Daily Devotion #70

Heaven

***Romans 8:18 (NASB)*** *18  “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”*

It is impossible to live any length of time in this life and not feel the weight of the difficulties that surround us. From the moment we are born, this life is full of trouble. (Job 14:1) We live every day in the shadow of what may not happen and the sadness that comes with losing friends and family either to death or because of some misunderstanding. Life is full of trouble.

It would be a sad time in the life of any person if all they knew was this life and the struggles it brings, but many live just that way. They are making the best of their days, but, internally, they are feeling the weight of responsibility and the pulling and tugging on their hearts of what they hope life will be even as they never fully achieve their desires and wants. But life doesn’t have to be negative. God didn’t create us to live in the ho hum and the down-and-out of each day. He made us to enjoy this life, but more so to enjoy this life with the anticipation of the life to come.

God has promised to all who put their trust in Jesus as their Savior, that there is coming a day when they will be with God in Paradise. (Rev 2:7) And when we get to that place, as Paul said, there will be no comparison between the glory that we will experience and the struggles in this life.

Paul lived his life in the constant hope of heaven. When the Lord rescued his soul on the Damascus road, he was so changed inwardly that all of his effort was spent, from that moment, on rescuing souls. It was so much his goal and hope that he suffered greatly at the hands of wicked men who wanted only to destroy him. And that was because they were of their father, the devil.

But Paul never let circumstances overwhelm him or distract him from his purpose. ***2 Corinthians 4:8-11 (NASB)*** *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.”* He never let people or their negativity or their hatred or anything else keep him from his goal of following Christ. Why? Because His eye was always on the prize. ***Philippians 3:13-14 (NASB)*** *13  “Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14  I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”*

What gave Paul such tenacity? What helped him stay focused on the life to come? Why was he so willing to give himself for the cause of Christ? I’ll let him answer those questions. ***2 Timothy 1:12 (NASB)*** *12  “For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.”* ***Romans 8:38-39 (NASB)*** *38  “For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39  nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

Paul knew, not just hoped, but knew, that Jesus had saved him, therefore he was convinced nothing could come between himself and what God had promised, that he would forever be with God in heaven. What about you? Are you convinced of that same truth? Will you give your life similarly because you know what waits for you?

Make it your goal to give your life to Christ, so when you wake up every morning, you won’t be full of dread for that day, but will be energized to keep going because of what waits for you at the end of this life.