

Reasons to Not Lose Heart

II Corinthians 4: 1-18

1/27/02

Intro

- Pray for Pastor Steve in Africa
- Conference on the work and gifts of the Holy Spirit –Feb 1-2 at Crossroads Community Church.

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In chapter three, Paul makes a comparison of the Old Covenant with the New saying that though the Old came with glory, it was nothing compared to the New. Also, he said that the letter kills, but the ministry of the Spirit gives life.

In these verses, Paul shows us that the ministry of the Holy Spirit has very practical ramifications in every day life. Therefore, we do not lose heart. God is at work in all the daily troubles of our lives!

Here are reasons we should not lose heart.

I. Because God wants to make His power known.

Vs 7-9

A. But not in the way we so often expect.

- We often expect God to show His power by holding back the storm.
- But God often shows His power by strengthening us through the storm.

B. How does he transform us from glory to glory?

- Through the difficulties and challenges of life!!

Illus-How do we learn anything worthwhile? It takes difficulty and challenge. You can't even learn math without difficulty.

- Many like to focus on the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- But the primary goal of the Holy Spirit is Christ-like transformation.

Phil 2 – Have this same mind in you that was also in Christ Jesus.

II. Because we don't have to be defeated.

Vs 7- 9 (in clay pots)

A. But we do have to be broken.

- The clay pots must be broken so that either others see Jesus.
- Or we do.

Illus- Gideon and the 300 soldiers. They couldn't see the light until the pots were broken. (Judges 7)

B. We are as big as the problems that stop us.

Illus- When we are young our simple problems seem very big.

- Our problems are only going to get bigger. If they don't, we stop growing.
- It is our problems that increase us!!!!

Illus - Why do the boys like to wrestle? They are preparing for the life role of battling against the difficulties of life.

C. That the life of Jesus may be seen in us.

- Paul has the evidence of the resurrection because he has its power in the constant deliverances and renewals.

III. Because we have a new perspective.

Vs 16-18

A. Though our outer man is decaying...

- Our inner man is being renewed day by day.

Illus- When Billy Graham did the Los Angeles tent meetings they went on for week after week after week. He said, "They took something out of me physically that I never got back, but they gave me something spiritually that I knew I would never lose. I knew God would use me for His glory.

B. Light affliction is producing in us an eternal weight of glory.

- This is a confirmation that affliction is used of the Lord.
- To bring about transformation is us.

C. God gives us an eternal perspective rather than a temporal one.

- Rather than focus on the problems, we should focus on what God is doing.
- To have God's perspective is to have maturity in Christ.

Illus- suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem. How much better if we could see our problems from His viewpoint.

Illus – "This too shall pass," has been a great encouragement to me.

Conclusion

I Timothy 1: 18-19. We do not lose heart because God is doing a good work in us. We need to stay at it and not give up and not ship-wreck our faith.

Illus- And don't worry, says Paul, all these things here...pain, trials, sickness, suffering...they will all pass away. But the things that are spiritual; God, Heaven, Eternal life, our glorified bodies; that will never pass away. C.S.Lewis once wrote of believers, "we will live to remember the galaxies as an ancient tale." Because even the stars and the galaxies are physical things and will pass away. Peter says they will "burn up with an intense heat". But as a believer in Christ, you will live with no end. Think about it! After sitting at His feet and worshipping Him and reigning with him for time that we cannot even imagine; even then, we will have only just begun. You must believe that enough to let it affect your thinking...your very life; because it is true.