



Daily Devotions from Lutheran Hour Ministries

"When Life Is Hard"

February 4, 2023

2 Corinthians 4:16-17 - So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.



God is good, and He cared enough about our pain to share in our suffering. This is the way He disclosed Himself for all the world to see. From heaven above, He sent down His Son to be a human being like us, to endure our pain, to die the death that each one of us has to die. Yes, the very Son of God came to us, and in Him there was light instead of darkness (see 1 John 1:4-7).

It was a strange light, too, not the kind most people were looking for. But there it was! Christ our Savior. The cross of Christ is the answer from God to those all-too-human questions we have: "Why, Lord? Why me? Why am I experiencing this?" Once a person knows Christ, the answers to these and a host of other questions find their resolution in God's divine purpose: "For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison."

Before Christ came, the sick and the unfortunate were commonly thought to be under the curse of God. No one wanted to help them because even God had turned His back on them, or so it was thought. The suffering of Christ changed all that. He was made to be a curse for us (see Galatians 3:13), so that every person might know themselves as a beloved child of God, a son or daughter of their Heavenly Father.

Some of you may be saying to yourselves, "My pain is not a small one, nor is it momentary. I have been miserable for years." Indeed, the tests of life are not pleasant, nor are they wanted, but they can lead to wonderful growth and maturity. God does not insulate His people from troubles but gives us the power to press on. "So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:6-7).

We can take a lot in this world of ours if we know that it has a purpose. Your life has a purpose in Christ. Cling to the Savior and know that it is true: "this light momentary affliction," these fleeting troubles you experience now are preparing you for a permanent and glorious reward out of all proportion to your pain. Christ has come to us. His life, death, and resurrection has sealed our eternal home in the heavens. In that place, there will be no more "mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away" (Revelation 21:4b).

WE PRAY: Heavenly Father, teach us to trust You when life is hard to take. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

From "A Good God in a World of Pain," a message from Rev. Dr. Oswald Hoffmann, former Speaker of **The Lutheran Hour**

Reflection Questions:

1. What does it say about God that He would share our suffering?
2. How is it possible for our outer self to be wasting away while our inner self is being renewed?
3. Is it easy for you to empathize with those who are ill or suffering?

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