

Keep your eyes on the eternal weight of glory

Good morning. I trust you had a blessed Christmas or at the very least got through it without too much difficulty!

This has been a rough week for me. A good bit of pain: physical, and psychic.

At times like these, the Lord always reminds me of something He has said in His word. Typically, it is a promise that He has made.

And this time it's no different.

The promise He brought to my attention is found in 2 Cor 4:17

2 Cor 4:16-18

*16 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. **17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,***

18 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.

When someone is facing an affliction, a situation of death, verse 17 ought to be a great comfort.

/This affliction, this pain, will not last forever.\ Don't lose heart. Don't be afraid.

Your inner man is being renewed day by day.

17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,

The suffering is momentary. The glory is forever. Glory – God's glory – awaits you in the distance. That distance may be long, or it may be short.

/And the very affliction you suffer is itself productive. \

Rom 5:1-5

*Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of **the glory of God**. 3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; 4 and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; 5 and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*

/Nothing is wasted with God. And he has a plan that is not thwarted by anything. He will complete His work in you. \

Phil 1:6

6 For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus

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/Yes, His plan includes suffering. But His work continues through our suffering.\

1 Peter 5:10

*10 After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His **eternal glory in Christ**, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.*

2 Cor 4:17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,

/Christmas is all about light breaking through the darkness. \

The light of Christ's presence and love shines in the darkest night.

Isaiah 9:2

2 The people who walk in darkness

Will see a great light;

Those who live in a dark land,

The light will shine on them.

In the midst of this darkness, there came a marvelous Light. That's what Christmas is all about.

/The newborn Savior, the Light of the Word, has come.\

As I read the rest of 2 Corinthians chapter 4, I realized that there is a wonderful connection here with Christmas. I want to walk you through this now.

2 Cor 4:1-6

4 Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we received mercy, we do not lose heart, 2 but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

*3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see **the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ**, who is the image of God.*

*5 For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, who said, "**Light shall shine out of darkness**," is the One who has **shone in our hearts** to give the **Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ**.*

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/This the connection between 1 Corinthians 4 and Christmas. The Light shines out of darkness. \

And now - think of it! God has shone in OUR HEARTS.

This is the same God who, after He created the heavens and the earth, said "Let there be light!

Gen 1:1-5

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. 3 Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4 God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

Weeping may last for the darkness of a night,
but a shout of joy comes in the morning light. Ps 30:5

/The same God who said “let there be light” in the darkness has now shown in our hearts.\ There is light in our hearts now.

/The Light in our hearts is the gospel of the glory of Christ.\

John 1:1-5

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. 5 The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

/His life is the Light of men. \

And we have this light in OUR HEARTS!

/We - we- are the vessels that God has chosen to give this light, this knowledge of the very glory of God in the Person, the face, of Christ.\

What an honor. In the world, the important people get to carry the Olympic torch. But the torch we carry in our hearts is a thousand times more significant than that Olympic torch.

/Christ is in us, the hope – confident expectation ...the guarantee- of the most astounding glory of all!\

Col 1:26-27

26 the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints [including us!], 27 to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of **glory**.

/And we exult in hope – confident expectation - of **the glory of God**.\ Rom 5:2.

We even exult in our tribulations. Turn by turn, /God changes tribulations into **the hope** that does not disappoint.\

The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ is a great treasure. It's precious. /For the joy of this treasure, Jesus endured the cross.\

2 Cor 4:7-12

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; 8 we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; 10 always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 11 For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 12 So death works in us, but life in you.

Do you see it? We are common vessels.

/The earthen vessel of our bodies is an afflicted vessel. Afflictions of all kinds.\

Our afflictions serve God's purpose.

/So that the surpassing greatness of the power will be revealed to be God's power, and not ours!\

Our afflictions reveal His power.

We are weak, and yet we have the power of God's strength.

And we have great hope for the future. Not a temporal earthly future, but a spiritual, eternal future!

/Our work, our privilege, is to carry this torch, under great affliction at times, and pass it on.\

/Even in the darkness of being delivered over to a death, the light of this torch shines! \ /pic\

This is what Jesus meant out when He said to lay down our life for the brethren. /pic\

/Death works in us so that life works in others.\ It's all for the sake of Christ.

<pic>

Story of Louie Ponpua

2Co 4:13 But having the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I BELIEVED, THEREFORE I SPOKE," we also believe, therefore we also speak, 14 knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will present us with you. 15 For all things are for your sakes, so that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God.

/Even – no, especially – in our afflictions, we have great hope. \

/He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will present us along with the rest of Christ's body, whether physically alive or dead.\ Because spiritually we already have been raised with Christ!

2 Cor 4:16-18

*16 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. **17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,** 18 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.*

/The light of Christ's presence and love shines in the darkest night.\

You may be walking through the darkness of great suffering right now. Please, please /keep your eyes on that eternal weight of glory\. For the joy set before us.