out our humanity, our mental faculties, our prowess in whatever way we demonstrated, they will come to fail at some point.

[28 : 32] It is generally accepted, as one put it, that our physical constitution must yield to an inevitable decay.

Some of us may take a long time. Some of us may take a long time, die. The ageing process is slow and gradual, but it is inevitable.

And you wouldn't dispute that. You can't deny it because everywhere you look, you see evidence as offered. In fact, any one of us, the longer lived we are, we know in our own bodies, in our own minds, that this is what is going on.

We cannot deny it. We know that. We know that. And that is something that we wrestle with in some ways and sometimes we deny.

But whatever it is we make of it, what Paul is saying here is quite true.

[29 : 49] I was recently presented with a copy of a book which is called The Christian Analogy in Three Parts.

And it was quite a strange occurrence. And I won't go into it. But it was a book of poetry composed by John MacDonald Ferrentosh.

And the book was translated from Gaelic to English by Dr. John MacLeod, who was principal of the Free Church College at one point.

And when I was looking at this, this passage in the poem came to mind. And this is what the poet said.

Hard the ills of age assail me, with withered now my wanted hue. All my strength is passing from me.

[30 : 58] Every power fades from view. For the web is almost ready. And the shuttle swiftly flies. And this feeble mortal body, at death's very portal lies.

It's a marvelous poem. And personally I think it's better in Gaelic, although the translation to English sells a purpose.

What he is saying is known by every one of us. What Paul is saying is known by every one of us. He is speaking experientially.

He is speaking as someone who understands that time will have its own ravages in the human body and the human mind.

But he follows that with this statement, which is not true of everyone, but it is true of the believer. He says that the inward man is renewed day by day.

[32 : 12] The inward man is renewed day by day. And what he means by this is the spiritual nature of man.

The divine Charles Hodge maintains that what that means is not just simply the soul as opposed to body, but the soul which is the subject of divine life.

And Paul is convinced of this ongoing change within himself. At the end of chapter 3 we read, Paul saying this, We all with open face beholding us in a glass, the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as with the spirit or by the spirit of the Lord.

And that is something that may not be noticeable to us. It may not be something that we could argue from our experience that this is something that is going on.

But Paul is convinced of it, and convinced of it from his own experience, that there is this ongoing spiritual renewal that is the result of a living relationship with God through Christ Jesus.

[33 : 48] And he is convinced of it, and he is encouraged by it, because what he is confronting at a personal level is reminding him of death and the potential that there is in the world to do harm to him and remove him from life and to the realm of death.

But he is equally encouraged to believe that although that is true, then it does not mean for him anything other than a blessing.

In a biography, written by Ian Murray, where his focus is on the well-known Welsh preacher, Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones, he speaks of the deathbed of this man of God.

And he tells that when Lloyd-Jones was semi-conscious, he was very probably nearly comatose and very barely able to respond to those who were at his bedside.

But even though his response was few, his daughter, who was sitting beside him, spoke to him of his experience at that moment.

[35 : 30] And she directed him through the scripture to this passage and asked if this was true. And he, barely able to answer, he nodded his head, we are told, vigorously.

Even though he was there at death's door and he was failing from life, as it were. For him at that moment, he was experiencing life in a fullness that he had not enjoyed, even as he lived it in this world.

Despite him being somebody who laboured in the cause of Christ. What Paul is saying here, he is saying it to a people who are determined to quench his spirit.

And to do all in their power to take away from him what would represent life. And through these words he is telling them, this cannot be done.

Remember, Paul is speaking here at this point, in the midst of ongoing wrestlings, that he must endure as one charged to preach the gospel of Christ.

[36 : 57] And the words that we sang from Psalm 34, for example, it tells us, it reminds us, that whatever the sufferings of the Christian may be, of the believer may be, out of them all, at length, we are told by the psalmist, the Lord will set him free.

And that is what is said by the apostle with conviction. He knows with certainty that no matter what it appears like, this is what is true for the believer.

And even though the believer may know this truth, leading up to the experience where conviction follows on its hill, it is still the truth that God has given and will be fulfilled in the experience of the believer.

I'm sure many of you have witnessed, if not being present, at the deathbed of somebody who knows the Lord. And often it may not be possible for you to glean for them what their private experience of this may be.

Maybe they may not be able to communicate it. But that does not mean that it's not the way it is. That does not mean that even if they're not able to speak of it, that it is not what is going on.

[38 : 32] Because the word of God will not be frustrated in any way. And what he has promised, even through the words of the apostle here, as his experience, the experience of God's people, the inward man is renewed day by day.

It's something that won't just happen at the point of death. It is something that has begun. The moment that they inherited, that they were bestowed with everlasting life, that they became living creatures in Christ, this was something that began and was ongoing and will not complete in this world.

Then Paul speaks the third thing here. He talks about our light affliction, which is but for a moment. Now that third thing, I think, confuses people, and it opens a road to a misunderstanding of what is true about the experience of being a Christian.

The fleeting light afflictions. Do we know what he is referring to? Well, when we think of the apostles' afflictions, if we were honest, we certainly would not call them light afflictions.

Because some of the things that he speaks of, even in this, as we said, a biographical account of his own experience, I doubt if any one of us would want to share in some of the things.

[40 : 21] That Paul had to go through. When he speaks of himself as a Christian, and remember he's refuting the allegations that are made against him, as to his witness for God, that it is a counterfeit witness, he says, he's saying to these people, these people who are arguing against him, I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak.

How be it whereinsoever any is bold, I speak foolishly. That's in brackets. In other words, he's saying, I'm telling you this, but it's a waste of breath on my part, in the sense that it's not what I want to do.

This is not what I want to speak of. I don't want to boast, as it so seems to some, that Paul is doing. I don't want to tell you about the terrible things that I've had to endure, but I'll tell you anyway, because I'm speaking to those who know nothing about this, even though they are condemning me for my lack of evidence as a believer in God.

Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they historic? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. Are they ministers of Christ? I speak as a fool.

I am more. In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths often. Of the Jews five times received, I forty stripes save one.

[41 : 57] Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep. In journeying softened, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often in cold, and nakedness.

Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. That list, you could see, is quite exhaustive.

It's quite minute in the detail that it gives of the experiences of Paul. But that's not all that Paul suffered, by any manner of means.

And as I said, he would not even speak of these things, were it not for the fact that these people that he was responding to, were challenging his faith.

And you would not say, I would not say, in any sense that these words of, that he describes his experience, that he would speak of them, as light afflictions.

[43 : 25] And yet, that's what he says. That they are light afflictions. So how can he speak of them, as light afflictions?

What is it that makes them, light afflictions to him? Or to any Christian for that matter? Robbie Duncan, the preacher, speaks about someone who spoke to himself about the experience of another person that he knew.

A lady who was confined to bed because of a problem she had with her spine. And in those days, there were very few, if any at all, possible remedies.

So she was bedridden and riddled with pain. And yet, because of her Christian faith, she was able to patiently endure the pain that she was suffering.

And this person, without any shadow of doubt, admired her patience and admired her faith. And he asked, why?

[44 : 43] How are you able to do this? How can you endure such sufferings? And she said, well, I look upon, I look upon the things that cause me pain.

I see the pain. I see what causes me suffering. And these things, they are but light afflictions. afflictions.

But only when I look at what is clearly meant to be contrasted with them. The pain that I endure, the suffering that I go through, it's not that she was saying it's not there, but I move my eye to look at something else.

And that something else is this exceeding eternal weight of glory. And when I see that, and when I look at that, when I see things which are not seen, then I am able to endure and to bear the pain.

It's not that Paul is alluding to something here that it is of no consequence.

[46 : 05] he's not saying the pain is not real. He's not saying ignore the suffering. It's nothing. That's not what he is saying.

But he is saying that you have to look at it in the right way. Because the final part of the thing that we have here, a light affliction which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

What he is measuring is what is time, what is contained within time, as opposed to what is contained, which cannot be contained because it is eternal.

It is outside the confines of time. The suffering must be curtailed within time and for that reason there is a limit placed upon it.

But the glory is limitless. A lot of the theologians attract attention to this word that we have here, the eternal weight of glory.

[47 : 17] The word glory in Greek is derived from the Hebrew word which is itself a word that implies weight, speaks of weight.

It is as if it is a play on the words that we have here. Glory being the weight of weights, an immeasurable quantity of glory.

Now Paul is not saying and he is not teaching you and he is not teaching me to think of the sufferings of this world as if these sufferings are to be trivialised.

As if the challenges that being a Christian in a world that is opposed to Christianity does not bring wars into the experience of the believer who testifies to Christ in this world.

There is wisdom in understanding well let me quote to you the words of the theologian Charles Hodge he says the Bible does not teach either by precept or example that Christians are to bear pain as though it was not pain or bereavement as though they caused no sorrow unless affliction prove real sorrows they will not produce the fruits of sorrow.

[48 : 52] You see the logic that he has to dismiss the sufferings as if they are not sufferings is not what Paul expects is not what God expects because the understanding is that these sufferings must be seen in their proper light.

they must be seen in the sense in which they appear in the scheme of God's providence and the part that we have within it and it works in us something that would not otherwise be seen were it not so.

There are many people and they will counsel you. In a very wrong way I said never mind these things are of little consequence.

That's not what Paul is saying at all. Paul is not diminishing the effect of suffering. He is not belittling his own experience but he is holding it up to the light of what God is accomplishing through them.

His afflictions are light in the sight of the glory that is without end. And what is in view for him are eternal realities.

[50 : 23] What is in view for him is the truth concerning what God is doing in him. And that is when we look at the writings of Paul when we look at the way he writes his epistles and what he has to teach us through his epistles.

Sometimes he's got doctrine, sometimes he's got reams of theology, but sometimes he devotes his attention to the experience of the believer so that the experience is seen in the light of what the doctrine and the theology is.

both have to fix together. Only with God's help can that be understood. Some of you will know the name Samuel Rutherford.

And Samuel Rutherford when he passed away, a fond admirer of his and Mrs. Cousins composed a hymn or a poem that morn to passing and it's called The Sands of Time but it begins with these words.

The sands of time are sinking, the dawn of heaven breaks, the summer morn I sighed for, the fair sweet morn awakes.

[51 : 59] Dark, dark hath been the midnight but days bring us at hand. Glory, glory dwelleth in Emmanuel's land.

If anyone knows the life of Samuel Rutherford, he knew much of the dark night of suffering. Someone who endured imprisonment because of his love for the Lord.

Imprisonment because he preached the gospel of Jesus Christ. And his greatest challenge as a preacher of the gospel was that he was denied the ability to preach the gospel that he loved to preach.

that was what vexed his soul much. And yet in that hymn Mrs. Cousins draws attention to the fact that the midnight hour however dark it is for the Christian the dawn will break.

The griefs and the sorrows and the sadness of the believer will come to an end. And it is so easy for the Christian to fall prey to fixing upon the here and the now and the sadness and the grief and the pain and the heartache of the present and lose sight of what is more real because even though the reality of the suffering is there for us we have no knowledge of how long it will endure even the Christian who is dying has no knowledge at that moment of his dying how long that process will go on but they could be assured of the fact that however long it goes on for there is a point beyond which they are not expected to go beyond that point the assurance they have is that there is a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory that is theirs through

[54 : 29] Christ Jesus Paul concludes this chapter with the words while we look not at the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen for the things which are seen are temporal but the things which are not seen are eternal it's quite a strange statement in a sense looking at the unseen and you can't do that except you have faith except you have God's grace working in your heart and that's what the Christian has that's what the believer has even in the face of all the things that are a vexatious consternation to them in this life and all of these things endure them they must recognize them for what they are learn from them learning them to the glory of God but ultimately the end will come and the glory of Emmanuel's land as cousins put it will be theirs and make

God bless to us these few thoughts let us pray Lord help us to realize that no one of us can speak of enduring pain or suffering or loss perhaps like the apostle did even if we were to think of our own lives as having so much of that in measures that others may not have to contend with that the grace that Christ affords us to live through these things is more than adequate but that there is also a company that the promise that the greater glory awaits and we bless you for the truth that encourages us to believe that nothing can frustrate that glory nothing can keep us from it and we give thanks for all who have had to endure pain and suffering in their life some extensively some intensively but that the point came for many that this came to an end and would they today change what they have for anything of the best that they had in this world and we know that that is not true of them bless us and bless your word to us remind us of your grace in Christ and pardon us in Jesus name

Amen we're going to conclude singing the words of Psalm 68 68 and we're going to sing from verse 18 to verse 20 Thou hast O Lord most glorious ascended up on high and in triumph victorious led captivity Thou hast received gifts for men for such as did repel yea even for them that God the Lord in midst of them might dwell blessed be the Lord who is to us of our salvation God who daily with his benefits as plenteously doth lobe he of salvation is the God who is our God most strong and unto God the Lord from death the issues do belong these verses of psalm 68 thou hast O Lord most glorious ascended up on high Moved and in

And in triumph victorious land And in triumph victorious land Captive, captivity Thou hast received gifts for men For such as to every them Give for them that God adored Give for them that God the Lord

In which of them might dwell Blessed be the Lord who is to us For first submission God Who deal with this benefit Who deal with this benefit As pleniously controlled The observation is the God

[60 : 34] Who is our God most strong And unto God the Lord from death And unto God the Lord from death The Jesus Christ will belong And I make this mercy and peace in God the Father The Son of the Holy Spirit rest and abide with you all And of our dogs Amen Thank you Thank you Thank you Thank you