

OUR “UNSEEN” GOD

“So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.” (2 Cor 4:18) It is a fact, as you know, that our Eternal God is unseen. In Colossians 1:15 we are told that He is invisible. John 1:18 reminds us that no man has seen Him at any time. The only way we can “see” God is by “faith”. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen (Heb. 11:1). Peter made reference to our unseen God with these words: **“Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy” (1 Pet 1:8).**

Paul, in our text, uses the “unseen” to explain the secret of his spiritual resilience and strength. Earlier in the chapter he wrote: **“We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.”** (vss. 8 - 9) The reason these adversities did not destroy him is in our text. The Living Bible translates vs. 16 as **“That is why we never give up.”** The reason why Paul did not give up was that “by faith”, he was focusing his mental and spiritual energies on “seeing” what is unseen.

At this point we need to be asked: Does the ever watchful eye of our “unseen” God affect your life in any way?

I am told that a new born baby has only two fears: (1) the fear of loud noises and (2) the fear of falling. In the course of maturing the average person accumulates 5,000 other fears. In addition to sharp objects, snakes, and spiders the thoughtful parent also trains a child to be fear God. The Scriptures teach that: **“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.” (Prov 9:10)**

The writer of Hebrews draws a distinction between Jewish worship and Christian worship by pointing out that one involves things that can be touched (and seen), and the other things that cannot be touched (and are unseen).

Please consider: **“You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm; to a trumpet blast or to such a voice speaking words that those who heard it begged that no further word be spoken to them, because they could not bear what was commanded: “If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned.” The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, “I am trembling with fear.” (Heb 12:18-21).** Note that this worship experience involved physical things like a mountain, a trumpet, animals, and a voice speaking words.

The emphasis of Christian worship, however, involves spiritual realities that cannot be touched. Please consider: **“But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.” (Heb 12:22-24)** Note that the “things” associated with Christian worship cannot be touched: heavenly Jerusalem, angels, God, Christ, and the spirits of righteous men made perfect, etc.

The early Christians did not have beautiful buildings in which to worship for several generations. Sometimes they even met in the catacombs to avoid persecution. This did not affect their worship, however, for true worship is not in a special building or place, but in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). Where two or three are gathered together in His name, Jesus has promised to be present (Matt. 18:20). Neither did our coronated King come alone when He graced their humble meetings with His presence. He came with a full retinue of angels, the firstborn ones whose names are written in heaven, and the spirits of righteous men made perfect.

This is what true worship involves! Do you “see” what I mean?