

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

INTRO:

- In the previous verses Paul shows what the life of the minister of Christ is like. How God is glorified through him and displayed to the world. 7-15
- From the moment we receive Christ into our lives, life becomes a ministry and we, ministers, ambassadors. (2 Cor. 5:18, 20)
- Paul in these earlier verses exposes the true nature of the Christian life and ministry. (persecuted church)
- If the ministry means that Jesus Christ is to be communicated, manifested by the power of the Holy Spirit through the life of the believer, and I believe it is, then day by day the principle of the cross and the death to our selfish natures must take place.
- Believe it or not, it's not about you/me.
- How then can the Christian receive the strength and power to live this self-emptying, sacrificial life?
- So now in the proceeding verses, verses 16-18, Paul tells the believer how he receives strength and perseverance for the Christian life for the battle.

READ: 16-18.

Notice the wonderful contradictive phrases in these verses.

16)

- Loosing heart/renewed.
- Outward man perishing/inward man renewing.

17)

- Light affliction/weight of glory.
- Momentary affliction/eternal glory.

18)

- Seen/unseen.
- Seen, temporary/unseen, eternal.

16)

- **Amplified:** Therefore we do not become discouraged (utterly spiritless, exhausted, and wearied out through fear). Though our outer man is [progressively] decaying and wasting away, yet our inner self is being [progressively] renewed day after day.
- Vs. 16 begins with "therefore." (For which cause, because of these things, or so.) What is the "therefore? What are the "these things?"

- **Vs. 14-15, Knowing the reality, having absolute unwavering confidence and assurance of the resurrection,**
- **And knowing that all his labors and afflictions were working for the church and that these labors through the abundance of grace and thanksgiving would rebound to the glory of God he did not would not loose heart!**
- **Paul was sure of a glorious resurrection and he was convinced and satisfied that his present sufferings and labors would advance the kingdom and glory of God.**
- **If we are not convinced of this in our own lives, these verses will be toothless.**
- **To lose heart: to be utterly spiritless, faint hearted.**
- **The outer man: the man of this age. The body.**
- **Inner man: the man of the age to come the spirit man.**
- **Perish: to change for the worse, wasting away, the work of a moth, corruption.**
- **Paul was a realist, he did not pretend he had not suffered, or that he was never in pain, hungry, cold etc..**
- **He did not deny there was a cost to live for Christ and to be a minister, a Christian.**
- **He admits his outward man was perishing, weakening, wearing out.**
- **But he did not pitch his tent on this thought, but looked upward to God and His grace and found it more than sufficient.**
- **He chose to put off the old man and put on the new man.**
- **It was a truth, not a bible verse for him to declare, it is no longer I that live, but Christ, (Gal. 2:20)**
- **And that the world was crucified unto him and he to the world. (Gal. 6:14)**
- **The secret of Paul's sustainability and perseverance was found to be his daily renewal.**
- **Renewed: To make new or the renewal of spiritual power. Refreshed in spirit. **2 Cor. 3:18, 4:6****

CONCLUSION:

- **So we learn from this verse at least three things;**
 - 1) **To not lose heart; contemplate on the resurrection, heaven not the grave is our goal.**
That is; appraise your priorities and make sure our labors are not in vain, and God is using them for the His benefit and those of the church, and that which we are wasting away for will secure eternal rewards.
 - 2) **Our outward man is perishing.**
To decay. (diaphtheiro dia = intensifies meaning + phtheiro = to ruin, corrupt, spoil, shrivel, destroy, defile) (English

= *diphtheria*) means to cause the complete destruction, to destroy, corrupt or decay utterly (through and through so to speak), to rot thoroughly, to ruin, to pervert utterly, perish. It always signifies a change for the worse. The Bible uses *diaphtheiro* literally of physical corruption, destruction or decay

- Michael Angelo: "The more the marble wastes the more the statue grows."
- (Heb. 1:11-12)

3) To keep from losing heart we must be daily renewed.

- Eph. 3:14-19
 - Isa 40:31 But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew *their* strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.
 - Col. 3:10 being renewed makes us look like Jesus; and have put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,
- Oswald Chambers called this "continuous conversion." To refuse to be continuously converted is a hindrance to the growth of our spiritual life. There are areas of obstinate self-will in our lives where our pride pours contempt on the throne of God and says, "I won't surrender my will." We in essence deify our independence and self-will and call them by the wrong name. What God sees as stubborn, selfish weakness, we call "strength". There are whole areas of our lives that have not yet been brought into submission to the Lord, and this can only be done by continuous "conversion". Slowly but surely we can claim the whole territory for the Spirit of God (Ed: Although we will never attain perfection until the day of glorification).
- Some Christians are often better on there sick beds than on his feet.

Value spiritual strength over physical strength, value the future over the present, and value eternal realities over temporal realities.

17)

Affliction: primarily means "a pressing, pressure "oppression, affliction, tribulation, distress, straits. anything which burdens the spirit.

Works: To perform accomplish to achieve. To do that from which something results. Rom. 5:3, Jam. 1:3

While we look: "But it is a secret process, invisible both to the outsider and to the believer himself, known only to faith. To protect that faith from the encroachments of pride, which would turn spiritual renewal into a human achievement instead of accepting it as a gift of grace, God has provided that the process be concealed within an 'earthenware vessel,' a perishable body subject to pain and decay (2Co 4:7; cp. 2Co 12:7, 8, 9). Those whose eyes are not on the seen and transient, but on the unseen and eternal, can detect beneath the decay of the outer nature an inner life which is being daily renewed