



Truth Matters

A Publication Discussing Matters Related To Truth Because Truth Matters

Blessed Memory One of Heaven's Tools

Upcoming Dates:

Christmas Dinner and Concert	10
Christmas Drama with Sweet Communion	18
Christmas Day service 10 a.m.	25
New Year's Day 10 a.m.	1
Missionary Sunday	22
Grace Partner Pulpit Exchange	29

Special points of interest:

- Officer nominations due today
- Members remember to read the proposed changes to our governing documents.
- Special membership meeting February 26

Two streams of thought wound their way down the hillside, as it were, until they converged to form a mighty river of meditation in my mind. The water from the river has been a cold and satisfying source of meditation. The power of the river has carried my thoughts through to a formative change in my actions lately.

What were the two streams?

The first was the opportunity to study, prepare and minister two sermons during the event of Brandon Witte's death.

Brandon was born under the struggles of Down's Syndrome. By the age of six, his struggle intensified as he was in need of a bone marrow transplant. Throughout his 19 years of life, Brandon went under the knife 25 different times and was persistently in and out of Children's Hospital. His final physical battle was waged and lost against lymphoma.

Suffering was the theme of Brandon's life. The Apostle Peter tells us to not think it strange when fiery trials enter life and not even to be surprised by them (cf. 1 Peter 4:12). This can only mean one thing—trials, pain, suffering, and affliction enter our life by de-

sign—God designs our suffering.

I thought a lot about the place of pain and suffering in the life of a Christian. My meditations carried me to a steadfast hope in a good God who designs our affliction not only for our good but also for our glorification (cf. 2 Cor. 4:16-18; 1 Pet. 1:6-7; 4:12-19).

Glorification is the ultimate design in our suffering. "The tested genuineness of your faith...may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:7). "For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. 4:17).

The second stream that was winding its way down the hillside of my thoughts was unwittingly headed for a convergence with the first. This second stream was my morning and evening meditations on heaven. I had started reading the great

Puritan pastor, Richard Baxter's magnum opus, *The Saints Everlasting Rest*. This book is several hundred pages of heaven. I didn't know at the outset that I would be reading a book about heaven when Brandon died let alone the collision course of two streams.

Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 4:17, "For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison." This phrase, "beyond all comparison" contains a breathtaking implication as regards heaven: the weight of heaven's glory is to be felt by comparison. That is to say, when I am in heaven, I will remember the slight momentary afflictions of earth so as to have

them pale in comparison to the weight of glory then being experienced in heaven. The stunning implication for stream one is that *my memory will be a powerful tool for enjoying the weight of heaven's glory!*

The end of stream number two is that I found my meditation confirmed in the likes of the great Richard Baxter:

"My memory will be a powerful tool for enjoying the weight of heaven's glory!"

Blessed Memory

...Continued

"The things contained in the heavenly rest are such as these: a ceasing from the means of grace; a perfect freedom from all evils; the highest degree of the saint's perfection, both of body and soul; the nearest enjoyment of God, the chief good; and a sweet and constant action of all the powers of body and soul in this enjoyment of God."

Heaven contains "a sweet and constant action of all the powers of body and soul in this enjoyment of God." Does this include the powers of the brain? Memory? Baxter removes all doubt.

"The memory will not be idle, or useless, in this blessed work. From that height the saint can look behind him and before him. And to compare past with present things must raise in the blessed soul an inconceivable esteem and sense of its condition."

Can you even begin to imagine the depth and height of your soul's worship as your then flawless brain can perfectly recall and precisely judge the

significance of the heavenly here and now? What must that first soul utterance in heaven sound like?

Here is what Baxter envisaged his first heart cry in heaven to say:

"Is this the purchase that cost so dear as the blood of Christ? No wonder. O blessed price and thrice blessed love, that invented and condescended!

Is this the end of believing? Is this the end of the Spirit's workings? Have the gales of grace blown me into such a harbor? Is it hither that Christ hath allured my soul? O blessed way, and thrice blessed end! Is this the glory which the Scriptures spoke of, and ministers preached of so much? I see the Gospel is indeed good tidings, even tidings of peace and good things, tidings of great joy to all nations!

Is my mourning, my fasting, my sad humblings, my heavy walking, come to this? Is my praying, watching, fearing to offend, come to this? Are all my afflictions, Satan's temptations, the world's scorns and jeers, come to this? O vile nature, that resisted so much, and so

long, such a blessing! Unworthy soul!

Is this the place thou camest to so unwillingly? Was duty wearisome? Was the world too good to lose? Couldst thou not leave all, deny all, and suffer any thing for this? Wast thou loth to die, to come to this? O false heart, thou hadst almost betrayed me to eternal flames, and lost me this glory!

Art thou not now ashamed, my soul, that ever thou didst question that love which brought thee hither? that thou wast jealous of the faithfulness of thy Lord? that thou suspectedst his love, when thou shouldst only have suspected thyself? that ever thou didst quench a motion of his Spirit? and that thou shouldst misinterpret those providences, and repine at those ways which have such an end? Now thou art sufficiently convinced that thy blessed Redeemer was saving thee as well when he crossed thy desires, as when he granted them; when he broke thy heart, as when he bound it up.

No thanks to thee, unworthy self, for this received crown; but to Jehovah and the Lamb be glory for ever."

For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory

beyond all comparison.

2 Corinthians 4:17

