

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MAY 5TH, 2024 // 2 CORINTHIANS

MINISTRY (2 CORINTHIANS 4:1-6) THEREFORE

Paul had already described the glorious ministry that brings life, salvation, righteousness, and transformation. It was a gift from God, not a burden.

- **How we look at ministry will determine how we will fulfill it. We should be overwhelmed with God's grace and mercy as He allows us to share His Word.**

DON'T QUIT

Paul experienced despair (2 Corinthians 1:8). He had great gifts and plenty of experience, but he still had weaknesses. His strength was renewed each time he thought about the ministry.

- **As God calls us to live and share His gospel, we know He will enable us to endure. It is His gospel, not ours, and that's why it will endure.**

TRUTH

False teachers had twisted and abused God's word to fit their personal agendas. Paul had nothing to hide. He didn't distort the Word, and his conscience was clear.

- **God has given us His word and called us to be messengers, not editors. Our responsibility is to share clearly, prayerfully, and truthfully.**

BLINDED

Paul recognized the power of God's gospel, but some still didn't believe. Satan was using religious teachers to deceive people and keep them from seeing the truth of the gospel.

- **As long as we are willing to keep our eyes away from Christ, Satan is willing to keep us distracted from the light of the gospel: Christ.**

PROCLAIM

Paul knew the problem wasn't his presentation because he only proclaimed Jesus Christ as Lord and himself as a servant of the people for Jesus' sake.

- **We are not here to build fan clubs or holy huddles. The truth that removed the veil from our hearts will remove the veil from others. When we take credit, we rob God of His glory.**

GOD'S GLORY

Paul was honored to be a light-bearer, but he was not the light. He remembered that his time in the darkness was like before creation, and only God could bring light to the universe and his soul.

- **One of the best ways to stay humble and honest in our service is to remember Who saved us and who we were before He changed our hearts.**

TREASURE (2 CORINTHIANS 4:7-12)

CLAY

Paul continues to reveal God's power in creation by calling us jars of clay—created by God but not powerful alone. What God has placed inside these jars brings value and power: His Spirit.

- **God has made us the way we are so we can do the work He wants us to do. He provides the gifts, abilities, and talent to glorify Him with our lives.**

DAMAGED

Paul lived as a vessel of Christ and endured affliction, grief, persecution, and rejection. But he survived because Christ was living in him and through him.

- **God is glorified through weak vessels. Sometimes, God allows us to be shaken so that some of the treasure will spill out and be seen by others.**

SCARS

Paul had not only suffered, he had scars on his body from the price he had paid to share the gospel with the Gentiles. He was still in danger but wouldn't stop.

- **Christ didn't stop. He, too, has scars. He paid the price by dying for us. We are called to live for Him. Ministry isn't about becoming a star; it's about serving and the wounds God has healed: our scars.**

FAITH (2 CORINTHIANS 4:13-18)

CONFIDENT ATTITUDE

Paul talks about the attitude of faith that every Believer should have. It's an attitude that trusts God's Word and isn't afraid to speak.

- **Nothing closes the mouth of a Believer quicker than unbelief. If we live in faith, we will have nothing to fear from life or death because faith will give us victory over every trial.**

ULTIMATE VICTORY

After listing many of his trials and sufferings, Paul jumps to the ultimate reason for his confident attitude. Why fear anything else if Jesus had conquered death, the last enemy?

- **If we want to live this life, we need to be prepared for the next. Until we get this settled, we will live in fear. What is our answer when we think of death?**

EVEN MORE GLORY

Paul had discovered how to live with purpose. He knew his suffering would lead to more people believing in Christ and God being glorified because of it.

- **As weak vessels, we carry the message to others in word and deed. The grace of God will spread to more and more people, and God will be glorified as they follow Christ.**

RENEWED DAILY

Paul wouldn't quit. Even when his body was falling apart, his spirit was renewed DAILY.

- **We live one day at a time. No matter how gifted, no one can live two days at once. Even more, we cannot renew ourselves! Following Christ means we look to Him every day, knowing He is doing His work in us and that we are one day closer to Him than ever before!**

PERSPECTIVE

Paul had resurrection hope. The things he endured were temporary. The pain was real but wouldn't last forever. The unseen things were real too, but would last for eternity.

- **We don't live in a Christian bubble of perfection. Life is painful, and we feel it. But when we live in faith, knowing that God's plan for us is eternal life, we can see the light at the end of the tunnel.**

LIGHT

- We want to see the light.
- **We want others to see the light.**
- **Jesus is the light. He is the light that we see and the light that others should see in us. We don't try to make ourselves the light, but our transparency will allow others to see the real light within us.**

VALUE

- We know the value of Christ.
- **We believe in the value of His sacrifice.**
- **We have value because Christ chose to be a sacrifice for us. We have value because His Spirit lives in us. Can we only see ourselves? Yes, we may look like clay, but God has chosen our broken places to reveal our value.**

FOCUS

- A lot of what we see depends on where we look.
- **If all we see looks depressing and hopeless, we may not be focusing on the right things.**
- **Faith believes and sees what God reveals through His word and work. Are we looking to see Him glorified everywhere? Are we trusting Him to renew us DAILY in the middle of afflictions? Are we looking toward eternity? What kind of vessel will we be? Are we ready to focus on what the world can't see, but needs?**