



Church of Christ

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Heart to Heart...

We live in an environment that suffers and is decaying. In Rom. 8:18-22, we are reminded that all creation suffers corruption. It happened from the beginning, when sin entered the world. In this created world, things deteriorate. Trees that are big and look so strong are toppled when a gust of wind hits them, only to find that part of the trunk has died. The years have weakened it and it has decayed.

Our human bodies are the same. I'm sure I don't have to tell anyone that. We are wearing out as each day passes. The strength of youth flees and is overtaken with weakness. That's the nature of things. That's God's design for things. What do many do? Try to retain that youthful look with all sorts of things, but it is to no avail. You can't stop things from doing what God intended them to do. Our bodies were created from dust and to dust they will return (Gen.3: 19).

Paul recognized his own deterioration, but it didn't affect his attitude. "Therefore, we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying..." (II Cor. 4:16). Paul had insight into something about man that is not affected by time or age. "...yet our inner man is being renewed day by day." Paul saw the real, genuine part of man and that was his focus. He saw the inner man as being "*renewed day by day*." The majority focuses on the outer person, the decaying part of our beings. The inner person, the eternal part that is unseen, was Paul's focus day by day. What if one doesn't take care of the inner man day by day? The stress and strain of the normal, daily activities will slowly take its toll.

God has prepared clothing to swallow up our mortal beings (II Cor. 5:1-5). Paul's only concern was making sure he wasn't found naked. Walking by sight, not focused on the inner man will have drastic, eternal effects on us. It led Paul to "*always be of good courage*" (II Cor. 5:8). He longed to be at home with the Lord. By renewing his inner man day by day, he came to one conclusion, "Therefore, we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him." (II Cor. 5:9)

What are most people ambitious about? Their outer, physical bodies and daily activities! Why is there so little faith? Look at the focus of our lives. Are we renewing the inner day by day or always striving for the outer that takes no faith? There is a reason why Paul told Timothy, "For bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come." (I Tim. 4:8) Godliness will strengthen your inner person, which will take you to God. What are you working on? Think about it!!!

Brent