

K-488 the Eternal Perspective (1 of 2)

by Art Katz

Art Katz explores the profound significance of eternity in shaping the Christian faith and life, urging believers to adopt an eternal perspective.

Duration: 1:02:35

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Acts 20:18-20, Hebrews 10:34-36, Hebrews 11:13, Hebrews 11:27

Topics: "Eternal Perspective"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the promise of restoration and the establishment of God's glory through his rule over a creation that has rejected him. The sermon emphasizes the hope and promise that believers have been waiting for, even if they did not receive it in their lifetime. The preacher also mentions the invisible crowd of witnesses who are not yet complete without believers. The ministry of the church is not just to proclaim, but also to demonstrate the message of the kingdom of God and the reality of a life free from fear and anxiety. The sermon highlights the importance of living by faith and the transformative power it has in bringing eternity into the present world.

Transcript

I have to say that everyone knows how it is that when you read something familiar and then there comes a moment when the familiar becomes new, when all of a sudden a veil comes off and you blink your eyes and you see what you've not seen, that you've gone over that text many times. That's what's happened to me with this not too long ago and I hope that the same kind of discovery and revelation will come to you because it was for me revolutionary. It has affected every aspect of my faith.

Mainly what it has done is to unveil the significance and the meaning of eternity and I feel that this has been a lost dimension of Christian understanding. It's not something that we are happy to acknowledge but we do not anticipate the practical significance of until death. But eternity in the way that God intended it, mainly to affect every present consideration.

If eternity is not taken into the now, we are not considering it in the way that God intends. So here's a way in which we can begin to see how the patriarchal fathers and all of the giants of the faith live in such a conscious sense of the things that are eternal, that it transfigured their present living and made them the men of faith. So let's look at Hebrews 11 here.

Verse 8, By faith Abraham when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed and he went out not knowing whether he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise, for he looked for a city which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Verse 13, These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them that fell off and were persuaded of them, and embraced them and confessed them, and confessed that there were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek the country. The words that we want to focus in on would be in verse 8, the word after. A place which he should after receive for an inheritance.

And though he was in the land of promise, verse 9, it was yet for him a strange country. Have you ever seen that? How can that be? That he was in the place of God's intention, but it was not yet the land of promise, it was then a strange country. It was after to become an inheritance.

When is the after? In the life to come. Abraham is the preeminent man of the resurrection, and his whole life is lived in the expectation of the fulfillment of it. After.

This is a vitally profound and different emphasis than that which characterizes modern living. Where in contemporary secular living, everything is now. This life, this world oriented.

True faith has its emphasis and orientation in the thing that comes after as an inheritance in the life to come. Now I know that's going to sound medieval in your hearing. It sounds like something out of the Middle Ages, where you'll understand that this life is like a veil of tears and some preparatory thing for the life to come that's eternal, which the world tries to depict to us as cop-out.

The fact of the matter is, by the way, that is a perfectly biblical view. We have been sold a bill of goods which is a lie, and has therefore occasioned in us such distortion in our way of living and our perception of value that I couldn't even begin to describe. You will not be Abrahamic, and you will not be a man or woman of faith until you take eternity into your deepest consideration and recognize that this life is pre-eminently a preparation for that.

Can you be more fundamental than this? Can you understand that this emphasis turns the world on its gear? Millennia of the apostles were said to turn the world upside down. I think it's fair to say every value that the world celebrates as right and as true is unmistakably a lie. The whole world lies in the wicked one who is the father of lies, and the greatest success that he has had is to rob mankind and even the church of the sense and the reality and the truth of eternity.

This needs to be restored. It's central to the faith, and it will affect all your seeing and all your life and all your service. And what it will do to you is what it did to Abraham.

It will make your present life as a pilgrim, stranger, and sojourner in the earth. You're looking for something that is future, but the very looking for that future profoundly affects how you are now presently walking, what you will do. So isn't it interesting that verse 13 says, These all died in faith, not out of the faith.

They died in the faith, not having received the promises. What kind of a God is that who has made promises that are central to believing and not to have given them or answered them in the lifetime of these great giants of faith? Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the heirs of the promise with them, and all others of that same faith. This whole chapter on the giants of the faith ends in verse 40, verse 39.

These all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise. Have you ever seen that before? Some things are missed here. Either they had another kind of faith, contrary to what is being celebrated today, because the faith that we're encouraged to possess is the one that obtains a Cadillac now, has a payoff now, or else you're out of the faith.

Evidently their faith did not receive the promise. These all died not having received the promise. It wasn't here or there or one or two, or God was looking the other way.

Without exception, every single giant of faith died without having received the promise. So being the students of Scripture that you are, what did you conclude? We need to understand, whatever the promise is, and we'll come to that in a moment, they did not receive it. That's the point I want to focus in on.

Was God defunct? Is he a God who cannot keep us? Whose promises are they, after all? They're the promises of God. Is he not a God who honors his word? How then did he fail to honor his word, and yet they died in faith? What does that mean? We've got to understand what that means. It's a key to something remarkably profound.

It was not a promise that was ever intended to be fulfilled in their natural lifetime. And that to be in the faith means that you understand that, and that the real firmness of your faith and its realization comes in the eternal future. That is a totally different way of understanding what it is to which we're called.

It changes your whole perspective. Then this, then, must be preparatory to this life. That, then, is the fulfillment of gratification and the meaning.

That's the intelligence that comes after. Now, we are a now generation. Everything in the whole temper of our civilization is calculated for immediate gratification.

If you begin to understand what I'm saying, you'll have a new appreciation when you come across words in the Scripture like patience, the patience of the saints, the forbearance, waiting, the things that come after. This is a different kind of requirement of character and a different kind of trust. Can you die not having received the promise? Totally assured that you'll be raised up in resurrection to the fulfillment of it.

And you are so assured of that resurrection and that fulfillment that you can confidently walk in this life with absolute assurance of that fulfillment. You do not need to be gratified now. You don't need the payoff now.

You'll receive it as an inheritance after. There's a whole different mentality, a whole different expectation, and a whole different requirement. Okay, now let's just take a look at the word promise.

It'll be a whole study in itself. I'm just going to make a suggestion about it, that I have an apocalyptic and theocratic view of the setting for the chapter on the healers of the faith that we need to understand and to embrace. The promise has got to do with the establishment of specific statements God has made to the patriarchal fathers of the faith, like David, that upon his throne would be seated a descendant from his lines who will rule over the house of Israel forever.

We need to come into a Hebraic mentality that was reflected, for example, in the disciples who were with Jesus in his resurrection when he spoke to them for forty days on the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. I want to say, saints, that we have lost the sense of eternity in the exact proportion as we have lost or never understood the issue of the kingdom. The kingdom for us has varied connotations.

It's nice, it's suggestive. The kingdom of God is within you. Yes, there's a certain value, way of living.

But we have lost the sense of the kingdom as a theocratic reality. The kingdom is the political rule of God in the earth when the law shall go forth out of Zion and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem. Now, I know that that does not mean much to us as modern Western secular saints, but it has meant a great deal to generations of Jews who lived and waited for the fulfillment of that promise.

And that's why they said to Jesus, is it time now to establish the kingdom for Israel? They had lived so long in shame, so long in alienation from God, so long divorced from their Davidic origins, that is it now time to restore the kingdom? This is not some narrow nationalistic desire that we too are going to show ourselves. It's their promise. And it's our promise to the degree that we have entered the commonwealth of Israel who were once far off and without God and without hope in the world.

Even the proclamation of what I'm about requires so manifestly the spirit of God for what we are about to explain. This work of restoration is humanly exhausting. It requires the heavens to be opened and for God to implant a sense of the things that pertain to his kingdom and to his glory which are lost to us as reality and as expectation.

And that's why this chapter needs to be set in that context. He was looking for a city whose builder and maker is God, is another statement of the theocratic kingdom, that Jerusalem that comes down from above, out of which the air shall go forth and the word of the Lord. That is the issue of God's glory.

The issue of God's kingdom as a ruling over his creation is the issue of God's glory. All the more when it takes place in the literal land of promise and in the capital of that land which is Jerusalem, the city of peace, and within that city the holy hill of Zion. You see, I'm speaking to you out of a whole eschatological that means things pertaining to the end, apocalyptic, the conclusion of the age, theocratic view of the faith.

It's a very large framework and if we don't have it then we can speak of these verses in a subjective and personal way that has a meaning that is not the full meaning. To desire Jesus and to long for his appearing is not some kind of palpitation in a kind of emotional way that you could have that dimension. For me, it's the Lord coming to be vindicated in the very place where he was publicly humiliated and where they put a sign up over his head in three languages, Jesus, the Magistrate King of the Jews, as mock and gave him a crown of thorns and a robe.

It's the Lord in that very place who established his rule over his own creation. It's not loving God abstractly, it's loving God in the sense of desiring to see the fulfillment of all that is rightly his and which has been so long denied him. And with that comes a whole view of the faith and maybe this will be true for us in these days, the whole introduction of the theme of Israel in the context that I'm now describing.

Not that shouldn't they have their own nation after they have it coming with how long they've separated in exile and they gave it to the prophets and blah blah blah and they have it. The restoration of Israel has been a necessary preliminary to the coming of Israel's King and the King of all creation. He cannot rule from a Jerusalem whose nation is not yet reconciled to him.

So that the issue of Israel's reconciliation and restoration is the key to his own coming and to his own glory. I'll say this again now many times in the time that's left to us. I'm just introducing something.

I'm giving you a theocratic view in which Israel's restoration is critical and as we'll talk about it, the church's role in that restoration that the King might come. Acts 3.21, Jesus is pent up in the heavens contained

waiting for the restoration of all things spoken by the prophets since the world began. We're talking about the things that will release Jesus pent up in the heavens to actually be the ruler over his creation in the earth.

And the one prayer that Jesus gave was pray this. Thy kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. And we have, what shall I say, spiritualized these things and we've not understood them in God's literal intent.

But Abraham understood it literally. The gospel that was preached unto Abraham is the one that I'm now trying to communicate. It contains a promise of restoration, of God's glory being established and revealed through his rule over a creation that has long rejected him and distorted and destroyed the image of God in man and steeped the earth in blood and everything vile and perverse.

This was the hope. This was the promise for which men waited. This fulfillment that did not receive it in their lifetime and yet did not die murmuring and disappointed in how come and where's God.

These all died not having received the promise. Now, doesn't that then bring into another focus the invisible crowd of witnesses who are not yet complete without us which is mentioned in this very context and connection. We are moving towards something to which they have already sacrificed and given themselves but will not be obtained independent of us.

They're waiting for the punchline. They're waiting for the fulfillment and we are the last day's actors and I'm going to speak about this maybe tomorrow. Their being around us invisibly does not mean that they are inert and that they do not contribute something to us.

They are a vital factor and bring, in my opinion, an ingredient of a very particular time to facilitate the conclusion of the age to us. I'm opening something here. A whole vista of the faith, almost like mystery of things that have preceded us and things that are future that affect our present.

So we need to take this into our deepest consideration. The key to what is eternal is millennial. The Lord gave me that somewhere this morning between five and six, that phrase.

The entry to eternity is the millennium and the word millennium and its meaning is equally lost to the present day church. It has only the vaguest connotations. There is no living urgent expectancy of an actual millennial rule.

Mill means thousand. The thousand year rule of Christ. Doesn't mean it ends with the thousand year but that's when Satan is allowed up out of the pit for one last time.

Does his final mischief and seeking once again to turn the nations against God. A final catastrophic defeat where God himself destroys those nations that rise up against him and Satan and his angels are eternally cast into the lake of fire. But the government continues.

The rule of God continues. So I beseech you and I beseech the help of God to birth in us a millennial expectation. How do we purport to be looking for him and wanting to be with him and seeing him who is invisible and have not a lack of concern or awareness of what it will be that eternally glorifies him.

This is a little bit of what I was trying to express yesterday and I just let it rest at that. In other words, I'm uncomfortable with fascination for Jesus and the love of him in his own person that somehow does not also take into consideration that things have eternally glorified him. And that's why both things are

mentioned in the same chapter.

Promises. And verse 13 These are about him not having received the promises but having seen them with our eyes and were persuaded of them and embraced them. Something pure.

As against seeing him who is invisible something singular. Do you know what I mean? Both things are true. It's not pitting one against the other whether you're going to opt for the kingdom and the promises pertaining to the millennial rule of Christ or him in his own person.

It's like pitting his rewards as we said yesterday God's not divided against himself. And I'm appealing to you to see the issue of the Lord and his coming and seeing him who is invisible in the context of what his coming means. The issue of his glory forever.

No accident that Romans 11 which is the great treatise of Paul on the mystery of Israel and the church ends with this great doxology of praise that breaks through the limitations of language. Oh the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God whose from his counsel What is Paul doing here? What is he seeing? He's seeing something much more than Israel's restoration. He's seeing the church transfigured in the process as being God's agent for that transformation and then he says For of him and through him and to him are all things to whom be glory forever.

The issues are worked out and enacted in the last days. But when they are completed history is completed and we move out of the dispensation of history and the times of the Gentiles and into the millennial and eternal realm. The thing that comes after.

That's why they who endure to the end will be saved. And I think that many are not enduring because they do not see the end. They do not expect the end.

They do not desire the end. And in that company I would include Jimmy Swalwell. And men like that.

Great evangelists who have a narrow this world focus and have not seen the faith in the eschatological apocalyptic and theocratic setting that God intends that we would all see it as normative. That's what the word promise refers to. And you check out the references you'll see it turns you back to 2 Chronicles 7 and other such references where God has made tabernacle promises to Israel that in the last days I will restore I will bring back I will establish I will set a king over you even David who will rule over the house of Israel forever.

You see the issue of eternity is introduced at the end of the age with the issue of Israel. This heightens everything that we are about. It adds a dimension to what we are about that is the dimension that makes us to endure and to overcome.

We're touching the issues of eternity and God's glory forever. It's going to be performed in time but once it comes in it is eternally abiding. And I'll tell you for that a man could be beside himself.

He'll do things for that that he would not have done if it's just something that's affecting the course of this present moment that I'm on. We need to have eternity restored to our deepest consciousness and understanding. And there are people who can live now in the anticipation of it.

In fact I want to say that that is the biblical formula for true living. Look for example in chapter 10 of Hebrews Paul reviewing his apostolic life verse 34 You have compassion of me in my bonds and took

joyfully the squirming of your goods knowing in yourselves that you have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Cast not away therefore see that refers back to the verse we just read your confidence which hath great recompense of reward.

34 and 35 of chapter 10. We will do well just contemplating those two verses for the rest of the morning. Do you understand why you've been doing basic training up till now? Why I've taken such pains to encourage how to examine the scriptures how to borrow in how to draw out the meaning that now when we come to these verses we can apply that ability.

So what is Paul celebrating in 34 and 35? People who took joyfully the squirming of their goods knowing in themselves that they have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. How come? What does it mean enduring? What made it better? It does not fade away. It's eternal.

Now what is the practical implication? Because you see is God speaking about some esoteric virultantist kind of faith where you walk over eggshells? Does this have a nuts and bolts application? I would say that heaven is eminently the most practical subject in the world. And what does the word say? If you're heavenly minded you have no earthly good. Exactly the reverse of what's true.

I would say unless you're heavenly minded you have no earthly good. There is no one more heavenly minded than Paul. He shared with things that were invisible and eternal.

And he shared them in such a way that it made his present and afflictions both momentary and life. Unless there is an effect of your seeing of things eternal that affects your present you have not yet seen. And if we want to do anything we want to do this.

We want to disabuse ourselves from thinking that we have taken hold of the faith merely because we can recite it verbally. Until you can rejoice when your goods are stripped of you you have not yet seen it. But let's look at that.

We're turning to hermeneutical key here. Hermeneutical means a principle of interpretation that once you have inserted the issue of eternity in the theocratic sense of a coming kingdom and the millennial rule and the eternal glory the whole Bible changes. Everything takes... Oh, I didn't see that.

Wow. As even the meaning of faith is going to change for you today. There's something we're going to communicate today that will show what faith is in God's biblical intention as Abraham knew it and others also who died not having received the reward.

Without murmuring, without complaining about they never expected it in this life. When you become heavenly minded you're a giant in the end. You walk through the world with complete disdain of the kinds of things which meant saliva and pant hoping to get it now.

It's like water off the duck's back. You're so infused. You've been so taken up with the view of the eternal things to come that the things of this world and I want to say practically speaking that is God's greatest provision for last days temptation, lust and falling.

Those that subscribe to false doctrine that become apostate that say where is the hope of this coming are those who have succumbed to earthly lusts that have corrupted their doctrine and their expectations. This hold of eternity will bring a dimension of ability to shun and resist the blandishments and the temptations of the world as nothing else is calculated to perform it. It's eminently profitable and yet it's enormously lofty

and that's the paradox of the faith and that's what I'm saying to you.

Unless we have internalized this and taken it into our spirits in such a way as to joyfully take the stripping of our goods we have not yet laid hold of heaven. So let's look at that in 35 and 36 34 and 35 and took joyfully the stripping of your goods. Now I have to say this in all fairness if you're going to take eternity seriously you're going to make yourself a candidate to have your goods stripped.

Nothing more threatens the principalities and the powers of the air than those who have seen and have taken to heart the eternal dimension of the faith. You are a pantheist. You'll have no consequence.

The devil will run in your face. He'll say Jesus I know and Paul I know but the church will say and say who? Until you come to this. Because this opens a whole perception to millennial reign the very thing that the powers of darkness hate with a passion.

Why do you think they're going to be exterminating the Jews in the last days? Why do you think there'll be a worldwide persecution of Jews? Because unless this people is restored to their land and their nation and to their God the Lord cannot be released from heaven. The king, so who then will be king? They will. The rulers of this world the kings of this world and the rulers take threat against God and against his anointed and say we will cast off their bonds from us for we will not have him to rule over us.

But he holds them in disdain and contempt when he said I will set my king on the holy hill of Zion. What have I just quoted? Psalm 2 one of the most profound theocratic statements in all scripture that shows that is hidden at the heart of last day's controversy feeling like nothing you can ever imagine because have you ever heard of a politician feeling giving up his office? It's the scandal of American politics that a man can be in Congress for 30 to 40 years and never be unseated. Becomes his lifetime possession.

He's known how to pay off this one and that one and he insures himself in incumbency in office cycle after cycle after cycle. Power is corrupting and the powers themselves are corrupt and they are the effectual gods of this world and they don't want to give it up. When must they give it up? When the king comes.

When does he come? When the promises are fulfilled that he has made to those who have believed for them and have died expecting them and will yet receive them in the resurrection. Even the resurrection and the expectation of resurrection is as distant for us as millennium as eternity, as glory. These are all fallen into the realm of abstraction.

But it was not so for the early church. Isn't that remarkable? That the church of 2,000 years ago had a much more profound sense of the imminent coming of the world the judges at the door. Thy kingdom come.

Be found blameless and obeyed as a theorem. Be zealous for good works. You know, right to the end there was a sense of conclusion.

They're moving towards something and we lack it. And I want to say that that is the principal reason for the dynamic of the early church. There's something that comes with an expectancy that has a power and a dynamic for which nothing else can be substituted.

And it is the absence of this that explains our brand lackadaisical and predictable Christianity. We do not expect a king. We don't expect the day of the Lord coming.

The apocalyptic conclusion of God in judgment on a world that has rejected him. We don't want to see the day of the Lord and the earth being burned up and the elements rolled up and the heavens rolled up as a curtain. We kind of would rather see it improved.

You know, can't it improve? After earth is burned up will that include my hi-fi set and my vacation plans? We are not an apocalyptically minded people. So you see how everything is joined together? We're missing the whole apostolic mindset. You can't have a peace meal.

You've got to have it in prayer or you have it not at all. And if you don't have it you condemn yourself for being charismatic. Worst of all traits.

Evangelical. You know what I mean? It's nice and it has a measure of efficacy and blessing for this life and this world and this present age. But it is robbed entirely of the dynamic, the joy, the expectation, the release, the power to endure and to overcome.

That it only belongs to those who see the things that are invisible and eternal and are living in that seeing and in that expectancy which is true living. As I'm trying to show you in two verses here. You know that you're really living.

When very real goods are being spoiled you can take it joyfully. Why? Because you're some kind of masochist that likes to get run over? Because you know to the same measure that you have been spoiled, demuted and robbed what are you going to attain? A far more exceeding weight of glory of that which you endure because it's heavenly and eternal. Believest thou this? Have you ever been stripped? You'll make yourself a candidate to the degree that you embrace this apostolic mindset.

The Lord might even allow you to be tested. As I have been on a few occasions very gently by the Lord but enough for me to get the point. As for example all my Holy Cross papers were in one box.

All. That I have been assiduously collecting and keeping for the number of years and I put it all together in one box when I moved back to the Proud House after we were off this property for three years. Talk about being stripped of your goods.

We had been on this property for ten years Shelley was part of that and June and Paul and Adrian and others that we met last night and then the Lord summarily ended it and required us to abandon this property. This property was just up for grabs. Anybody could have come.

Vandals, robbers. We lost two trailers by water damage. The Lord preserved us and it could have been much worse than it was without us saying when we'd be back or if we would be back.

And I had to face the death of this and the few occasions I had to come up on this property to get something and to find a place like a ghost town. There was creeping in the room. Not a soul.

Not a laughter. Not a voice. Dead silence where the place used to abound in life and death.

It takes the kiss to die. It's death. I had to eat death because we had to know desolation.

God brought us to desolation because he's going to bring Israel to desolation. The only ones who will be able to come to Israel are those who have both tasted the desolation of God and the restoration of God. You would be very realistic to expect that in one form or another you're likely to experience a stripping.

But will you take it joyfully? Remember that this is all in the context of faith. First of all, it's a faith that believes that nothing can be taken but God does not first allow it to be yielded up. But greater than all of that is also that to the degree that we suffer loss in this life to that degree also will we obtain a gain that shall never subside away that is eternal and enduring in the heavens.

Little wonder that the world has made of this a mock and has tried to make a joke out of this and a picture of heaven is suddenly playing a harp on a cloud and it has robbed the church itself of the veracity of heaven. Of eternity. We ourselves do not deeply believe in that which is eternal.

We acknowledge it, but we are not living as if we believe it. Because it's another kind of living. It's a freedom from the fears and the anxieties that cripple those who are dwelling upon the earth rather than in heaven.

I would say there will be two categories of mankind in the last days. Those that dwell on the earth whose hearts will fail them for fear for the things that are coming upon the earth and those that dwell in heaven even while they live on the earth. Where is your dwelling? Paul said, I am a citizen of heaven.

I have my citizenship in heaven where I await his coming. And yet the man was on the earth so practically involved in the nuts and bolts operation of the church my God, you wonder how he could name it all. And yet was he being euphoric? Was he being metaphoric to say I'm living in heaven? That's where the man had his effectual and substantial life.

You've got to get this into your spirit, into your understanding. Eternity is not another kind of time. Eternity is not merely endless time.

It's not just a quantitative thing it is profoundly and foremost a qualitative thing. And that qualitative thing is available now. It's eternity now.

For God right now we are in an eternal moment. And when you begin to see all your moments as set in the context of eternity you will bring to those moments an intensity and a care and a solemnity and a seriousness that they would not otherwise have. That's when you'll be fasting off.

That's when your life will be studded with prayer. That's when you'll know that this is just another class or another cycle but that eternity is at stake. And who is sufficient for these things? I think she is.

I'm going to say this many times over so you'll be hit from it from one angle or the other and I would be very gratified and count the entire school worthwhile that if this one thing were accomplished eternity had come into your time. A whole new category, a whole new way of perceiving reality and life and meaning and the faith that was not there before that transmutes and affects everything. And this is not some hyperbolic thing that cats cooked up.

This is the enormous big thing that has been lost and that God is wanting now to use. It's reality. Heaven is reality.

And it's coming down to earth. It's that new city that whose founder and builder is God that Abraham saw that though he was in the land of promise it was yet for him a strange country. How come? It was not yet the time.

That would come after. Okay. They took joy from this warning of the goods knowing in yourselves that you have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

You've got to know it in yourself. I love this because it's calculated to get us out of our little mental categories where we think that if we can recite doctrines of the faith that somehow we have arrived. You've got to have something so in yourself that when the affliction comes you receive it joyfully.

That's when you know you have it. You're so sure of what comes after. God will so recompense whatever loss you've had to bear for his name's sake.

Paul brought the whole counsel of God. Remember when Paul reviews his apostolic career with the Elvis from Ephesus. He said, you know what manner of men I was with you from the beginning and that in all seasons going from house to house and in public places daily and with tears night and day I proclaim to you the whole counsel of God.

I think this is the whole counsel of God. And I don't know that we need to balance one thing. It's whole.

It comes into a reality and it will affect the practical categories of our life where we don't have it. Well, let's just read on here. Verse 36, we have need of patience that after you have done the will of God that speaks of something practical in this life you might receive a promise.

So here's a statement of the doing in this life connected with the promise in the life to come for yet a little while and he that shall come will come and will not perish. So that promise is tied in with the coming of the Lord. Look how, talk about that.

See, I wouldn't call this balance. I would call this the whole counsel. The whole thing is being stated in one verse here.

Talks about Christian character, apostolic character, mainly patience. It talks about the practical effect of being the saint in the world, doing the will of God, the incentive for which is receiving the promise which is connected with the coming of the Lord. He that shall come will come and will not perish and that is a little while.

Of course, it may seem to us a long time but from the divine perspective, it's only a little while. He who promised will come and then, what's verse 30? Now. I love that verse.

Hallelujah for that heavenly word. Now. The just shall live by faith.

So this is saying, now go get spiritual and be lost from any practical obligation or consequence and just twiddle your thumbs until he who comes will come? No. Now the just shall live by faith. What faith? The faith of his coming.

The faith of his appearing. The faith of his kingdom. The faith of the fulfillment of all his promises.

Now, a little while. That's it. How did that just fit in there? What timing.

What a terrific insertion. I couldn't have done better myself. What a time to say now.

Just when you're beginning to get carried away in ethereal realms of heaven and promise, all of a sudden, boom, you're brought down to earth. Now. The just shall live.

And that's what I'm trying to say to you guys. This is living. This has released the living.

It emancipates you from fear, from timidity, from self-consciousness, from living in that little cubicle, that little spectrum of this present world only, this life only. This is an emancipating youth. It's a great release.

That enables you to live now. Faith is a mode of living that has taken into its deepest consciousness the eschatological, apocalyptic expectation of the end of the age in its theocratic promise that transforms your quality of life now. When I sit down with Arnold Hamburger in Nuremberg on September 19th, Lord willing, it's not going to be with my holding my hat in my hand and sitting in the man's great study, who is the head of the Jewish community of Nuremberg and a legislator in Germany.

It will be as one coming to him from the king himself, sent from the throne a representative and an ambassador of the Most High God who's living in the expectation of eternity and Israel's restoration and glory to a man who's just bumbling about in the boondocks and hardly knows which end is up. That doesn't mean I'm going to be contentious or disdainful or sneering or anything like that, but I'm in no way going to be intimidated by anything of this earthly or worldly qualifications. You see what I mean? This is a life free of intimidation if you're already in the eternal world.

I'm not willing to die to experience it. It's eternal life now. We have inherited it.

You just dip back a little bit into chapter 10 in verse 23. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for he is faithful, that promise. And then what does it say from there? And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the day approaching.

The anticipation of what's coming has a vital effect on how you're going to live now and what you will be to the church. Exhort one another, encourage one another in love, all of them all. There's a practical play of it.

Once this comes into your spirit, you cannot abide a church that is mere a set of predictable Sunday services. Something is working in your spirit that moves you to exhort and to encourage all the more and to be part of the assembling of ourselves together and to consider one another to provoke to love. There's a practical play of it.

This is what the faith is. And Paul is the outstanding example. The fact that he was the one who saw the things that were eternal and invisible most clearly, did that render him impractical? He saw the eternal weight of glory, he saw the things that were invisible that made his afflictions momentary in life.

Was he a man who was so esoteric and so ethereal and so caught up in the heavenly realms that he was no earthly good? Quite the contrary. He was the most practical, most sober, most able to mediate, to give instruction, how to pray communion, how to behave yourself in the house of God. Full of practicality, all the more because he was couched in a heavenly view.

And that's God's intention for us. That's why the apostles are the foundation of the Church. Not just their knowledge, but their whole character and their mode of life.

They were eminently men of eternity. And look what Jesus said in Nicodemus. No man ascends to heaven who is not first and born from heaven, even the Son of Man who is in heaven.

Now what is it? Is Jesus playing on words? Is he trying to tease the poor man to death who is already bewildered? You must be born again. Must I have circumcised, go through my mother's womb? And now he's the Son of Man who has been up to heaven, descended, and is now presently in heaven while he's even talking to Nicodemus, he's listening. What is he trying to do? Bewilder him? Or really explain to him what reality is? Are we bewildered? It means that we're more identified with Nicodemus than we are... How can a man be in earth and say that he's in heaven? If you don't understand that, you've not yet attained to reality.

Can you be in La Porte, Minnesota, and be in heaven at the same time? Can you be cleaning out the cow dung or the pig goop or painting or washing or doing dishes and be in heaven at the same time? You'd better believe it. That's God's normative intention for us all. But you've got to believe that and see that that's what faith is now.

Now faith is. It transfuses everything. It takes the ordinary and the mundane and it invests it with a quality of eternity now.

It makes the profane sacred and it brings eternity into time and I'm getting goose pimples as I'm talking. And it's for the absence of this that mankind is freaking out. Because mankind was made in God's image to live in the dimension that I'm now describing.

And though they're ignorant of it, their whole system is exploding. Their veins are going haywire, popping. Their minds are cracking out.

Their organs are exploding. Of course it was made to live in the eternal realm. It was made to live in righteousness and in truth and love and reality.

But the world is so removed from God and from his categories and dimensions that it's stunted. It thinks that everything is this present world. The poor hearts go out of it when they watch the market rise and fall and with fever look at what's happening in the economy and poor things.

You see what I mean? It's a contorted, restricted living that is not a true living at all. And what is the ministry of the Church? Not just to proclaim, but to demonstrate the message of the Kingdom of God. That is at hand.

Look. Here it is. Touch and feel.

Come and see. Look at the reality. Look at the people who are completely free from intimidation, from fear, from anxiety, from distress.

Have such a confidence of the things which are to come to pass and that it is sure to come. And that the Lord is coming and there will be a new heaven and a new earth where you will dwell in righteousness. Just seeing your peace will be shattering to those who are unmoved by what's happening in the world.

If you are living by faith. The faith of those who can be stripped and take a break. Oh, I tell you, I'm a depression baby.

I'm sorry to make these references. But it's the one life that I know best. Born in 1929 and without a father and living in poverty in Brooklyn and my mother working for 12 bucks a week in the garment trade and riding the subway for hours to get back and forth to work and growing up in want and finally becoming a

professional and a teacher with security and what do you call it when you can't be fired and tenure and annual wage increases and health insurance and all those things.

The great security after you've grown up out of this world and how the Lord has been dealing with me in my depression years thinking this. It's a good joke between him and me. I clutch every little bar of salt a tissue ready to fall away when it's reduced to that size.

I mean there's still time for that. We'll keep using it until it's desired forever more. It's taken something for the Lord to liberate me from being so attached and fearful over things like that.

To come to an extensiveness to know that what is this? It's nothing for the Lord. The Lord is at the door. The eternity is at hand.

All fullness is coming. His kingdom and glory. It's liberated.

This is the faith. Now the saints shall live by this faith that can live effectually and consistently without receiving the reward of their faithfulness in this life. Because they know that there's a mansion prepared for them in heaven a greater treasure in heaven.

You cannot believe how extraordinarily wealthy I'm going to be there. I invite everyone to visit me. How then does the vision come? It must come to us by foundational men who are apostolic and prophetic and who are the stewards of the mystery of God.

You're not likely to get it from your pastor. But when the pastor himself will get it through the proclamation that comes from these foundational men he can then explore and expand and show the applications. This brings the church to a dependency on prophetic and apostolic men who come to the church out from God.

Paul called himself a steward of the mysteries of God. He said pray for me that I might have grace for utterance that I might boldly proclaim the riches of Christ. If you don't hear it from the poor if you don't hear it from men who have that calling you're not going to hear it.

And that's why the church till now has been robbed of its inheritance. It has not even believed the prophets and apostles that are foundational who bring the vision of the faith to the church. And their speaking is not merely an explanation their speaking constitutes the event.

It confers the revelation. It brings it into the reality of the life of God's people by the hearing of the word that proceeds from it. That's why we're having a school for the prophets.

There's a tremendous need for prophetic proclamation of the mysteries of God of the ultimate truths of God of the vision of God where without a vision the people perish. And we've got churches banging around in their programs and clunking around with this and looking for some new fad and some new panacea that is going to alleviate the malaise of the church. And they try this and for a moment there's some quickening and an excitement and then it dissipates and then another one or this here or that or power evangelism, church growth.

What's missing is what we're talking about now the apostolic view the apocalyptic view the eschatological view the theocratic view that can only come from those who are sent. And maybe what the last day's conflict will be is between that greater religious body that thinks itself to be the church that not only shuns but is offended by this message because they love the petty kingdoms of this world of which they

themselves are one and will be threatened by the message of a greater kingdom or they will only give lip service to the same and that's why the calling of the prophet is a tough one. He's got to be able to bear rejection not only of his message but of himself.

And if they cannot refuse the message on its own merit they'll refuse it on some defect they will have found in you. And God will see to it that there's sufficient defect that they can observe and justify rejecting you both. And we'll get into this also the prophetic calling and that requires prophetic character.

Men who can bear such suffering who can bear such rejection will be faithful to bring the message when it's resisted. So that's the whole foundation for what we're trying to do here. This is not a school of discipleship.

We're not looking for people who are just beginning to take steps in faith but with people who already have a history have a calling and wanting to encourage and bring to release this most powerfully needed dimension to the church in the world every year. I was in Japan and I looked in on some of those congregations either of their own and my heart just sunk. What is it? This sneaky, creaking along predictable kind of Christianity and it was clear they have not a true foundation but we're discussing this morning, Saints is the foundation of the church.

A church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets and this is exactly what has been lost and this is what is desperately needing to be restored. The righteous must first come and restore old things then the left comes. It's good to clearly understand and to consciously be aware of what was only intuitive or gropingly felt.

You need to come into an awareness so let's just take a little break at this point. I don't even know how to proceed from here and I don't think it would hurt if after the break we went right back to the beginning and started the whole thing again and went through it a second time. So Lord we just thank you precious God.

We know that what we're touching is so dear in your sight so holy so at the foundations of the most precious faith once and for all given to saints so long lost to your church so desperately needing to be restored that we cry out to you precious God for grace from heaven to make known such riches. Bless us Lord, bless these children open our hearts and our understanding let your words find lodging there let them be my God as knives and as daggers and as saws to cut, to open, to find entry and to find lodging and to be rooted there grafted in and that anything that we may have to consider anything else in the scriptures is seen in this light in the light of this great consummation your coming your kingdom your glory Oh give us the stamina Lord even to consider this that we might be steadfast and hold fast our confession thank you for this great faith and our privilege my God to hear it continue on with us as it shall please you we thank you my dear God for what you've given in Jesus name

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