

I remember a chapel service, Dr. Bernard Holm was preaching. In his sixties, nearing retirement at age 70, Dr. Holm seemed so very old to me. His speech was slow, deliberate, each word seemed to him worthy of consideration. I remember nothing of what he said, except that each time he spoke the name Jesus, tears would ~~flow~~^{fill} from his eyes. He would wait until he could continue, sometimes a few seconds, sometimes a few minutes. Each time he spoke the name of his Lord, his emotion would force him to stop.

To me he seemed a dottering old man, clearly not in control. Syrupy, sentimental, I viewed him, though he was clearly a brilliant man, commanding languages from Hebrew to French and Russian, and when I knew him working diligently to master Chinese. Brilliant but foolish.

One day in History class he lectured about what is to come. As he spoke about what eye has not seen nor ear heard, about the golden streets and jeweled walls of the new Jerusalem of joys and mysteries beyond understanding again he was overcome. Unable to continue through the tears of joy and anticipation, he stood before us, again seeming to me a sentimental, possibly senile old man. A childish old man.

Did he not know of our world, of war in Viet Nam, of political struggle? Did he not know of modern science, of trips to the moon, of glimpses inside the atom? Did he not know that modern people weren't interested in some other life after death, but rather in hanging onto this life in the here and now? Did not we the new generation have it figured out that what ever God might have in store for us someday was not nearly so interesting as the here and now?

So, Bernard was more likely to be impressed with what Paul wrote: "I consider that the sufferings of the present time are not worth comparing ~~with~~ the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God; for the creation was subjected to ~~f~~ utility, not of its own will but by the will of him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Sufferings of the present time not worth comparing to the coming glory. Yes, that is the kind of thing Dr. Holm understands. ~~And creation being set free from its bondage to~~

~~January~~
I was unfortunate to have been raised in the world of science, when the intellect of man became the measure of all things, even God. what I could not understand, what I could not conceive, could not be. what was not rational, logical, ~~***~~ and preferably cold as stone could not be. And the emotion~~s~~ of the feeling of A Bernard Holm, so irrational, so unscientific, must be disdained.

And as the modern scientific world has set in judgment of God - We have our cancer, AIDS, and depend on the very sufferings of the present time, even science can give us a glimpse of how things really are.
I read that the earth is 4.5 billion years old and that might be compared to one trip around the world in an airplane. Man was placed on that plane by God a mere eight miles before the end of that trip around the world, and industrial man, ~~the last two hundred years or so~~ *just the last six feet of the journey.* ~~The~~ present time, your and my life, in the history of this earth are but a snap of the fingers and less.

And the universe so vast that science tells us that ~~*****~~ ^{light flashed} ~~at~~ at the beginning of the universe, I believe some twenty billion years ago, is only reaching our sophisticated telescopes now. Light traveling 186,000 miles every second for 20 billion years arriving here only now. What we can know about this present universe, this present age, what we are part of now.

Let Paul writes, I consider~~s~~ that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ~~Delights~~ ^{Delights} beyond all imagining, what eye~~s~~ has not seen nor ear heard, this God has planned for you and I.

And more, not simply a new life for us, but Paul writes of God's plan for all creation, for all the universe. No more bondage to decay is the promise. No more wearing, eroding, dying, all creation, the whole universe ~~*****~~ ^{made} fresh and new.

As time goes on I realize that it is not Bernard who is the fool, but I. ~~For~~ I have been caught up in the present time, living by what eye can see and ear can hear, living in poverty. But he prepares for riches focusing his life in what is to come.

Now you may wonder at my use of the words poverty and riches. This week I've been reading some of Wealth and Poverty by George Gilder, and he makes the point that the poor are poor because they are caught in the present. Unable to live for a future, they spend everything they get on immediate satisfaction and never have anything. The rich on the other hand, become rich by delaying pleasure, working hard for a tomorrow that they value more than the immediate gratifications of today.

So Paul can write about the insignificance of present sufferings. What is coming will make all of this bearable, for us, and for creation. For the glory that will be ours is beyond all imagining.

For that glory
for now we live in hope, waiting, ~~*****~~ glory we have not seen..