

Eternal Perspective: Into Eternity

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer(author) and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.”

From the very beginning, God has been the one to initiate our reconciliation to Him. If you remember last week, the author of Hebrews declares that “For the joy set before him (Jesus) he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” What, then, is the joy set before Christ, for what reason would the word of God who was with God and was God eagerly become one with dust?

Each and every one of us will one day find ourselves standing before the throne of God. We will either be sent to eternal damnation or eternal glory. As an unrighteous unholy people before a righteous and holy God, we would be obliterated by His wrath. God is compelled by His very nature to destroy us and do not think for a second that a single iota of His anger towards us is unjust or evil. To be unjust is to punish more than the crime deserves and you and I can only continue to understand how sinful we are.

Yet you will find time and time again that the very one who should want nothing to do with sinners is constantly with His people. The Lord was with Adam even after his disobedience, fashioning clothes for Adam and Eve. The very moment Moses finished the tabernacle, clouds covered the tent and God’s presence descended, filling the tabernacle to such a degree that Moses could not enter.

The joy set before Christ is the redemption of His people, the joy of bringing salvation to those He loves. To suffering the wrath of God on the cross in our place, Jesus’ answer is a clear and resounding yes. We who have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God are justified, we are made righteous before the throne of God. For eternity, we will be in communion with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

We go back to the dot vs the line, our current life versus eternity, and for which we live for. What we live for is decided by what we believe to be more gratifying and I, for one, have a heart that is often more captivated by laziness than by prayer and reading of God’s word.

The call is to run with perseverance, it is not an easy or casual jog. It is a denial of self, wrestling with yourself to exhaustion, without a constant beholding of the work of Jesus you will not have the strength to run. But none of this is pointless, our God is not arbitrary, the race he has marked out for us is not meaningless. There is an end, the day where you stand before God and see that in your striving to become more like Christ, you have had a part in bringing about the kingdom of God. Your work does not go unnoticed; it is recognized by the Father. Until the day you behold God, listen to the author of Hebrews and run with your eyes fixed on Christ.

“But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it – the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by His blood, to be received through faith.” (Romans 3:21 – 25)