

It sometimes happens that we stop and envy the worldly people for all the so-called freedom, wealth and prosperity they sometimes have.

And then we reflect on what little we have, and we may even become despondent and depressed.

It has happened to me – and I am sure to many Christians all over the world – as we have been known through the ages as having few worldly possessions (sometimes by our own choice) – and also as having been persecuted.

Such thought is wrong and destructive, as we look on things that can be seen – whilst our inheritance is one which cannot be seen and even unthinkable.

It makes me think of the beautiful words of the song we often sing :

*Little is much when God is in it  
labour not for wealth or fame  
there's a crown – and you can win it  
if you go in Jesus name.*

*When the conflict here is ended  
And our race on earth is run  
He wil say, if we are faithful  
Welcome home, My child – well done*

This song brings me to the real point – I have never seen anyone getting a trophy or crown before he has won the race – and none of us has won it yet – so it cannot be seen.

Today many people wish to have the trophy or crown without the race. They assume that they have a right to everything – and they want to be seen as having won something.

We also judge our circumstances by the wrong yardstick – looking for the incorrect side of our circumstances. The apostle Paul set it out so beautifully and fully in 2 Cor. 6:8-10.

On the one hand he speaks of us in terms of afflictions, distresses, stripes, imprisonment, tumults, labour, watchings, fastings, longsuffering, dishonour, evil report, deceivers, unknown, dying, chastened, sorrowful, poor and having nothing – and this is the part we mostly use to lament, discomfort and pity ourselves – for these things are easily seen in our lives.

But on the other hand he speaks of approving ourselves, pureness, knowledge, kindness, love unfeigned, truth, the power of God, the armour of righteousness, honour, good report, true, well known, living, always rejoicing, making many rich and yet possessing all things – and these things are not so easily seen in our lives – and even if they are present, our thoughts normally turn to our weaknesses and not to our strengths.

The point Paul makes is serious and comforting – he talks of the balance, the conflict and the purpose in our lives and how we should rather look at our strengths and not at our weaknesses – telling us to look at the other side of our suffering and the real values thereof – such as in ... 'having nothing, and yet possessing all things'.

We are more likely to say we have nothing than to be inspired by the words of scripture which says :

2 Peter 1:3 ... as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.

Luke 15:31 And he said unto him, Son, .... all that I have is thine.

Can anybody then say – I still need something else when we have everything pertaining to life and godliness and everything of the Father is ours !!.

If we look at the anomalies that Paul enumerates, we come to the conclusion that our view of our circumstances is wrong and warped and that in fact it is mostly the exact opposite of what we perceive it to be ... as in :

- we might be seen as deceivers, but we are true (to Gods word)
- we might feel we are unknown, but we (as Christians) are well known through the centuries.

- we might feel that we are dying, but we LIVE
- we might feel chastened to death, but we LIVE (are not killed)
- we might feel the sorrow, but we have enough reason to rejoice.
- we might feel poor, but we make people rich (in Christ) and so become rich ourselves.
- we might feel that we have nothing, but in fact we possess all things.

I have often heard people say that it would be easier for them to serve the Lord or to live the Christian life if they do not have to worry about worldly hardships - and I have also at one time believed so, but it is exactly worldly things which distract us from His possessions, gifts and inheritance.

Be not distracted by worldly goods – believe me they distract easily.

Let us rather turn our eyes away from what we need to what we've got in Jesus Christ and let us, in the spirit, look to :

Heb 12:22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, v:23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, v:24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of Abel*.

WHAT A FRIEND