



A Time for Everything

Lesson 2

A Time for Perspective

Prayer

Introductory Activity

What will they say?

A popular productivity guru tells people to imagine what people will say about you at your funeral. He says this gives you perspective as you make decisions on how to spend your life. Read the following words about two dead “kings,” and compare especially the words in bold. Which one of these “eulogies” do you think people would generally prefer at their funeral?

King One:

Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
 Stand in the desert . . . Near them, on the sand,
 Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
 And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
 Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
 Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
 The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed:
 And on the pedestal these words appear:

'My name is __[name]__, king of kings:

Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!

Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
 Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
 The lone and level sands stretch far away.¹

King Two:

“Now when [name] had served God’s purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his ancestors and his body decayed.”²

¹ *Ozymandias* by Percy Shelley (1792-1822)

² Acts 13:36

3. Read Mark 8:34-38. Apply these verses to a person's perspective on...

- Career -
- Singlehood/Marriage/Choice of Spouse -
- Children -
- Sports -
- Money -
- Crippling/Terminal Illness -
- Technology -
- News/Shows -
- Anything else?

- e) Ruth's faith-filled perspective led her to treat Naomi with faithfulness and love. **Read 1 Peter 1:18-23, especially verses 21 and 22.** For what reasons does an eternal perspective help us "love one another deeply from the heart"?
- f) Read Ruth 4:13-22. Identify the most important details of Ruth's "eulogy." Imagine how this portion of Scripture might look different if she had been focusing on human concerns in Ruth 1:17?

Group Discussion

In 2 Corinthians 4, the apostle Paul is talking about how he and his coworkers are suffering all sorts of difficulties in this life because of their weak (jars of clay) bodies and because of persecution. And yet because they know the risen Jesus, they are happy to suffer these things for their sake, "that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God."

Read 2 Corinthians 4:15-18.

- List at least five possible troubles in this life. Put a check by the ones that *feel* light and momentary when you're going through them.
- Circle the troubles that *are* light and momentary compared to the eternal glory waiting for us?
- We can't see the unseen. We can see troubles and toys and everything else that might distract us from heaven. Brainstorm ways Christians can keep their eyes fixed on the eternal things that are unseen.

Closing Activity

What will they say?

In the introductory activity, we thought about what people might say about our lives after we die. Much of our life as Christians is lived among the body of Christ, in a local congregation. Share some nice things you've heard or remember about sainted Christians who served in ways big and small in our church.