

Hearts of Love

Tom & Debbie Tillman "to touch the world for Jesus Christ"

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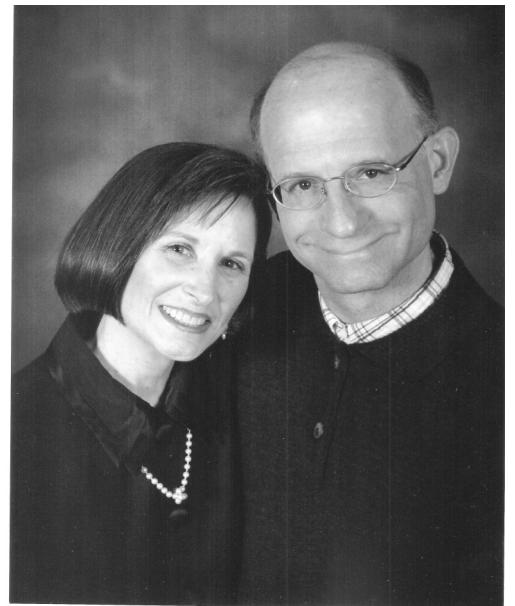
Just Imagine! As I begin this, our first writing for the new year, it's my birthday and Debbie's will be in just 3 weeks.. We're both turning 69 but we're not old; we're not even close to 'middle aged.' We're just beginning the 70th year of our never-ending eternal life... We could write out the number 900-trillion-quadrillion-gazillion, followed by many trillions of zeros and even then, after all those countless millennia, it would be only the first second of the first hour of the next day of Eternity... forever and ever, never ending! We are in forever now: every action we take, every decision we make, affects forever now!

We have a friend who thinks believers should celebrate the date of their new birth unto Eternal Life. To that, I must confess I don't remember when I was born again. I grew up in a Christian family and it would have been my mother who explained the Gospel and led me to pray, in faith, unto Eternal Life. I remember being baptized at age 5 or 6. I don't remember ever not believing the truth of the Gospel and trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for my salvation. Debbie, on the other hand, does remember coming to faith as a teenager, watching Billy Graham on TV, but both of our Eternal Lives are sure in God.

Most people never think about eternity at all; they believe the Universe began with a 'big bang,' that all we see is but the result of incredible, unbelievable happenstance, that everything is the result of chance. They believe there is no God and that they will simply cease to exist when they physically die. 'The fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God.' Psalms 53 and 14.' Many believers, having God's gift of Eternal Life, refuse to even think about eternity, being afraid that living forever will be boring or that to imagine our eternal lives is somehow sacrilegious: that's possibly the result of their lives now being boring, leaving them incapable of imagining anything more but the Bible is filled with references to our Eternal Life.

First, we are told that sometime in Eternity past, God chose me/us, for Himself. Paul writes: 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.' Eph 1:3 What a thing! Just imagine! which is what we are actually commanded to do: 'If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.' Col 3:1

As of those who set their minds on the things of the Earth: 'For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their mind on earthly things.' Phpn 3:18



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He has committed to us the word of Reconciliation. Therefore, we are Ambassadors for Christ.
2 Corinthians 5:19,20

We are commanded to set our minds, our thinking, and our imagination on Heavenly things, on eternal things and specifically not on things of the Earth. Heavenly things are eternal; Earthly things are temporary. We are not to be anxiously and worriedly thinking on things of this life, on this tiny, by comparison, first stage of our eternal lives. 'Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.' Phpn 4:6 We are not to be overly concerned with anything of this world or our lives now, before the Rapture. Our commission is simply to take the Gospel to all we meet. Since we are commanded to take the Gospel to the world, and yet commanded to not be anxious about it, we are to think and plan and take the Gospel but we are to always remember that the result of witnessing, of our testimony, whether or not someone is saved, that is God's concern; the results are up to God and God alone. We are simply told to go and tell. So... what does it mean to 'set our minds on things above?' First... above, where God is enthroned, where the Lord Jesus

sits at the Father's right hand, where we are currently seated with Him in heavenly places... everything 'up' there is eternal. Consequently... we are to set our minds and thoughts on the things of Eternity.

What is the very next thing in God's Eternal plan? The Rapture! At any moment, we will be 'harpozoed!' That's the Greek word for: snatched away by force, the way in which raptors (owls, hawks, eagles: from which we get the English word: Rapture) swoop down and grab their prey, to take it back to their nest. We, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye will be caught up together to meet Him in the air and so shall we ever be with Him as He takes us back to His Father's house, to the place He has prepared for each one of us, to be with Him forever in the New Heavens, on the New Earth and in His New Jerusalem.

'Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if *it were not so* I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I

am there you may be also.' John 14:1 'Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.' 1 Cor 15:51 'For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.' 1 Thes 4:16

Let's think about some of those eternal things: the first and most important thing coming, at any moment, is the Rapture when we will finally experience the full culmination of our eternal salvation. Suddenly, in a moment, our physical bodies will be changed and we will be given eternal, glorified bodies, incredible, unimaginable bodies which will be like Jesus Christ's own body: 'Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, ***we shall be like Him***, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.' 1John 3:2 When we set our minds on Jesus Christ's soon coming for us, as we set our hope on Him, we will be far more apt to 'walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which we are called.' Eph 4:1

We will be like Him! Think about that... we will see Him as He is and we will be like Him! We know that God, the Father, created Jesus' eternal, physical body, Heb 10:5 and we ask ourselves: would God think, plan and then create for His Son, and for us, eternal bodies with any imperfections whatsoever? God does think and imagine infinitely and far more deeply and fully than we. Imagine the strength of our eternal glorified bodies. (egb's) Imagine the dexterity and ability to feel in our egb's. Imagine our ability to feel, sense and experience throughout our egb's. Imagine our new eyes: the full spectrum of light, at least all that our scientists understand, is

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very large, stretching between the very long radio waves down to the very small x-rays and then gamma rays. Our current eyes see only a very small slice of light between ultra violet and infrared.

Imagine all that exists beyond the small bit of light within which we see. When we receive our ebg's, we will see everything, all that is now, to us, invisible. We only see a small bit of all that exists so, consequent-ly, that is all that most of us ever imagine. With our new ebg's we will see colors that don't even exist here in the visible realm. Imagine our new ears: we will hear sounds and music which are now, unimaginable. Perhaps we'll even 'see' music and other sounds together. Right now, we use only a small % of our brains' potential. Then, we will use all of our brains which will be infinitely more capable than our current ones or any computer.

Do you think anything exists which Jesus Christ cannot see? Do you think there is any sound He cannot hear? Is there anything He cannot do? Do you think there is now any computer which is 'smarter' than His physical brain? Can any bird fly higher than He? Can any cheetah run faster than He? Can Superman do anything He can't? We will see Him as He is and we will be like Him! 1 John 3:2

Now, we love excitement and surprises. We love to laugh at the surprise endings of 'good' jokes. Then, we will be filled with Godly joy and laughter always.

Imagine your joy and fulfillment now when you are able to give a wonderful, unexpected gift to a child or grandchild who genuinely appreciates what you've done or, the joy of being able to meet the desperate need of a family who could never begin to pay you back.

Magnify that by an infinite amount and you will, then, only begin to scratch the surface of understanding God's joy in pouring out His rewards and blessings upon us day after day, more and more, never-endingly forever. Only He could imagine the unimaginable blessings and eternal rewards He will pour out on us and only He could imagine and create eternal glorified bodies which are actually capable of experiencing all of those coming, unimaginably wondrous things.

Some believe that it's wrong to try to imagine eternity and to think about our coming eternal rewards. But the truth is, we glorify God by making ourselves imagine bigger and more incredible eternal things. The more immense we can imagine, the more we are glorifying God because we are knowing that He alone is capable of fulfilling our greatest imaginations and even far beyond.

'But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man (we can't even imagine), the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.' 1 Cor 2:9

'For whom He foreknew, He also pre-

destined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.' Rom 8:29 God has already glorified us and will continue to do so through-out eternity. When I think of God's glory which He will shower upon us, I think of Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration and also of Moses when He came down from Mt. Sinai. They glowed, they shone brightly. I believe that is how we will be; I think that is how Adam and Eve were before they sinned. Then, immediately after they sinned, their glory was gone and they saw that they were naked. Our glory will never be removed.

Surely, we could imagine things which do not now nor ever shall exist, but the truth is, we could never imagine anything at all which is beyond God's ability to do or to create. And, also true, certainly there are countless things that the Lord Jesus Christ can do that we never will but we should not *under-imagine* ever.

**Do you think I imagine too big?
Perhaps you imagine far too small.
Think big! Imagine huge! He can,
and will, do far beyond even that!**

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The Harvest is Great, but the laborers are few. Matt 9:38

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