John 15:12: “This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”

The recent tornado in Oklahoma serves as a reminder that the things of this earth are fleeting. Our very homes can be taken away in an instant. Some have survived with only the clothes on their backs. Some have perished. The grief in the days, months and years to come will not be for the lost homes and businesses as much as it will be for the loved ones now lost.

This serves to remind us that perishable things won’t satisfy our deepest needs and longings. You can eat at the finest restaurant, but the next day you will be hungry again. You can sleep in the biggest, most lavish home around, but you are still going to need sleep the next night. You can root, root, root for your favorite team to win the Super Bowl, but it may not happen. Many of us would like a greener lawn, a place on a lake or, for some, retirement with a big chair and the NFL Network. There are many things that will satisfy a need and many a want for a brief time, but they wear off, wear out, go out of style, get lost, get stale, break or otherwise fail to maintain satisfaction. The Oklahoma tragedy reminds us once again that you can’t take perishable things with you when you die. We recall 1Timothy 6:7: “We brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world.” Or Job 1:21: “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return.”

Think of all the wreckage we see in the pictures of the aftermath of the tornado. Many show family pictures in the rubble. The most memorable film footage is of people going through the wreckage looking for the photos that once adorned the walls of their homes. No one is looking for the refrigerator; they are looking for photos of loved ones. Those pictures capture a moment in time. But all those moments are now memories. They will not occur again.

When we love another person, we are experiencing just a bit of love compared to the love of God for each person. When we hurt because our love is not returned or the object of our love is lost to us, our hurt is just a bit of hurt compared to the hurt of God over the sin that splits us from Him who is love. Every time we do not walk in love for each other, we are driving ourselves further and further from the God who is love.

So in this life look to love that lasts forever. As we can see in Oklahoma, our homes can be taken away in an instant, even our loved ones can be taken away in an instant. So hold fast to Jesus who is the one thing needful, now and forever. Jesus suffered and died to atone for our sins. He rose from the dead and has assured us that because He lives, we shall live also (John 14:19). He has gone to prepare a place for us. Eye has not seen nor ear heard nor the heart of man imagined what God has prepared for those who love Him (1 Corinthians 2:9).

Pray for the suffering in Oklahoma that God would comfort the grieving and remind the survivors of His love that passes all understanding.

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