

The Church Must Embrace This Paradigm Right Now

A primary distinctive of the early church and the original apostles was the fact that they were fully apprehended by things of eternal value. They lived their lives in such a way that they maintained a passion for the Lord that went beyond mere religious practice and Christian discipline.

Jesus was everything to them!

They also understood and were apprehended by the declaration of James 4:14b, which says, "For what is your life? It is just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away." This reality governed them and caused them to live for the things that do not fade away or dim with time.

Oftentimes in modern culture we learn to acclimate to earthly or carnal surroundings, which in turn become more real to us than things of eternity. When we fall into the trap and cycle of only living for the temporary, then we lose sight of what is valuable and what will last forever.

The truth is that all this world has to offer is fleeting and temporary at best. Beyond that, the Bible clearly reveals to us that it will all fade away eventually. Therefore, what will we invest ourselves in while passing through our vapor of time here on this earth?

The reality of the Christian life and the call of God is one that must be lived in the light of eternity, or it becomes a realm of shallowness and even selfishness.

The apostle Paul considered his earthly existence as nothing in comparison to the eternal results and ramifications of the way in which he ran his race as a child of God. He was consumed with knowing Jesus and making Him known and

everything that he did and accomplished was predicated on these two primary goals.

The worldly and the satisfied religionist look at the lives of those who burn for Jesus and their eternal reward as if they were strange and out of touch with reality. However, to those of us who live with eternity in constant view, the things of this world grow strangely dim and only intimacy and complete obedience to the Lord makes sense to us.

The children of God who live in the revelation of eternity are distinctly aware of the end of their earthly existence and the reality of their works being revealed and reviewed at the judgment seat of Christ (see 2 Cor. 5:10). With this in view, they willingly invest themselves into elements that have eternal results and rewards.

It is incumbent upon us as followers of Jesus to deliberately live in the light of eternity. Below are some ways to make this a reality in our daily lives.

1. We must acquire and maintain a fresh and accurate view of Jesus in His glory; high and exalted in the midst of His church. (See Rev. 1:9-20).
2. We must embrace the reality of heaven and hell, as this is crucial to our eternal paradigm.
3. We must fasten (chain) ourselves to a life of private prayer and devotion unto the Lord. E.M. Bounds once said, "God's promises die like giant corpses without life, only for decay and dust, unless men appropriate and vivify these promises by earnest prevailing prayer."
4. We must devour the Word of God and meditate upon it incessantly (see Josh. 1:8).
5. We must acquire and maintain a radical hatred for sin and the destruction that it causes.
6. We must avoid the pitfalls of religious distractions

that shift the focus from Jesus to Christian ministry activity alone.

7. We must maintain a hunger for our “first love” experience with the Lord (See Rev. 2:1-5).

8. We must become misfits in a world of misfortune, misery and misunderstanding (See John 15:18-19).

To become a people motivated with unseen riches and eternal rewards causes us to become strangers in a world given to self-gratification and temporal pleasures.

Our gaze is continually upward, which in turn will grace us with a motivation that is beyond noble effort or religious energy. As a result, become pilgrims passing through an increment of time that does not and cannot take hold of us or cause us to lose our eternal focus.

Even though the world may look upon us oftentimes with dismay, we press forward because we belong to the eternal purposes of God. In the revelation of this reality is where we find our place of existence, purpose and expression of obedience and worship unto the Lord.

Our eternal perspective and understanding brings us to a place of absoluteness as well. Even though this absoluteness is seen as offensive to the world, it is this dynamic alone that ushers in the proper paradigm of Calvary’s cross, the Resurrection and the Ascension of Jesus Christ.

As a result, the following words of Leonard Ravenhill ring true, “This life is just a dressing room for eternity.”

Join me as I share about the important subject of “Living in the Light of Eternity.” If the church ever needs to embrace an eternal paradigm, then it is now! Prepare to be deeply encouraged and challenged as you listen to this vital *Maintain the Flame* podcast! {eoa}

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