

More Than > Sunday. Us. Now.

#3: Dot and Line

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Dr. Kevin Maurice ---- September 13, 2026

If you would, please open your Bibles to 2 Corinthians 4, and I will meet you there.

In ancient Rome, the highest honor a person could receive was something called a Roman triumph. This was the victory celebration to end all victory celebrations. Think of it as a Super Bowl parade coming down Main Street. A conquering general would ride into the city on a chariot. And crowds would line the street, and they'd all be cheering his name. His men and soldiers would march along beside him, and they'd be carrying all their spoils of war, all their treasure. The general would be clothed in this purple robe. He'd have a laurel wreath on his head. He was covered in glory. This was the pinnacle of his life.

But according to Roman tradition, a single slave would be tasked with walking one step behind the general. And throughout the procession he would yell at the top of his lungs, "*Hominem te mement., Memento mori*" "Remember that you are a man. Remember that you will die."

It's the apex of your life. Everyone knows you. They're all there for you. Everything that's yours is on display. And yet there's this one voice in your ear reminding you that you are mortal; that all this, this moment, is going to pass and this will all be gone. *Memento mori*.

God in His word actually reminds us of this truth over and over and over again. And He does this because it is so easy for us to believe that this life is all there is; to get so consumed with now and the right here that we forget that there's something more. There's forever.

So, here's the question I want us to wrestle with today. Does the way I live my life make sense if eternity is real? Because listen, if eternity is real, if forever is coming, shouldn't that change something about us? In fact, shouldn't it change everything? That's what we're going to see in the Scriptures today.

Would you please stand with me for the reading of God's Word?

This is 2 Corinthians 4, starting in verse 16: **“So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen, but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.”** This is the Word of God. Thanks be to God. Please be seated.

Scripture compels us to look at this life in light of another life; to look at now in light of forever. And let me give you a picture of what this looks like. I want you to imagine that this dot *[draws a small dot at one edge of the blackboard]* represents your life. Okay, that’s all of it—that’s your birth, your childhood, your career, your marriage, your kids, your retirement, every possession, every paycheck, every person you’ve ever known—it exists right here. And extending out from this dot there’s a line. And it goes on forever... *[From the dot, a horizontal line is drawn that extends the width of the blackboard and beyond on the next screen.]* ... and ever ... and ever. The dot is your life right now. This line is your life into eternity.

And perhaps the greatest spiritual danger is that we spend so much of our energy and our time and our attention and our worry and a lot of our money on the dot. And we spend so little preparing for the line. And God invites us to do something that does not come naturally to mortal human beings. He invites us to see the dot in light of the line. And when we do that, it changes the way we live. It changes what we value. It changes what we chase after. It changes how we spend our time, and, yes, how we spend our money.

And the truth is that this dot is so much shorter than we think. The passage says this: our outer life, our outer self, is wasting away. And we know this. We can feel it, this mortal coil. It is physically decaying. Our bodies each year get just a little more brittle. Your knees break down, things just don’t work like they used to. And even if everything goes extraordinarily well—you eat right and you work out and you sleep well—the best you’re going to get is what? Eighty, maybe ninety years? And the older you get, the more you realize that dot is pretty small.

The Bible describes life as a mist of vapor, a flower, grass—things that are here for a moment and then gone.

In week one of the series, Matt taught us from 1 Chronicles. And there’s this moment when King David and the people of Israel come together and bring their gold and their silver and precious stones and all these resources. They bring them into Jerusalem to build the temple of

God. And after they do this, David prays this prayer and says, **“For we are strangers before You, God, and sojourners, as all our fathers were. Our days on earth are like a shadow, and there is no abiding.”** David gets it. He’s saying, *Look, I’m a stranger, I’m a sojourner. I’m just passing through. My days are a shadow. Pretty soon the sun is going to set.*

And so, David can give freely of his resources, of his wealth, of his stuff, because he knows, *I’m not staying here that long.* David’s generosity is linked to his mortality.

Just because the dot ends does not mean it doesn’t matter. It matters. Life matters. Life is beautiful. It’s filled with meaning and significance. Your life is a gift from God. The Bible never tells us that temporary things are bad. The Bible does tell us that temporary things are temporary. So, our clothes, our cars, our houses, our bank accounts are nice. They’re gifts. But they won’t last.

And the trouble comes when temporary things become for us ultimate things--when we spend our lives trying to make this little dot more comfortable and safer and we barely think about what is coming after.

Think about it this way. Imagine you’ve just won an all-inclusive vacation at a resort in Mexico. There’s one catch—it’s not a time share, but there’s one catch. The only way for you to get there is going to be by bus, from Austin to Zihuatanejo. But you’re okay with that because you’re going somewhere spectacular. We’re talking about white sand beaches, those bungalows out over the water. You’ll have a private chef. You’ll get to go snorkeling. It is going to be incredible.

But first, you’ve got this bus ride. And it’s about fourteen hours long. Now imagine spending your entire trip obsessing over your seat on that bus. So, you hang up little curtains, you replace your tray table with a nicer one—you know, you want something better. You cut out a square of carpet beneath your feet. You install a shade that you prefer. You buy artwork and you hang it in the lavatory—you know, the one you’re not supposed to use. What are you doing? We’re going to be there in a few hours. The bus isn’t the destination. Just put on a neck pillow and recline the inch that they give you and enjoy some snacks. You’re just along for the ride. You’re not going to be there that long.

And I wonder sometimes if heaven looks at the way we live and asks, *What are you doing? You’re spending so much time and energy and money dressing up a bus. Why are you putting so much of your life into upgrading the dot?*

Listen, the road trip ends. It's going to be a lot shorter than we think.

But here's the truth: as short as that dot is, the line is better than we can imagine. The passage continues. It says that this light and momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.

Just look at the contrast. We've got a light affliction, and then the weight of glory—momentary and eternal. And the Bible puts the dot next to the line and says that there is no comparison.

Now the person writing this is the Apostle Paul. This man has been beaten, imprisoned, shipwrecked. He's been hungry and homeless. Eventually, he is going to be executed for following Jesus. And he is saying, *Bring all the worst that life can bring and put that on one side of the scale. And you put what is coming in eternity on the other side, and there's no comparison.* Because eternity is longer, but it's also weightier. It's more real. The line is longer. Everything in this dot has an expiration date: pain and loss and grief. Those things will end. Even death doesn't last. So, what God is preparing for us is eternal. The line just keeps going forever and ever and ever. But eternity is not just longer than life here; it's weightier. Paul says that all this light stuff is preparing us for something heavy.

We tend to think about this in the opposite way. We think that this, this right now, is the heavy stuff. And then heaven will be like retirement. But here work is heavy, parenting is tough, suffering and sickness are these crushing things. Life is hard. And we dream about putting all that weight down. But Paul, in God's Word, calls all this the light stuff. And he says that what is coming is an eternal weight. Heaven isn't just the absence of pain. It's not just relief or rest. There's a weightiness to heaven. And that weightiness is God's glory. And that's what makes eternity more real.

C. S. Lewis gives us a picture of this in his book *The Great Divorce*. Lewis imagines a group of people arriving at the edge of heaven. And they're surprised because heaven isn't wispy. It's not vague or indistinct or immaterial. They are. They're emerging out of death and into eternity, and they're ghost-like. But heaven is solid. Even the grass beneath their feet hurts them because the grass is more solid than they are. It's more real. And they struggle to walk through it. They have to adjust. Because where they've been alive, where they've been, it's not nearly as real.

And I love that reversal. It's what is going on here in the passage. Because we think that this is the solid stuff, that this is the real world. And heaven is a spiritual, cloudy place with halos and all that. That's not what the Bible says. Look at verse 18: **"The things that we can see are transient. That doesn't last. The things that we can't see are eternal."** This is the shadow. Eternity is the reality. Which means that when we approach the line, we're not moving from less life to lesser life; we're approaching this line and approaching more life, more substance, more of what is actually real. And that's not hopeful optimism or wishful thinking. Because of Jesus, because of the resurrection, this line is a promise.

Look at what Paul says just a few verses before this passage: **"... knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus."** Knowing that He, God, who raised Jesus will also raise us with Jesus. Christianity is not, *Oh, man, I hope there's something after this.* Christian faith is not, *Fingers crossed--maybe there's something after the lights go out.*

No, Christian hope is Jesus Christ walked out of that grave, and because He lives, I live. Because of Him, I have the gift of eternal life. And what is to come is far greater than what is right now.

One of my favorite lines from the hymn "Amazing Grace" is the line that says,
"The earth shall soon dissolve like snow, the sun forbear to shine;
but He who called me here below will be forever mine."

So, you see that the glory of the line is not the line itself. The treasure of heaven is not heaven for its own sake. Our eternal weight of glory is being with God, our Creator. And it will be better than we can imagine.

And since that is where we're going, it should change the way we live right now. It should change what we look at and what we pursue. Don't look to the things that are seen; look to the things that are unseen.

In other words, what Paul is saying here is to live your dot in light of the line.

And hear me out: there are two ways that we can get this really wrong. One way is to say, *Well, since the dot doesn't last, I'll just reject it. I'll enjoy nothing. Possessions are bad, pleasure is suspicious, comfort is questionable. So, don't ever order soda at a restaurant. Heaven forbid you ever go to Disneyworld. Because the less you enjoy this life, the more spiritual you must be.* That's called asceticism. And listen, that is not in the Bible. God made this

world. He created good things. We can enjoy them. So, eat great food. Take your family on vacation. Appreciate good things as gifts from God. Just remember that they're temporary.

Here's the other way we can get it wrong. And this one is way more tempting of a trap. It's called hedonism. And hedonism says, *Well, if the dot doesn't last that long, then I better get everything I can out of it for myself.* George Strait, the king of country music, once sang about hedonism. He sang, "I'm not here for a long time, I'm here for a good time." *So, prioritize pleasure. Just maximize luxury. Collect experiences. Avoid anything that feels hard like sacrifice. Make this life as enjoyable as possible, because this is all you've got.*

Christianity comes to a very different conclusion. It's not, *Well, the dot is short, so squeeze everything you can out of it.* No, the Christian life says, *The dot is short, so spend it on what lasts. Use your dot in light of the line.*

And that means that as Christians, we should be very difficult people to categorize. Because we should enjoy all the things that God provides much, much more deeply than an ascetic, because we know they're gifts from God. And we should hold those gifts much more loosely than a hedonist, because they're gifts, but they're not the Giver. They're not God Himself.

And one of the clearest signs that I can hold God's gifts loosely is that I can open my hands and give some of them away. And that is so true when it comes to money. Money can make the dot a lot more comfortable, more secure, more fun. And those aren't necessarily bad things, remember. But if I really believe that the line is real and that all my money ever does is to improve my dot, I have to ask if my money reflects what I say I believe. Because the way I use money tells a story about what matters to me.

And so, what if I use something that's temporary for something eternal? What would it look like to use money, a temporary commodity, to translate the Bible, God's Word, into a new language on this planet? Or to send a missionary to share the gospel in a place that's never heard the name of Jesus? Or to care for someone who is in crisis, or to build a place where people could hear about Jesus?

Listen, money is temporary. But God allows this. He allows us to use it for things that echo into eternity. We can use our dot for the line. And at the heart of it, that is what this More Than campaign is really about. It is an opportunity to ask, *God, how do You want me to use what You have put in my hand?*

And so, yes, as we're talking about this, practically speaking, it's a two-year financial commitment. And yes, we're hoping to build buildings and ministry space and a chapel. And people can come and gather and worship and get married and hear about Jesus and learn the gospel. And we're so eager about that. We're praying, *God, what do You want us to do?*

But here's the truth: none of the buildings on this campus will last forever—not a single one of them. Give it enough time, and everything that we put on this corner in Austin, Texas, will soon dissolve like snow.

So, what if there's something more happening here? What if it's not only about what we build through our generosity? What if it is about what God wants to build in us through our generosity? Because giving doesn't just change what I do with my money; God uses giving to change me.

And so, here's one thing He wants to change in me. And I'm just talking to you personally. Here's one thing He wants to change in Kevin. It's fear. Because fear is the thing that keeps my fists closed very tightly on all the stuff that I think I need. Y'all, I'm just being honest. It's where I am right now. The Maurice family are paying for diapers and daycare, and we've got a mortgage and minivan payments. And so, it gets really easy for me to think, *Well, once we get through this season, then that's when we're going to have more margin. And that's when it's going to get easier for us.*

But what I've come to learn is that these exceptional seasons aren't actually exceptions. Because in a few years, we're going to be worried about other things. I'm going to be afraid about how we're going to afford car insurance, not to mention the cars that go along with that insurance. And then it will be how we're going to pay for college. And y'all, I've got four daughters. That potentially means four weddings! It's a good thing we're building a chapel. (We still get a pastor's discount for that, right?)

But then we'll be empty nesters. We'll turn a corner, and then it will get really easy. Well, I imagine we're going to be caring for some aging parents. And then before long, there's retirement. Are grandkids cheap?

The dot is a lot shorter than we think. There's not going to be some magical season when trusting God with money becomes easy for me. And so, here's what Kate and I are praying about in this season. It's what faithful generosity looks like for us.

And I've been thinking this week that when it comes to writing a number on this line, my prayer is that it would help me to see and to pursue this line.

This card is just a way of saying, *God, here's what You've given me, and here's how I feel that You are leading me to use what is temporary for what lasts.*

So, Grace, here's the question I want us to wrestle with: Does the way I live my life make sense if eternity is real? Do the ways I spend and save and give away my money make sense if eternity is real? And ultimately, that is not a capital campaign question. That is a question about what I really believe. Because someday, perhaps very soon, every one of us will discover just how temporary all of this was.

We started with a Roman triumph. Let me end with a royal funeral. For centuries, rulers of the Habsburg Dynasty would be buried in a crypt in Vienna. And there's this remarkable tradition when it comes to their funerals.

The entire funeral procession—the casket, the pallbearers, the attendees—arrives at the entrance of the crypt. And a herald steps forward and knocks on the heavy wooden door—*Boom, boom, boom, boom.* And from inside a priest asks, “Who is there?”

And the herald announces the deceased by all his or her titles—emperor, king, queen, archduke, prince, or princess. And then after the list of titles and all their honors and achievements—everything this person has accomplished on earth—from behind the door a voice would answer, “We do not know him.”

So, the herald knocks again. And the voice says, “Who is there?” Once more the herald gives the name of the deceased with fewer titles this time. But still, there's just enough pomp and circumstance. And again, the voice answers, “We do not know him.”

And then there's a third knock. “Who's there?” And this time the herald offers no list of titles, no pronouncement of wealth or riches. He doesn't even say the person's name. He says, “A poor mortal and a sinner, forgiven by God.” And then the doors open.

Eventually, everything here fades away. Whatever we spend our lifetime accumulating—none of it leads this dot. *Memento mori.* Remember that you will die.

But remember that in Christ you will live forever. And prepared for you is an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.

And so, while you're here, receive every good gift that God wants to place in your hands. And thank God for those gifts, and enjoy them.

And when He gives you the opportunity to take something temporary and spend it on something eternal, would you open your hands?

The dot is short ... the line is better than we can imagine. So, live your dot in light of that line.

Would you please pray with me?

God in heaven, we come before You, and all we can say is "Thank You." Thank You for who You are, thank You for what You've done for us; that while we were still sinners, You died for us. You stepped out of glory, and You stepped into this earth, this creation. And You did it out of love for us.

God, I pray that our lives would be transformed by the truth of the gospel, that we would live life here in light of what is to come; that we would be people who would be open-handed with everything that You give us: our time and our energy, our finances. God, help us to be faithful men and women transformed by the gospel. Help us to live in such a way as to glorify You, to make You known.

God, we pray these things in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.