

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time

time

by William MacDonald

Transcript

“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” (Rom. 8:18)

Taken by themselves, the sufferings of this present time can be appalling. I think of the gruesome sufferings of the Christian martyrs. I think of what some of God’s people have had to endure in the concentration camps. What shall we say concerning the horrible sufferings associated with war? The cruel dismemberment and paralysis connected with accidents? The unspeakable pain of human bodies racked by cancer or other diseases?

And yet physical suffering isn’t the whole story. It seems at times that bodily pain is easier to bear than mental torture. Isn’t that what Solomon meant when he wrote, “The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?” (Prov. 18:14)? There is the suffering that comes with unfaithfulness in the marriage relationship, or with the death of a loved one, or with disappointment over a broken dream. There is the heartbreak of being forsaken, of being betrayed by a close friend. We wonder oftentimes at the ability of the human frame to endure the blows, the agonies, the crushing griefs of life.

Viewed by themselves, these sufferings are overwhelming. But when seen alongside the coming glory, they are only pinpricks. Paul says they are “not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” If the sufferings are so great, how much greater must be the glory!

In another passage, the Apostle Paul indulges in a delightful burst of spiritual imagery when he says that “our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2 Cor. 4:17). Seen on the scales, the afflictions are feather-light while the glory is infinitely heavy. Judged by the calendar, the sufferings are momentary while the glory is eternal.

When we see the Savior at the end of the journey, the sufferings of this present time will fade into insignificance.

It will be worth it all when we see Jesus. Life’s trials will seem so small when we see Christ. One glimpse of His dear face all sorrow will erase, So bravely run the race till we see Christ.

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/william-macdonald/for-i-reckon-that-the-sufferings-of-this-present-time/>

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