

FROM LIGHT AFFLICTION TO ETERNAL GLORY

2 CORINTHIANS 4:17

INTRODUCTION:

1. Although Paul and the apostles suffered afflictions, they were not discouraged. (2 Cor. 4.7-12)
2. Paul believed that the God who raised up Jesus would also one day raise them up in glory. (2 Cor. 4.13-15)
3. Christians easily get discouraged when suffering afflictions, but we look forward to the day of glory. (2 Cor. 4.16,17)

I. THE AFFLICTIONS THAT WE SUFFER

- A. While it may seem that one is alone in their afflictions, God is aware the suffering of His people. (Ex. 3.7)
- B. That “*man...is of few days and full of trouble*” teaches us to expect adversity in our lives. (Job 14.1)
- C. Although there may seem to be no end to our suffering, afflictions belong only to the present state. (Rom. 8.18)
- D. There is no joy in the sufferings of this life, but the results can be beneficial. (Heb. 12.11)
- E. Paul knew what it was like to suffer, but he looked forward to the glory that would follow. (2 Cor. 12.6-9; 2 Tim. 4.7,8)

II. THE GLORY THAT WILL FOLLOW

- A. The glory that will follow will be free from the sin and sorrow of this life. (Rev. 21.4)
- B. So beautiful and glorious will be the reward of heaven, that it is difficult to conceive of it. (1 Cor. 2.9; 2 Cor. 12.1-7)
- C. The excellent glory of heaven is “*incorruptible*”, “*undefiled*”, and “*does not fade away*” (1 Pet. 1.4)
- D. In heaven will be the freedom from the infirmities and the limitations on earth. (Phil. 3.21; 1 John 3.2)
- E. It’s duration is eternal.

CONCLUSION: God has given to us all things that we need. (2 Petr. 1.3). And Christ has promised us a place with Him in His Father’s house. (John 14.2,3)

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“...fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God” -Ephesians 2:19

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MEETING TIMES:

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS : 9:00 AM
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP: 9:50 AM
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP: 6:00 PM
WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS 7:30 PM

WHY DO WE HAVE NO MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS?

The basis of our having no musical instruments is the lack of God’s approval. However, some appeal to the Old Testament to find approval for the things we do today. Since David used stringed instruments in his praise to God (Ps. 150.4,5), many feel that this provides the authority we need to use musical instruments in the church. But is this the case?

The Old Testament is a valuable resource for learning about the character of God and principles of righteousness (Rom. 15.4; 1 Cor. 10.6,11). However, the Old Testament was written for a specific people for a specific time. No one would argue that Christians today are authorized to build an ark. For such a directive was given specifically to Noah for a specific purpose. In like manner, the Old Testament was meant for the children of Israel and only until the death of Christ (Col. 2.14; Heb. 8.13).

While musical instruments were used extensively within the worship under the Law of Moses, they are conspicuously absent in the New Testament. Indeed, the New Testament does not contain a single example or command relating to the use of musical instruments in the church. The silence is deafening!

Whatever we do must be with His authority or approval (Col. 3.16,17). Since the New Testament provides no authority for musical instruments, adding them would be to go beyond what is written (1 Cor. 4.6). And that we can never do! CLP

THE LOVE OF CHRIST CONSTRAINS US

2 CORINTHIANS 5:14

INTRODUCTION:

1. Those who were jealous, tried to discredit Paul portraying him as weak and contemptible. (2 Cor. 10.7-10; 11.6,12)
2. Paul's defense to his accusers? (2 Cor. 5.12-15; Acts 26.24,25)
3. Contrain: [sunecho (συνέχω)] "to hold together, compress; or arrest" [STRONG] (Luke 19.43; Acts 7.57)
4. Knowing the love of Christ we are constrained to live not for ourselves, but for Christ. (2 Cor. 5.14,15)

I. THE LOVE OF CHRIST CONSTRAINS US

- A. Since the love of Christ saved us from sin, then our love for Christ will keep us from sin. (Rom. 5.8-10; 2 Cor. 5.14,15)
 1. The appetites of the flesh are not eliminated, but put under control. (1 Cor. 9.24-27; Luke 9.23-25)
 2. Is it unreasonable for us to give our lives to the One who gave His life for us? (Rom. 12.1)
- B. **1 PETER 2.11:** "I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul"
 1. Sexual immorality defiles the body. (1 Cor. 6.18-20)
 2. Covetousness is idolatry. (1 Tim. 6.10,11; Col. 3.5)
 3. The tongue needs to be refrained. (1 Pet. 3.10; Col. 3.8)

II. THE LOVE OF CHRIST COMPELS US

- A. **2 CORINTHIANS 5.15:** "that those who live should live...for Him who died and rose again" (cf. Titus 2.14; Phil. 1.20,21)
 1. Faithfulness is not defined as abstaining from sin, but as the pursuit of righteousness. (2 Tim. 2.22; John 14.15)
 2. It begins in the heart. (Col. 3.23; Matt. 5.41)
- B. The love of Christ compels us to go that extra mile.
 1. The Samaritan went the extra mile. (Luke 10.33-35)
 2. The Bereans went the extra mile. (Acts 17.11)
 3. The Macedonians went the extra mile. (2 Cor. 8.3)
 4. The apostle Paul went the extra mile. (2 Cor. 11.5; 12.11)
- C. When compelled by the love of Christ, we will not allow ourselves to be separated from it. (Rom. 8.35-39)

CONCLUSION: The love of Christ took Him from eternal glory to death on the cross. How far are you willing to go for Him?

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE PHARISEES

Addressing His disciples on the Sermon on the mount, Jesus exposes the Pharisees and says, "for I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5.20). The scribes and Pharisees were regarded as the religious elite. They had authority to cast anyone out of the temple. If our righteousness must go beyond that of these exalted religious icons, it becomes imperative that we understand the nature of their righteousness.

The Pharisees were known for compelling others to sacrifice and serve. However, they were unwilling to follow their own instructions. Jesus warned that the scribes and Pharisees "bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers" (Matt. 23.4).

The Pharisees seemed to be righteous. However, they only appeared to be on the outside. They put great effort to appear righteous before others, but did not do anything to purify their hearts. Therefore they appeared as "whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and uncleanness" (Matt. 23.27).

The Pharisees loved to be on the receiving end of praise. They enjoyed the recognition of their elitist position by being called "rabbi" (Matt. 23.7). They often called attention to themselves by making their "phylacteries broad" and enlarging the "borders of their garment" (Matt. 23.5). Their interest was not in exalting the name of God, but in exalting themselves.

How do Christians ensure that their righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees? Be sure that righteousness is not just for show. Christians who need others to believe that they are righteous are only trying to deceive others and have already deceived themselves. Do you want to be righteous? True righteousness comes by first cleansing "the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also" (Matt. 23.26).

True righteousness originates from the heart when one honestly and sincerely lives by the righteousness revealed within the word of God. For when our heart is right, then the actions will follow (James 2.18; Col. 3.22,23) CLP