

The Lakeview Lamp

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." -Psalm 119:105
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Temporary Things

Tol Burk

(The following article was written a few weeks ago. Tol and his family lost their home to fire several months ago [which helps explain some of his comments], so he knows firsthand the reality of his subject. – Troy)

In 2 Cor. 4:18, the apostle Paul reminds these brethren that *"the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."* In case we weren't sure of that, God, through the cycles of nature, has reminded us.

It looks like Hurricane Ivan will strike somewhere in Florida today or tomorrow. This will be the third hurricane in a month. Contrast that with the last 10 years, when they had about three over the 10-year period. Things are always destroyed or damaged. Without power, life is uncomfortable—waiting in line for a bag of ice, pure drinking water, etc. Not only are they without air conditioning, they don't even have fans. How quickly we are reminded of two things: 1) How good we have it, and 2) How temporary these things really are. In just a few short hours, sometimes even a matter of minutes, it can all be swept away. How temporary the things of this world really are. With the help of insurance, FEMA, the Red Cross, Federal and State Government, most of these people will be okay in the long run; but in heaven we will need none of this help, because we will have none of these problems. Heaven is not temporary, but eternal, in contrast to the things of this temporary world.

From what little we have seen from the island of Grenada it looks very bad. Of those houses that are still standing, many have lost the roof, which means that everything inside has been wet with salt water, fresh

water, debris, etc. and is ruined. And many of those houses that have stood for years are now gone—what a difference two hours can make. The situation is so bad, the US government is sending blankets, tarps, dried food, etc. for 20,000 people—that’s getting close to the size of Columbia (TN). The Prime Minister’s home, a prison, the main hospital, all the police stations, the University campus—all have been damaged or destroyed, not to mention the many homes, schools, and small businesses. Grenada is known as the Spice Island, for the great quantity of nutmeg, mace, allspice, cinnamon, and cloves that they produce; but the vast majority of those trees have also been badly damaged or destroyed. And these are not banana trees that will regrow in a matter of months, but trees that need 5-10 years to mature to bear fruit.

While we mourn and pray for these people, we MUST learn the lesson—the things of this world are only temporary. If it’s not natural disasters, it’s other things. What we saved from our house would fit in the back of a pickup truck—that’s a three bedroom, two bath house. This world is only meant to be temporary, a place to prepare us for heaven. As the Law of Moses was a schoolmaster, to prepare mankind to receive the Savior when He came, so this world is meant to help us see the greatness of heaven, so we will make the necessary sacrifices to be there. How foolish to suffer the pains of loss but not learn the lesson and spend eternity not in a better place, but in an infinitely worse one.

Preacher’s Point – It is unfortunate that sometimes it takes tragedy to remind us of the brevity of the things of this world. Jesus tries to warn us when He says, *“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal”* (Matthew 6:19). When Job lost all of his earthly possessions, he responded by saying, *“Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there”* (Job 1:21). So will it be for each of us. Many of the things we accumulate during life will not last us throughout life. Even if they do, we cannot take them with us when we die. We must do as Jesus says: *“But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal”* (Matt 6:20).

“But as for me, I will always have hope; I will praise you more and more.”— Psalm 71:14

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"This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it"
(Psalm 118:24).