

Develop eternal eyes

by Marge Hopkins, Entrust pastoral care



This 4th of July was just not the same. Normally we would go to a local minor league baseball game in our area. At the end of the game there would be a fantastic fireworks display. It would be so patriotic. Everyone would enjoy a great evening, feeling good about our country, community and life.

This year was so different! We watched the fireworks on TV from Washington, D.C., a city we lived in for 26 years, so we knew what the fireworks were supposed to be like. They were nice, but even they weren't normal. The presentation wasn't anything like we were used to!

Then, I got to thinking. Nothing about this year has been normal. COVID-19, riots in the streets, calls to defund the police, tearing down of statues and renaming things all over the country. Added to this, we're still experiencing a good amount of uncertainty about how things will work out economically and health-wise for our country. All of this was beginning to make me feel a little shaky inside. How can we respond during uncertain times like this?

Let's look at 2 Cor. 4:7-18 and see what we can learn from Paul about how to respond during difficult times. (Read the passage aloud)

1. Paul mentions that we all are "fragile clay jars." What are some difficulties he and his co-workers might have had to endure that put stress on their lives?
2. How do you think Paul views his suffering?
3. Why do you think Paul mentions that he will "never give up?"

4. What do you think Paul means by “fix our gaze on things that can’t be seen?”
5. Think about your life recently. How have you been responding to our new normal?
(Write down a few ideas.)

Reflect on your responses. What feelings can you identify?

6. Paul’s example for us when we go through sufferings or difficult times is to remember God’s faithfulness and to fix our eyes on things that can’t be seen. What can you praise God for right now?

(If using Zoom for the study, ask participants to use the chat feature to write a praise to God about how he has been faithful or a hope in things to come/eternal)

(Allow time to think and write.)

Let’s look at (or talk about) those things we’ve thought of to praise God for.

(Allow time to review and discuss the list.)

I would encourage you to meditate in your daily quiet time on the praise you wrote today, and continue each day to add more praises so that you can continually keep your eyes focused on God’s eternal glory.

