

## Don't Lose Heart – You are a New Inward Eternal Man!

Recently I watched an episode of SAS Australia. Ten candidates were on day two of tryouts. After a grueling day carrying a fully loaded pack, crawling through mud and water, pulling tyres through the bush the day was still not over. Dragged out of bed at 11pm for another hour of ice-cold baths, running around the parade ground carrying each other on their shoulders, push-ups, sit-ups, burpees, and back into the ice-cold water. The drill sergeant was doing everything possible to push them past the breaking point to find out what they would do. His goal was to make them *comfortable with being uncomfortable*, learning to depend not on their own strength but only on their team and the orders of the drill sergeant.

Christianity is much like that. We need to learn to be *comfortable with the unseen*, relying not on our might, or power, but the Holy Spirit – to see the invisible, and rely fully on the orders of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Consider these words, from the Apostle Paul in *2 Corinthians 4*, as direct orders from the master drill sergeant when you are at the breaking point in your life.

<sup>7</sup> But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. <sup>8</sup> We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; <sup>9</sup> persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed— <sup>10</sup> always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. <sup>11</sup> For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

Paul is not glossing over the problems we all face, but is showing the way through, the light at the end of the tunnel, the guaranteed outcome – *if we stay on the path*.

### 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 Therefore we do not lose heart.

Even though our **outward** man is perishing, yet the **inward** man is being renewed day by day.

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<sup>17</sup> For our **light** affliction, which is but for a **moment**, is working for us a far more exceeding and **eternal weight** of glory,

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<sup>18</sup> while we do not look at the things which are **seen**, but at the things which are **not seen**.

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For the things which are seen are **temporary**, but the things which are not seen are **eternal**.

#### Outward Man

- Perishing
- Light affliction
- Seen, Visible
- Temporary

#### Inward Man

- Renewed day by day
- Exceeding weight of glory
- Unseen, Invisible
- Eternal

## You are an Eternal Inward Person, living inside a Temporary Outward Person

1. God is Spirit. God created mankind in His image. Therefore, man is a spirit.
  - God formed man's body out of the dust of the ground but breathed into the body the *breath of life* (*Genesis 2:7*). This was God imparting an inward spiritual body into the outward physical body.
2. The inward spirit is what differentiates humans from animals.
  - Animals have a *natural body with a natural soul*. They have emotions (happy, sad, angry) just like humans, but once they die that is the end.
3. Man has an eternal spirit (and soul) living inside their natural body (and soul).
  - The outward self is merely clothing for the inward self.
  - The inward and outward are joined together – cell for cell, every part, conjoint twins – and will remain joined until physical death or Christ's return. (*Ecclesiastes 12:6-7*)
4. Because man has two parts, not one, you can look for either a natural or a spiritual solution. The natural is temporary, but the spiritual is permanent.
  - Example – Ronald Coyne – Plastic eye miracle.

## What happens when you focus on the “things which are seen,” your outward body in this natural world?

1. Because I see the problems in the outward man, I focus on trying to fix the outward man, thinking “*if only I solve this problem, then I will be OK.*”
2. Failure leads to Doubts --> discouragement --> disillusionment --> depression.

- Our outward body is perishing; we make mistakes; we sin; everything is temporary, we can have a good day today but tomorrow could be a disaster.
  - *Maybe my salvation didn't work. Maybe I'm just too broken; If I was really a Christian, I wouldn't do that stuff; There must be something wrong with me.*
  - *It's just too hard. Everybody is against me. I'm being persecuted.*  
*I thought this Jesus was supposed to offer me an abundant life. Why am I struggling so much?*
3. Apathy – I give up.
    - I've tried quitting a hundred times. It never lasts. Why will now be any different?
    - The world is too big, too bad, and I can't make a difference. Why should I even try?
  4. Backslide and start looking for pleasures in the world.
    - I can fill my life with entertainment, pleasure, busyness, or addictions to drown out the noise.
    - I'm no worse than the average bloke. I'm not doing anything *really* bad.
    - It won't matter if I ...<name your sin> .... No one will know, and everybody sins anyway.

#### Fundamental Problem – Natural power cannot fix a spiritual problem!

1. *Flesh can't change flesh. The outward man can't fix the outward man.*
2. Hebrews 8:7-13 – You need a *new* covenant to fix the *old* covenant.  
The old covenant is *flesh trying to control flesh* – *Thou shalt not steal, murder, adultery ....*  
The new covenant is spirit overcoming flesh – *You must be born again. I will put a new spirit in you.*
3. Galatians 5:16 Walk by the **spirit** and you will not fulfill the lusts of the **flesh**.

#### How do I remain encouraged? How do I look at the things which are unseen? What are the unseen things?

1. Hebrews 11 – Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Moses
  - 7. By faith **Noah**, being divinely warned of **things not yet seen**, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark
  - 8. By faith **Abraham** ... went out, **not knowing** where he was going.
  - 13. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but **having seen them afar off** were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.
  - 24. By faith **Moses**, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, <sup>25</sup> choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, <sup>26</sup> esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he **looked to the reward**.  
<sup>27</sup> By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as **seeing Him who is invisible**.
2. Hebrews 12 – Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith – but how?
3. 2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.
  - I look at the new man, the new nature, the incorruptible seed of Jesus Christ. I was an old sinner but now I am saved by grace. And I am righteous at my core, a perfect baby, but not yet full grown.
4. Hebrews 4:14-16 When I slip up and yield to my outward self (flesh) I come boldly to the throne of grace and find 2 things:
  - a. Mercy – for my failure.
  - b. Grace – the inward power to overcome.
5. I focus on growing my inward self. How?
  - a. Prayer – water for my inward person
  - b. Word – food for my inward person
  - c. Worship – love and strength for my inward person (*imparted direct from your Heavenly Father*)
  - d. Fellowship – encouragement from fellow believers.
  - e. Fasting – exposing weakness in the outward person
    - Note that fasting doesn't solve problems. It only reveals hidden areas of darkness in your outward self; past failures which have locked up your life and seem to continually repeat themselves. Once revealed and brought into the light then you come back to God's Throne for grace to overcome.
6. I put my hope in the promised new incorruptible immortal outward body.
  - I don't have to *fix* my outward body.
  - I just have to *endure to the end*, Christ's return, when I will receive my glorified immortal body.
  - My new body will never face temptation. It is immune, faultless, just like my inward self.