

OUR LIGHT AFFLICTION

Preached By Rev. Theophilus Ogunnaike on the 18th January 1976



It is my pleasure to say hello to you as members of the family of God, and to say compliment of the season to every one of you. Since the end of the campmeeting convention, I had no opportunity of meeting the congregation here in Lagos like this; but thanks be to God who had given me the opportunity to be in your midst this morning. First of all, I have to express my gratitude to you as a minister of the gospel, if we are able to stand for God today it is as a result of the support you give us in your prayers. Because the call which have been extended to us is one which involves us or engages us in the warfare, and without your support in prayer we cannot succeed. I want to express our gratitude to you too in respect of our church at Ibadan. When the work was to start, you acted as father and mother to us by supporting us. It was the pleasure of my heart that God made it possible that you saw the opening and the dedication of the church, it is my earnest prayer that God of blessing will command His blessings upon everyone of you.

When I was informed that I should stand here this morning, to exhort the congregation here in Lagos, it afforded me a great pleasure, and since I came yesterday I started to pray that God would put in my heart, in my mind the message He would want me to deliver to the congregation this morning. Hence I spent some time in prayer and studying the word of God. I thought I had a message, but I was not clear about the message. In the first instant, I was not quite clear about what God would have me deliver to you this morning by way of His message to you. But after some time, God laid something upon my heart, I thought it was going to be a light thing, but I thank God that since the start of our meeting this morning I have seen the hand of God supporting that which He had laid upon my heart to deliver to you as the message this morning. In the Sunday school, we have heard a lot about it, during the review, God had spoken a great deal to us, to my surprise in the prayer room, at the prayer of the ministers and workers preceding this service, God made mentioned of this great thing, and this gave me more encouragement to deliver this message to you. It is my earnest prayer that God will bless everyone.

The message is 'Our Light Affliction.'

17 *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;*

18 *While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. 2*
Cor. 4:17-18

Here Paul was writing to Christians. People who have believed and knew what he was saying that our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. The affliction of the world is not light, it is always very hectic, and it is not temporal, it is something that will see the sinners through out their lives. But the affliction of Christians, the believers, the scripture says is very light. It is not something that will begin and will not have an end. Apart from the shortness, we are told that it worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Our affliction as Christians, no matter what this affliction is, is very light. It is light in the sense that before the affliction reaches us, our Lord and Saviour has known about it and has made a provision whereby

we will not see the heavier part of this affliction. If not for the closeness of the Lord, and the part He took in this affliction, it is the heavier part of this affliction that he carried; hence He is so close to us, near to us than any other being in this world. If it was not for His closeness and nearness to us, we would have been over burdened and overwhelmed by this affliction.

It is necessary that we have this affliction along this way of life. If we do not have it there is no hope that we will ever make the portals of glory. But as this affliction comes our way, it is according to our ability, it is according to what we are capable to bear, and that is why it is regarded as being light. He said that this affliction worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Were it not for this affliction, there could have been nothing in our life to work a far and exceeding a weight of glory in us. Somebody was asking during the review this morning, that the Egyptians were afflicted as a result of their sinfulness, and could not understand it today why the Christians are also afflicted. We have course to thank God, during the review this morning, much have been explained as to why Christians should be afflicted. We have every cause to thank God and I congratulate you and myself for having come in contact with this sound doctrine which God had made available to try us and afflict us to make us what he wants us to be. But this is quite contrary to our own ways of life. Quite before we knew about the gospel, we used to think that if anybody was saved things should be going on normally well with him, and he should be going on top of everything without trouble, and this was our view when we were saved from our lives of sin, we should have no trouble, we should have no affliction, we should have no opposition, but that is not God's plan for our life. If that was the case with us that things go easy with us, we would have no one to resemble as far as Christianity is concern. Because we have many examples of people who have gone this way before and what they suffered by way of affliction. Let us see further about Paul testimony regarding the distribution of affliction among children of God.

23 *Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.*
24 *Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. 25* *Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26* *In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; 27* *In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. 28* *Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.*
29 *Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? 30* *If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.*
31 *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not. 32* *In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: 33* *And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands. 2 Cor. 11:23-33.*

This is the list of the affliction which Paul the Apostle whom we want to be like went through. If we study the life of the Apostles of Jesus Christ very carefully or critically we will see that each of them went through this. Even the Lord and Saviour whom they believed and whom they followed had gone through such severe affliction as they were now going through. If Christ went through such afflictions, and the apostles went through the same thing, then who shall we imitate in our profession of our Christianity if we will not go through such. Jesus Christ the Son of God told us that we have to go through with Him in affliction carrying our cross, otherwise will be the same. If our glory and testimony is limited to God had built a house for me, He bought a car for me, He provided me with all the physical materials we can see around; such testimonies have no basis. Those who hear the testimonies of the disciples, while we look at the things which are seen, noticed that they were not looking at the temporal things, the physical things, wife, children, mansions, and whatever, but they looked beyond

the blue skies, to the things beyond. The glory of these people is quite contrary or in opposition to the glory which many of us talk of today. What was their glory? See [2 Cor. 12:10](#) ¹⁰*Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.* [2 Cor. 12:10](#). In what do you take pleasure? Do you take pleasure in infirmities, in affliction, in persecution, in opposition, in necessities? And if that is your attitude, then you are taking after the disciples of Jesus Christ who looked not at the temporal things but things that are eternal. Or is your attitude like people who have complaints, I just do not know how things are, I do not know what is the matter with me now. People of such attitude are making a plan to go back from this way of life. Whereas Paul said to us in other portions of the scripture that he was not among those people who regret who go back from that way of life, but belong to the group of people who are pressing forward daily. It is my earnest prayer that God will help us to be in that group. If you are in the group of those people whose attitude is when will this trouble come to an end, when will my trial come to an end, well if it does not come to an end in time, I know what to do. If that is your attitude, you are paving way for going away from faith. If your resolution is this, if Jesus Christ does not do this or solve this problem for me, I do not think I can remain in this gospel; certainly, you will not be able to remain. The resolution of Christian people, those who want to follow Jesus Christ is irrespective of Christ solves the problem or not, they want to go with him. God is no respecter of person. God deals with us as His own children. God does not spare some people and make them easy children that will not be affected by trials, but He brings trials to everyone. It is the way of trial that God had paved for everyone, and we need to go this way. It is the way Jesus Christ himself went through. It is of a necessity that all His followers should go through this very way. May God strengthen us, may God help us.

Due to lack of experience some young people come to me, and look at us ministers of God as people who are not affected by these afflictions which he talked about. Sometimes when the problem confronting these youths reaches a climax, they come to me with their problems and they begin to wander, will I be able to go through with these problems, will I be able to overcome these temptations? They approached me as if I had never on any occasion went through such things myself. But I would reason with them, and speak to them and let them realize that, although I am a minister, not withstanding, I have my own trials, I have my own afflictions, I have my own problems to go through. It is just the Grace of God I stand before the congregation over, which God had made me minister, if I were to tell them all the troubles, all the afflictions, all the trials, that I have to go through, I doubt if any one of them will remain under my pulpit, but if God had not leaked my secret, then I have to go on by the Grace of God.

I said a while ago that it is necessary that God should put these afflictions upon our lives, so that it will be easy for God, to pattern us according to his own fashion. There was a time in my life, there was an affliction in my body, and the affliction was so much that I felt it, and I began to pray that God should relieve me. In spite of this affliction in my body, I was able to move about, I was able to do my work, I was very close to God, I was very sound spiritual, I continued to pray that God should relieve me of this affliction in my body, it seemed that God would not answer. I continued to pray, after some time, it appeared that God lifted the affliction, and when this was the case, I became light spiritually, I became so free that I started to pray that God should return the affliction, because if that was not the case, I was very close to sin, I was going away from the truth. That is why I say it is safer and very necessary that this affliction is brought upon our life, so that God will subject us to whatever pains He wants us to go through, and fashion us according to His own will. If not so, if the affliction is not there, you will surely get away from the gospel.

It was this type of affliction that was on the body of Paul, and he prayed on three occasions that God should relieve him of the afflictions, but God said He would not, but that His grace should be sufficient for him. That should be our attitude, let the affliction be there, let the grace of God be sufficient for us, it is in that condition that our staying in the Gospel is ensure. Affliction can not put an end to our lives, because there is that seed down deep in our heart. Children of God please note that affliction can not kill us, rather it will draw us nearer to God. Why do you cherish that notion that God had forgotten you when God is very close to you. God loves us very much. If there is any group of

people whom we can register as been loved by God, it is we youth in this gospel. God deals with us as a father deals with his son. Show me a child that is not directed by his father except a bastard. Though weeping may tarry for a night, the word of God says that joy is coming in the morrow. Though weeping may tarry for a night, joy is coming in the morrow. Joy is coming in the morrow.