

SANCTIFIED AFFLICTION.

"Our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen."

This little adverb while is the hinge on which the door of entrance to the glory hangs.

Our afflictions do not work out for us this glory, because we are continually looking at our business, our family, the world and its pleasures, and the many other things the enemy places about us, on purpose to keep us from looking at the things unseen by mortal eyes. When our Father permits the enemy to try us by unusual suffering, whether in mind or body, then we are compelled to cease our anxious chase after the things seen. When fever racks our brain, and Satan assaults us with doubt as to the character of our living Father, then our spirits are drawn by unusual power to cry out: Lord save from the evil – raise thy standard against him who hindereth me.

What are these unseen things we are to look at, which have such charming power, such a quieting and peaceful influence over the whole man? – "Looking unto Jesus" the author and finisher of our faith. This passage answers the question. He is unseen by the man dead in trespasses and sins, but clear to the eye of the new creature, begotten by God through the operation of the Holy Spirit. Wonderful begottenment – life in death – growing daily by looking at the things unseen.

Lord Jesus, whom have we in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth we desire beside thee. Sweet belief. We may lay all our loves, all our gifts, at the feet of such a giver, and worship Him. Looking at the things he does for us compensates even now for all the suffering we endure. We look at Him and think of his

declaration: "Where I am, ye may be also." He is our Prophet. "If I be lifted up I will draw all men unto me."

I think of him thus as my High Priest, not taking the blood of others, but presenting his own life as a sacrifice – a ransom – a propitiation – which [R456 : page 5] unites fallen man with heaven – a glorified being, unblamable, complete, wanting nothing, and perfectly holy, in the presence of our Father.

I think of Him as King, having left our Father's throne, and about to sit on his own throne, conducting us, his bride, to share in regal glory, all the Father hath given him, from the rising of the sun to the setting of the same.

And surely every earthly good, every earthly love, fades into insignificance while WE look thus at the things unseen by mortal powers, and we sigh for the hours to speed on to that One, so near, when we shall see Him as He is, and be satisfied.

"We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; – and sanctified affliction, in late serious sickness, has enabled us to write our testimony with that of our Bro. Sunderlin, to wit: Our Father ordered it for good, while Satan meant it for evil. "Looking unto Jesus," we rejoice in tribulation, when it worketh such weights of glory.

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