



**BELIEVERS CHAPEL**

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

2 Corinthians 4: 16-18

Spring 2025

"Weight of Glory"

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you Seth, and good morning. We are continuing our studies in 2 Corinthians with chapter 4, verses 16 through 18, which concludes the fourth chapter of 2 Corinthians—and concludes it on a very encouraging note. Paul wrote,

<sup>16</sup>Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup>For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, <sup>18</sup>while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

2 Corinthians 4: 16-18

May the LORD bless this reading of His Word and bless our time of study in it together. Let's seek His blessing.

Father, we do seek Your blessing on us. We've come to a glorious text of Scripture...so many of those in this great Book of 2 Corinthians, but this is a great encouragement to us.

This brief life should remind us of the things that are to come—eternal things, and I pray that You would make us sensitive to that and alert us to that. Help us to know what is so common to understand, and so obvious, and yet so easy to neglect.

And so Father, help us to realize that life's short, it's brief, and still we have opportunities, by Your grace, to serve You and to be encouraged that all the difficulties of life have a meaning, they have a purpose. We can't see it; 'We walk by faith, not by sight', (as Paul is about to explain in the next chapter), and that is certainly true in regard to the difficulties of life. And seeing those difficulties in light of Your sovereign grace and Your mercy and Your control over everything and over every detail of our life, we know that You have a purpose for everything that touches our lives. —And so we give You praise for that.

And we're thankful that the difficulties of life that weight us down and trouble us, or the challenges we face as we seek to live a Christian life before an unbelieving world, that all of that is being used of You to bless us in ways we may not see, we don't see but are genuine and real...and You're changing us and transforming us—that's a glorious thing. And we are going to contemplate that in this hour, and I pray that You would bless us as we do that.

And bless us materially, LORD. We have difficulties, as Paul explains it in this text. And so many of us in this congregation have gone through those difficulties, and are going through them—and I pray for each and every one of them, that You would bless. You know them, LORD. You have 'tailor made', as it were, the challenge that they are going through; may they do so with strength and wisdom.

Bless each of us, now, as we seek to know Your truth, may we seek that; may that be our heart at this moment. May we have open hearts and minds to receive the instruction that Paul is giving, and may we be blessed by it—to Your glory.

In Christ's name. Amen.

(Message) I think the end of that first stanza, (*Be Still My Soul*)

'...Thy heavenly Friend,  
Through thorny ways,  
Leads to a joyful end',

is a good summation of what we will study this morning; 2 Corinthians 4,  
verses 16 through 18.

There's an ancient riddle that the Sphinx asks Oedipus, (the legendary Greek King of Thebes), which was notoriously difficult, (as good riddles are). No one could figure it out. What made it especially difficult was the Sphinx was a man eater, with the head of a woman, the body of a lion, and wings of a bird. It would devour anyone who couldn't answer correctly.

But Oedipus was a bright guy, stayed calm, and when she asked the riddle, "What creature goes on four feet in the morning, on two at noonday, on three in the evening?", he answered, "Man: In childhood he creeps on hands and feet; in manhood he walks erect; in old age he helps himself with a staff." Oedipus got it right.

And so does the riddle—that's the way life naturally progresses, from the cradle, to the cane, to the grave; ultimately it is all physically downhill. And that's the course that every one of us is on, which for many is a discouraging thought.

But it wasn't for Paul. He wrote of all of this in 2 Corinthians 4:16 through 18, with great hope—and that every Christian should have because while we are growing old and weak outwardly, we are also growing strong inwardly.

So Paul takes on this subject of aging and hardship with great confidence—and began it in verse 16 by saying, "Therefore, we do not lose heart...". That is the same way he began the chapter in verse 1, where he described the hardships of the ministry. It is difficult; the Christian life is difficult because Jews have a veil over their heart—and the minds of the Gentiles are darkened too. People reject the things that we believe. People reject the Gospel when we seek to give that to them. It is foolishness to them and often

produces a response of hostility. That makes the Christian life and the Christian witness difficult; discouraging.

But not for Paul. He knew, that in spite of the resistance and opposition, God was in it to give our witness success—shining His light into dark hearts, producing faith. So he said, "We do not lose heart." (vs16). And further, we will ultimately triumph because we will be raised from the dead. That's the **hope** given in verse 14—the resurrection and glory to come. That's our future. It's not dismal; it's not dim. —It's glorious...and that is *certain*.

Now in verse 16, Paul adds a further reason for 'not losing heart': 'Though we are growing old and weak, we are being transformed.' Even the afflictions we suffer for the faith are producing glory now: "Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day." (vs16). That is a great statement. There are few statements that are more encouraging and hopeful than that because we know, (at least if you're 50 or older), you know that, "our outer man is decaying". It is inevitable, but there is a great compensation taking place because while we are steadily growing weak, we are, at the same time, growing strong spiritually in the inner man.

Now, "the outer man" is our mortal nature—which is more than the body; it is, as Philip Hughes wrote, "mental as well as muscular." But because it is mortal, it fails in this life—body and mind. While the "inner man...", (that part of us which is spiritual, that part of us which is eternal, the soul), "...is being renewed..." This has been called, "A great Christian reality; the inevitable advance of outward decay that is accompanied by the experience, day after day, of inward renewal."

Now, that is the work of the Holy Spirit, in which He imparts Christ's life to us. He's always doing that, and He does it chiefly through the instruction of the Word of God. He's doing it *always*; we are *always* receiving His life, the life of Christ...but He enhances that, and develops it, through the Word of God. The Holy Spirit is constantly supplying us with vitality—nourishing us so that we persevere, continue in the faith

despite the trials and difficulties. That is a great Christian reality—and *solely* a Christian reality.

The unbeliever doesn't have this blessing. Their only reality is constant decline, infirmity, and death—and that is a grim reality. Calvin said, that for the unbeliever, "The outward man decays, but without anything to compensate for it." There's no hope beyond this physical mortal life—and whatever hope that is...is brief.

This world is presently vanishing for all of us, and forever for the unbeliever. So for them, this decay of the outer man is, as Scottish theologian James Denney put it, "a melancholy spectacle, for it is the decay of everything." Everything they will have is in decay. So, when the reality of aging finally sets in, people feel and see the effects of getting older and declining, and realizing, 'the time is running out', there's often depression and desperation.

Now, as I thought about this, I thought, 'And yet that's the grace of God in that; that's the mercy of God.' If a person has, (as Moses put in Psalm 90, verse 10), "...seventy years, or due to strength, eighty years...", he or she has the blessing of being able for some time to see where things are going...and to realize this life is futile—and that's what Moses said; It's full of pain and difficulty. And then what's the result of it all, what's the end of it all? "...we fly away"..., (ibid.), 'it's over', 'brief'... 'just in a moment'.

So man has this opportunity to consider his fate, (as it were), his end. And yet what do people do so often? They'd ignore that; they don't see that. Their, 'minds are blinded', as Paul has explained in the previous chapters. (2Cor 3:14).

And so what do men do? Well, they have a midlife crisis and they buy a Lamborghini, or they join a spa in order to improve their health and vigor in an attempt to regain their youth, (and look, I'm not against exercise or even having a nice car—that's all fine and good), but that doesn't stay the inevitable path that people are on.

It is inevitable, as I say; and we might be able to slow it, but we cannot stop it, we cannot reverse it. Ultimately we're fighting a losing battle. As Longfellow put it in his poem, *A Psalm of Life*;

    "...our hearts, though stout and brave,  
Still, like muffled drums, are beating,  
        Funeral marches to the grave."

And for the world, that means the end of everything.

But not for the Christian. We have a very different perspective. We know this isn't the end; we have hope beyond this life. In fact, we have hope in this life; that's what Paul is saying here; 'We are being *presently* renewed'.

Still, that doesn't mean aging for us is an easy experience...It's not. Paul was not being glib in any of this; he wasn't being casual about the decline of the outer man; he, himself, felt it keenly. His decline was not only noticeable naturally, but it was exacerbated and accelerated by all of the difficulties that he went through—the beatings and the imprisonment, and all the hardships he experienced in the ministry. He knew very well the discouragement of getting old.

Now I can imagine him confiding to Luke, his beloved physician, that he was finding it harder to make the journeys that he took in his younger years—to travel the back roads of Asia or Illyricum. It's hard for everyone; but Paul could say, as hard as it is, "...we do not lose heart..." (vs16).

We don't despair or do desperate things, expensive things, personally destructive things, to try to change the situation which can't be changed. In fact, just the opposite, we can rejoice in our aging, because while we are declining physically, we are "being renewed", (vs16), spiritually in our inner man. Now we don't see this like we see the outer decline, but the 'inner renewal' is going on constantly. Paul says, "day by day", (ibid.), and it involves a strengthening of the new person that we are in Christ. At regeneration we become "new creatures". (2Cor 5:17). And these new people that we

are, (with a new heart, a new mind), are being “built up”, (Col 2:7)—becoming more and more like Christ.

It's what we just studied a few weeks back in chapter 3, verse 18; we “...are being transformed...from glory to glory.” Day by day, from glory to glory, as we see Christ's glory in Scripture our understanding is expanding; our love for Him is increasing; our wills are being fortified. Now that should be taking place in us. I think this is going on regardless, but this is how we live as we contemplate the Word of God.

And the result is we are able, increasingly, to serve God effectively, more wisely and more widely, but also show Christ increasingly. The glory of God, the glory that He gives us, will increasingly shine through. And as we become men and women of the Word of God and nourish ourselves on that, it affects us and...the change becomes evident, it shines through. So Paul didn't faint, because the more his afflictions hastened the breakdown of his body, the more his soul was strengthened and built up—like a magnificent house or building.

Affliction is not wasted on the Christian; it serves a purpose, both now and for eternity. God uses it to change us, as Paul explains next in verse 17; "For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison." Now that gives three reasons for why we do not faint under the weight of our afflictions; they are *light*, they are *temporary*, and they *secure for us eternal glory*.

Now few of us would consider that our *afflictions* are “light”, but in saying that, Paul was not trivializing suffering in any way. The sense of its “weight” depends entirely on the way we judge it. Compared with the sufferings of other men, Paul's afflictions were great, (few people have suffered the way he did). He's already described them in this chapter, and then before that in chapter 1, verse 8, (and he will give a much more detailed list of the afflictions that he went through in chapter 11).

He speaks of beatings and imprisonment, of hunger and shipwrecks. He describes himself as being in great personal distress over the condition of the churches.

So it's an outward and inward affliction that he goes through. He's always under great pressure—emotionally and physically.

Paul was deeply affected by these things, these hardships. He didn't experience them with some kind of stoical indifference. So his afflictions were not *"light"* in the sense of giving little pain or difficulty...no affliction is 'light' in that sense; no 'affliction' is easy; it's hard. It's painful—that's what affliction is. But, (and this is Paul's point), when you compare 'the cause with the effect', when you compare 'the suffering with the glory it produces', then the sufferings are insignificant in comparison. They are *"light"* in comparison.

And they are momentary. They don't last forever...a lifetime of suffering compared to eternity is like a single second to a century, or a single second to a millennium. (And really, there is no comparison because we can't understand eternity.) Suffering...or grief, anguish, will end and eternity will follow; *"world without end."* (Eph 3:21). And eternity for the Christian will be without any sorrow at all...full of glory, full of joy...what Paul called, *"an eternal weight of glory"*. (vs17).

Now that's the third reason for comfort in sorrow—God has a purpose for suffering, and it is ultimately to produce great glory for the children of God. Affliction causes that glory.

Now that doesn't mean that affliction is meritorious. Merit implies correspondence; 'If you work for a day's wage, you earn a day's wage.' Momentary misery can't earn eternal glory.

This is all of grace. What we gain is far beyond anything we suffer. Paul describes it as, *"far beyond all comparison"*. (vs17c). Literally, it is something like, 'according to excess unto excess.' It's as though Paul can't find the words to express the meaning. Language is too poor for a fair description of the glory that is ours; now and what is to come. It is, 'exceeding, exceedingly great'—that sets the idea.



Now he calls this "glory", a "weight". (vs17). Paul was a Hebrew, and the Hebrew word for 'glory', *kabad*, also means 'heavy'. And so the connection may be something like this, that;

'People who had lots of gold, who had lots of silver, who had jewels and lots of wealth...', (that literally is heavy), '...it weighs much. And the more one has, the heavier the weight.'

And so that came to be, 'the sense of glory'. You look at someone who has all this wealth, and the wealth itself is glorious, (and they tend to dress gloriously), and so Paul was saying that, 'Suffering, sacrifice, is producing something beyond anything we deserve; it is producing great glory, heavy glory...rich, magnificent, ultimately tangible glory!'

Suffering itself doesn't have that affect. Affliction is not a virtue. Affliction is not good; it will end someday. Often it produces bitterness in people.

But in the life of a believer, it produces blessing in different ways. In Matthew, chapter 19, verse 29, Jesus connected this 'great gain', to suffering loss or affliction *for His name's sake*. He said, "Everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life." I think that He means, 'In this life we'll receive much...you lose a family, you gain a great family in the people of God.' But that doesn't compare to what is to come when we'll inherit eternal life, and all that that involves.

The decaying of our outer man can include a lot of things. It can include, (and I'm basing this on what the Lord said in Matthew 19 ), it can include the loss of a family or the loss of earthly possessions. But all these temporal things, (that includes these losses), even these losses can be sanctifying because of the effect that it has...if we reflect upon them. Because what we do when we lose all of this, we see that everything in this life, (the things that we value, and that people put great value on), are temporal—they don't last! And it reminds us; we, as God's people, have something far better—and something lasting: We have a better life to come.

But affliction here is for Christ—for the Gospel. I think that's principally what he, (*Paul*), is speaking of here, although when trials come, and health problems occur, (the things that come with age, because that is largely what he's speaking of here), that also is a spiritual test.

How are we going to respond to that? And the way we respond to that, (by faith or not), is something that contributes to our glory. How we respond is very important—that itself is spiritual. That itself is a witness to those around us.

Even so, affliction is not something we seek, (that's obvious, it should be). God sends it—and He sends it in His time, and He sends it for His purpose...which is always for our good. And in His wisdom He uses it to produce in us maturity; He uses it to produce something that will be eternal—what Paul calls, “an eternal weight of glory”. (vs17).

Well what is, the ‘*glory*’, that he speaks of? C. S. Lewis wrote an article entitled, *The Weight of Glory*, which he included as a chapter, (or was included by editors in a chapter of a book by that title), in which he speculated on the question of what glory is. And he was helped in that by writers like John Milton—but also, (and I think principally), the authors of Scripture.

It's not found in fame, or the approval or applause of men, (what the world thinks of as ‘*glory*’). Instead it is *the approval of God*. It is God's appreciation, as expressed in the parable of the master who says to the faithful servant, "Well done, good and faithful servant." (Mat 25:21). And I think we would understand in that: That for the servant, that *approbation*, that *compliment*, that word of *encouragement* from the master was greater than any of the rewards he received, and the promotion he received.

Now, it's not a selfish thing to want to please God and have Him approve of us. It's good; that is part of our glory, that God is well-pleased with our life, and what He has accomplished in us. Pleasing God, not ourselves, is really the greatest happiness—and the more we know Him, the more we will realize that. He cares for us and has given us

everything.; so when we understand that, then we want to please Him; and that's where our great joy is.

But glory is also something else; it's other things. It's brightness. It's splendor. We will be luminous; we will shine like the sun; we will have great beauty—how could we not when we inherit resurrection bodies and the kingdom of God?! There is great glory and beauty in that; it's not wrong to want that. Beauty is good, it's the creation of God, and is an expression of His wisdom, and it is right to want it.

But it's wrong to be vain about it; and that happens in the unbeliever. Few people can handle the gift of beauty. Lucifer couldn't. He was God's beautiful creation, and thought, 'like the morning star'—and yet it produced in his heart pride that led to his fall. (Ezekiel describes that in Ezekiel 28.)

But there will be no vanity in heaven, no vanity in the world to come. Beauty will not produce pride, only gratitude, because we will realize that it is all of God. It's a gift of His grace, we are, from beginning to end, His workmanship—His great 'work of art'. And our beauty and glory will eclipse anything in the angels.

Paul Magnuson, a few weeks ago in the Lord's Supper meeting, told us how this fact gave Martin Luther great comfort when his daughter Magdalena died. Luther loved her; she was his favorite child and he wept bitterly over her coffin. But he was able to say through the tears, "Lena, you will rise again and you will shine like a star, yes, like a sun!" That's true. In fact, we will outshine all of the suns.

But before then we will suffer. What the world would call, 'the bludgeoning of chance'—what seem like random, meaningless tragedies. Even Luther, the great reformer, was destined to suffer such affliction. Luther did; Calvin did as well...They all did, and all must.

But we know it's not meaningless. They are the strokes from the hand of a loving God whose design is to refine us, to change us, and prepare us for all eternity so that we shine brightly throughout the universe, (which will also be transformed, glorified)—and

where we will wear crowns. We're told that, we see that in the Book of Revelations, that there will be crowns in heaven. There will be crowns for all eternity—which suggests authority and activity, ruling and worshiping. Heaven isn't boring—and the kingdom to come and the eternal state is exciting, it is full of activity.

But really, what this glory is —is that God is producing in us something beyond our comprehension, which we should be encouraged by, as we understand it during the trials and the losses that we experience in life. We should be comforted through all of that by what Paul is saying here, and the “eternal weight of glory”. It comforted Luther that his daughter had eternal life and ineffable glory—forever. That's our hope. That's our consolation; it's what God is preparing us for...and preparing in us by faith's challenges...And by affliction; by the affliction that we experience as we seek to be a light in the world, and the world responds to us with hostility; and by the difficulties we experience, just as the body wears down, and we have the opportunity to respond to that in the right way. And this helps us do that; this is what Paul is teaching here, and it is what we must believe. That is not only how we endure trials, but it is how we triumph in them to God's glory, and our own joy.

But still, that's hard to do. It goes against what we are naturally. We believe what we see; it's hard to put our confidence in what is not seen. It seems abstract to us, and it's really, as I've suggested and is obvious to us as we think about it, it's beyond our comprehension. Nevertheless, this is what the Christian does.

It is what Paul did; he fixed his mind on his, (and on our), future hope. ‘Not on things seen’, he says, ‘but the things that are unseen.’ So while having hardships, “...we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” (vs18).

This “look”, or “looking”, is faith. As the author of Hebrews tells us in Hebrews, chapter 11, verse 1, "Faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things

not seen." The fact that they are "not seen" doesn't mean that they're spiritual and invisible—but that we've not yet seen them, or, we don't yet have them...they haven't yet happened. We will see them in heaven, and we will experience them in the resurrection age.

So the author of Hebrews goes on to speak of Abraham and his faith and others as well, (Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob), and how Abraham lived in tents. Not as a settler; he lived in a temporary shelter; he and all of them lived as a pilgrim on the earth; "for..." the author wrote, "...he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God." (Heb 11:10). He knew that the future for him was not a temporary dwelling like a tent, but a permanent dwelling, a city.

Now the grammar here I think is important. It's not 'look', like a one-time glance, but was "looking". That characterized Abraham's life and faith. He was always "looking" for the promise of that city to come—of that *glorious* future. And here, too, Paul puts his sight, his 'looking', (and ours), in the present tense. We 'look', presently, always—not at the things which are seen...but not seen; the promises; the future hope.

But that's not the way of the world; and that's not what we're impressed with day after day as we live in this world. The world thinks that that, frankly, is insane. It's idea of wisdom is just the opposite of that. —It's 'Fix your eyes on the visible. Live for the present. Live for what you can accumulate. Seek your treasure here'!

That's the world's wisdom. But we know, (we should know), that's foolish. Foolish! Paul says, '...the things which are seen are temporal; the things not seen are eternal.' (vs18). "The world is passing away", (1Jn 2:17), John tells us that ... 'presently passing away.' The outer man is decaying; soon it will be gone.

Still, the things which are seen are very tempting. They are the present reality, and they are attractive. The way to counter that, the way to deal with that influence is not, in my opinion, to try not to look at them, to try not to think about them, but rather to, 'Look at something better.' It is to do what Paul did, which Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob did, be looking at the promise of the glory to come, know that it is true, fill your thoughts with it, (in fact, Paul says, in Colossians chapter 3, and verse 2, "...set your mind

on the things above, not the things that are on the earth", (they're all perishing). That strengthens faith, and that strengthens resolve; filling our mind with the good things, and the hopeful things that we have.

That's what Paul did; and it emboldened him to continue to serve Christ. In spite of all his afflictions, he concentrated his mind on the glory being produced within, and the glory that was yet to come. He didn't seek his treasure on earth; he sought it in heaven...because that is where his heart was. And he was confident that real, real treasure was there, real glory there, and in the world to come.

He was confident because his faith was in Christ who had suffered for him, who was risen and glorified, exalted above all creation and powers. So Christ's destiny is his destiny because he, (and we), are connected to Him. And so, what we see Christ having inherited and having possession of now, that's going to be ours because we're in Him. We're joined to Him; His destiny is our destiny. That firm conviction, that great truth sustained Paul in the most difficult of times—and it will sustain you, and it will sustain me as we go through the trials of life, (and we will go through the trials of life).

But he was also encouraged that God is presently doing a great work in us: 'Renewing our inner man', and even using hardship in life to do that, and to produce in us this great phrase, "an eternal weight of glory." So we can really rejoice when we have tribulation, not because it's easy, but momentary, (it doesn't last)—but it's producing in us what does last, glory that is great and forever.

Now that is true; Paul tells us it is. But again, we are weak; we succumb so often to even the smallest of trials, the most insignificant of difficulties. That's why we need to fill our minds with the promises and truth of God.

But also, we need to surround ourselves with friends, as Paul did with Luke and Titus, Timothy, Silas, and others. Paul wasn't out there on his own; he was surrounded by a company of believers and friends. And God uses them; God uses the saints in our lives in the production of this 'great weight of glory'. We walk a hard road through this

life, through this world; and people carry heavy burdens. We need to help each other, "bear one another's burdens", (Gal 6:2), so that we will all walk to our eternal destination triumphantly. By doing that, some day we will see this *weight of glory* in others we ministered to, and we will have the great joy of knowing that we contributed to God's masterpiece that they will become.

In his chapter on this subject, C. S. Lewis made the comment that, "There are no ordinary people, that no one is 'a mere mortal'. We are all, believer and unbeliever, immortal. But,..." he said, "...even the dullest and most uninteresting saint you can talk to will someday be such a creature that if you saw them now, glorified, you would be strongly tempted to worship."

So we, as we continue our pilgrimage through this world, eventually with the aid of a staff or cane, and while our hearts are beating, "Funeral marches to the grave", we must redeem the time—redeem the opportunities that you and I have to serve God, to benefit one another...to be a blessing in this world.

I knew a man in Romania who is now with the Lord. He was a godly saint; he was an elder of one of the churches that I would visit in Bucharest. The last time I was with him, (which is many years ago now), he was an old man; he was an invalid; he was unable to leave his home. And that was very hard on him because he had been a very active servant of the LORD. He would pass out tracts to people; (and this was when it was a communist country, and that was not to be done), but he would do that, and he would witness on the bus, going to work. He would use his weekends, often, to go up into these small mountain villages and teach in the churches there.

But that was past, the outer man had decayed. And while he longed to be active, and he expressed that, and expressed his frustration in not being able to do that, I thought, 'But you used your time and energy when you had the health and the opportunity—and that's reason to rejoice.'

And that I think is a lesson for us today, in light of all of this: 'Invest your life and your time wisely, while you have it. Strive to know the LORD and serve Him more, and

know that the afflictions that you go through, that we all will go through presently, are producing in us, 'an eternal weight of glory beyond comparison.'

Well that is the destiny and the life that the believer in Jesus Christ has. What's going on right now in your life is not futile; God is producing *a great weight of glory*, and that will be experienced, entered into, in the resurrection to come—which is tangible, real, physical glory, unimaginable glory—and joy. That's ours—and it is offered by God to lost sinners. Christ has obtained it for us, for all who believe in Him. He died and He suffered God's wrath, so that everyone who believes in Him will be saved—will be justified, sanctified, and some day glorified.

We're simply to believe in Christ, to receive all of that through faith alone, which is like an empty hand receiving a valuable gift. And so that opportunity is offered to you if you're here without Christ. If you've not believed, receive Him, trust in Him, and in so doing, you will receive eternal life, salvation, and glory unimaginable.

*(Closing prayer)* LORD, we look forward to that day when, in a nobler, sweeter song and tongue, we will sing Your power to save. We will sing it throughout all eternity; but in the meantime we have good reason to sing that as well.

We thank You for Your grace and Your mercy that saves and that sanctifies, and for the work You're doing within us at this very moment, day by day, from glory to glory. Thank You for what we have in Your Son. It's all a gift. It's all of grace. —Help us to understand that. And now,

The LORD bless you and keep you.

The LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The LORD lift up His countenance on you and give you peace.

In Christ's name. Amen.

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