

## TIP OF THE ICEBERG

**“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)**

The word “iceberg” comes from the Dutch word “ijsberg” which means “ice mountain”. Since pure ice is heavy, the majority of the ice mountain is beneath the surface of the sea. Typically, only one-tenth of the iceberg is above water. Surface winds, therefore, have little or no affect on the iceberg. The iceberg is moved by deep ocean currents. Thus we have coined the expression “tip of the iceberg” to contrast insignificant things that are seen, with significant things that are not. This is why Paul refused to divert his attention from the unseen realities in the spirit world. The “things” we see are temporal. They are only the tip of the iceberg. By contrast, the “things” we cannot see are eternal. They are obviously much more important. It is not always easy, however, to convince skeptical people that the tip of the iceberg is moved by unseen forces deep beneath the surface of the sea.

That’s why we need to be born again in order to “see” eternal truth (John 3:3). “Flesh and blood” are more easily seen than “spirits”, but our most important struggle is not against flesh and blood (Eph. 6:12). We can see airplanes, bombs, and bullets, but the most important weapons we fight with are not the weapons of this world (2 Cor. 10:4). “Flesh and blood” are therefore seen in a much different light when we recognize their temporal nature. The Scriptures are emphatic, **“flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable” (1 Cor 15:50)**. The things we see, therefore, are only the tip of the iceberg!

Luke, by inspiration, tells of two men who were walking from Jerusalem to a village called Emmaus (Lk. 24:1 - 35). Jesus joined them on their journey, but they did not recognize Him. Their faces were downcast because of what they had seen. They had hoped that Jesus would be the One Who would redeem Israel, but their hopes were dashed by only looking at the tip of the iceberg. They had seen Jesus abused, humiliated, and crucified, but unfortunately, they did not yet see the spiritual realities that overshadowed all of these earthly considerations. What really happened was that through death Jesus had destroyed him who had the power of death, that is the devil (Heb. 2:14). Though you could not see it with human eyes, Jesus on the cross actually destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (2 Tim 1:10). Not only did the death of Jesus make possible our forgiveness, but He also died to redeem those who sinned under the first covenant (Heb. 9:15). When Jesus ascended into heaven, He did not enter into holy places made by human hands, but into the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man. His death on the cross was only the tip of the iceberg. In the unseen world He entered into an eternal priesthood and now He ever lives to make intercession for us. The book of Hebrews puts it like this: **“Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; but because Jesus lives for ever, he has a permanent priesthood. Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them” (Heb 7:23-25)**.

It is impossible to plot the trajectory of an iceberg without understanding the unseen currents that move it. So also it is impossible to understand the true nature of Christianity without recognizing the realities in the spirit world. Since these eternal “things” are invisible to the human eye, they can only be seen by faith (Heb. 11:1). So, as Paul put it, we fix our eyes upon eternal reality that is unseen by human eyes.

No matter what you see with human eyes, there is no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:1). You are dead to sin (Rom. 6:2). You are free from sin (Rom. 6:7). You are dead to the law (Rom. 7:4). You are alive unto God through Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:11). You are new creations (2 Cor. 5:17). You have an advocate with the Father (1 Jn. 2:1). Your great high priest ever lives to make intercession for you (Heb. 7:25). You have a crown of righteousness reserved for you in heaven (2 Tim. 4:8), and everything that happens to you works together for good because you love God and are called according to His purpose (Rom. 8:28). Do you see it?