

Superficial Spirituality is not Sufficient.

As I write this one of our younger Sisters, greatly gifted and much loved is dying. Yesterday she thought she heard distant music resounding with many amens. She was able to sing them. Was it the music from heaven drawing near? We will never know. We talk together often about heaven and she has no fear of dying. Only once, a slight shadow, would the Lord Jesus come for her. We looked again at the cross where he took all our sin and she lay content.

Yet she is also still intensely practical, “you must cancel the dental appointment I have, next month.” We live as Christians in the here and now, very much part of this world and yet also in the heavenly glory that is to come. Most of the time, until circumstances change our perspective, our focus is on the former.

There is a deep spiritual law running right through the New Testament that life comes only through death. Never is this truer than in the valley of the shadow. The resurrection followed Calvary. Only if we lose our lives will we find them, said Jesus. In the sometimes tragic circumstances of life we learn to bow our wills. We would not have chosen this path, Lord, but you have chosen it for us. Our wills are humbled. Step by painful step we learn to die. Alongside us is our dear and loving Saviour who trod this path before us.

Many begin the Christian life but when trouble comes, doubts surface and they are swept away. St Paul emphasised many times the need for perseverance. Only on this path is there hope. Painful as it may be for the present, dying opens the gates to life in this world and the next.

Superficial spirituality will not hold us when trouble comes. Those who have learnt to go the way of the cross will sink deeper into God and rise to new life.

