



JOHNSON AVENUE
Church of Christ
WHERE *God's Family* BUILDS ETERNAL HOMES

A Spiritual Encouragement Message April 16, 2020

Just Passing Through

*This world is not my home I'm just a passing through
My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue
The angels beckon me from heaven's open door
And I can't feel at home in this world anymore
Oh lord you know I have no friend like you
If heaven's not my home then lord what will I do
The angels beckon me from heaven's open door
And I can't feel at home in this world anymore*

I can see Paul the Apostle singing this song as he traveled from city to city proclaiming the good news. I know it wasn't written for many centuries after Paul had left his mark on this world, but with the perspective he had on life and death, no doubt thoughts and principles like this were on his heart and lips (2 Corinthians 4:5-5:8). It seems that due to the constant cloud of death that lingered over Paul's ministry wherever he went, he had to learn to live with it and deeply apply the biblical principles that are so foreign in their application to many of us today.

"Alert" in bold red flashes across our televisions, pictures of a small virus that is wreaking havoc is stamped onto our brain, and images of patients flooding hospitals causes our pulse to quicken. We hunker down in our homes to avoid contracting or sharing this little unseen



enemy called the coronavirus, say prayers for those that are out on the front lines fighting this pandemic, or head out to complete our essential jobs. For some of us, this might be one of our first experiences seeing and feeling the cloud of death in and over our lives while others know this cloud well and have felt its shadow. It is in these moments of affliction, like this present distress, that we can apply a song we have sung so many times and the principles that we have been entrusted with.

Paul was able to continually proclaim the good news while living in the valley of the shadow of death because he knew and believed that what awaited him on the other side of death was God (2 Corinthians 5:6). The body that Paul lived in left him separated from God and he longed to exchange the tears, pain, and struggles faced on this earth for the rest, peace, joy, and life that was waiting for him in heaven (Philippians 1:21-24). Like an excited child who anxiously tried to sleep knowing that Disneyland was on tomorrow's agenda, Paul anticipated with great excitement the trip to his eternal rest.

Brothers and sisters, sing the song! When the gloom, darkness, and ugly storms of trials and death creep into your life, allow the light to break through and proclaim "This world is not my home, I am just passing through..." Put on the divine and eternal perspective that our brother Paul had, who groaned and was burdened in the earthly vessel he was given while he looked forward to the hope of a new body, a new home, and a new relationship with our Lord. Let us remember, especially when enduring a trial, that we are just passing through.

"Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord -- for we walk by faith, not by sight - We are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord." 2Corinthians 5:6-8

Andrew Lemus