

“Looking At Eternal Things”
2 Corinthians 4:8-18
10/17/21
Message 6

Introduction

- Title of the Message is: “Looking At Eternal Things”

• Review

- **We’re in the middle of a study in the book of 2 Corinthians**
 - Paul has written this letter
 - After Receiving word from Titus that the Corinthians had responded to 1 Corinthians
 - Remember - 1 Corinthians was a corrective letter –
 - They did not like being corrected – But of course who does...
 - But the Good News – Many did respond and REPENT
 - Paul is very happy to hear that MANY of the Corinthians have repented
 - Even though Paul still has some Nay Sayers in Corinth
 - Paul Writes this letter to encourage the ones that have repented to stay the course
 - His Encouragement
 - Life and ministry will be hard – BUT in Christ everything will be GREAT
 - **1st The God Of ALL Comfort**

- 2nd All The Promises Of God
- 3rd The Fragrance of Christ
- 4th From Glory To Glory
- 5th Treasure in Earthen Vessels
- **So if your keeping track...**
 - So Far GOD through Paul has said about US - believers
 - 2 Cor. 2:15 - FRAGRANCE
 - 2 Cor. 3:3 – An EPISTLE of Christ
 - 2 Cor. 3:18 – We REFLECT the GLORY of Christ
 - 2 Cor 4:7 TREASURE in EARTHEN Vessel

• **NOW before we Resume Chapter 4**

- **1st - 2 Corinthians 4 – DISPELS a LOT of Errors in The Modern Churches Thinking**
 - The Prosperity Teaching – (You're Best Life NOW)
 - If you're going through Struggles, Suffering – (TRIALS)
 - You're Outside of God's Will –
 - If you're in God's Will –
 - You will be BLESSED = (Easy Life)
 - That People are Basically Good – vs. 3-4
 - NO They Aren't – Blinded by the god of this age
 - That we can win the LOST with Carnal means

- Paul would not water down the Truth v. 2
- Burn Out IN Ministry – Paul says NEVER Quit
 - I know this can be controversial
 - BUT if your BURT OUT in Ministry Consider
 - You're NOT serving GOD
 - You're Serving Yourself or man FIRST
 - You may have wondered from the Lord
- Self Help Teaching
 - To MUCH SELF in the church is the problem
 - We need more Jesus less SELF
- We believe our Struggles are hard – BUT Paul calls them LIGHT
- **2nd NOW - Have wondered how Paul did what he did?**
 - Why he didn't give up
 - **Turn to 2 Corinthians 11:22-28**

2 Corinthians 11:22–28 (NKJV)

22 *Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I.*

23 *Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often.*

24 *From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one.*

25 *Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep;*

26 in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;
27 in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—
*28 besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: **my deep concern for all the churches.***

- **Chapter 4 Gives US insight into How Paul Persevered**

- **We will see the...**

- Character of Paul in the Ministry
- Commitment of Paul in Ministry
- Courage of Paul in Ministry

- **Last week we look at Keys to his Perseverance - **Show Slide****

- REFUSE to GIVE UP v. 1
- RENOUNCE all Deceitful Practices v. 2
- RECOGNIZE We have a REAL Enemy vs. 3-4
- REALIZE the MESSAGE we preach is Jesus Christ v. 5a
- REFLECT a HUMBLE ATTITUDE v. 5b
- REJOICE in What God has done in OUR HEARTS v. 6
- RELY Upon the Power of God v. 7

- **This Morning 6 more powerful points on how to remain STEADFAST in your Ministry**

- RESIST Being Defeated vs. 8-9
- REVEAL The Life Of The Lord Jesus vs. 10-12
- REST Upon The Promises of God vs. 13-14
- RETURN ALL The Glory To God v. 15
- RENEW The INNER MAN Each Day v. 16
- REMEMBER What Is ETERNAL vs. 17-18

RESIST Being Defeated vs. 8-9

- **First: We are hard pressed v. 8a**

2 Corinthians 4:8 (NKJV)

8 We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

- **1st This has the idea of being “HUNTED”**

- Paul was a wanted, hunted man
- WHY?! - Because of what he was for Jesus
- As we Just Read – ON EVER SIDE

Acts 23:12 (NKJV)

12 And when it was day, some of the Jews banded together and bound themselves under an oath, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.

- Paul was constantly pressed by adversaries and difficulties

- **2nd Lesson – Ministry will be HARD**

- There is a Romantic Notion that SERVING Jesus is EASY
 - That all pastors do is study God’s Word and that they have very FEW Struggles
- This is WRONG - Serving Jesus will be HARD
 - Full time ministry just means the target on your back just got larger
 - Attacks will come from ALL corners
 - Enemies – YES
 - Friends – YES
 - Family – YES
 - Christians – YES

- When you stand up for TRUTH and it rubs People the wrong way –
 - Be prepared for the Attacks – HARD PRESSED on ever SIDE

• **Second: Yet not crushed v. 8b**

2 Corinthians 4:8 (NKJV)

8 *We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;*

- **1st Paul says**
 - Living as a wanted, hunted man
 - Means terrible stress
 - Experienced every moment of the day.
- **2nd BUT God says – I GOT THIS**
 - So Paul says – Were not crushed by this stress!!!
 - He could still serve the Lord gloriously
 - We Keep MOVING forward

• **Third: Hard pressed... perplexed... persecuted... struck down v. 8c - 9**

2 Corinthians 4:8–9 (NKJV)

8 *We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;*

9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—

- **1st Paul's life was hard**
 - Perplexed, but not in despair...

- From the human standpoint Paul look at his struggles and said there is NO WAY OUT
- Paul could have backed off from his passion for Jesus, His Gospel and for the souls of MEN
 - Paul life would have become easier –
 - BUT there was NO way Paul could do that
- **2nd Paul Kept the Right Focus**
 - Jesus was EVERYTHING to Paul
 - This is WHY he could say
 - Not crushed... Not in despair... Not forsaken... Not destroyed.
 - Paul knew the power and victory of Jesus in his life

• **Fifth: Lesson**

- **1st Conflicts will NOT Defeat us**
 - Troubled on every side, yet NOT Distressed
- **2nd Confusion will NOT Discourage us**
 - We are perplexed, but not in despair
- **3rd Criticism will NOT Deter us**
 - Persecuted, but not forsaken” – NIV – “abandoned”
- **4th Casting down will NOT Destroy us**
 - Cast down, but not destroyed

REVEAL The Life Of The Lord Jesus vs. 10-12

- **First: That the LIFE of Jesus may be MANIFESTED v. 10**

2 Corinthians 4:10 (NKJV)

10 always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

- **1st Paul wanted the life of Jesus evident in him**
 - Paul knew
 - This could only happen if he DIED to SELF
 - The death of Jesus was being spiritually worked inside of him.
 - AKA –
 - There are some aspects of God's great work in our lives that only happen through trials and suffering.

Philippians 3:10 (NKJV)

10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

- The Modern Church
 - We want the POWER of Jesus
 - The Blessing of Jesus
 - The Victory of Jesus
 - WE DON'T want to HEAR anything about SUFFERING
- REMEMBER
 - There are certain fragrances God can only release through a broken vessel
 - WE MUST BE BROKEN if we are to be used BY GOD

- Illustration
 - Gideons Broken POTS

• **Second: Always delivered to death... death is working in us vs. 11-12**

2 Corinthians 4:11–12 (NKJV)

11 *For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.*

12 *So then death is working in us, but life in you.*

- **1st Spiritual Richness Came through Suffering**
 - Simple – Suffering produces Spiritual Richness
 - God made Paul
 - More effective in ministry through his suffering.
 - Illustration –
 - G. Campbell Morgan tells the story of a great young preacher who was impressive early in his ministry. Once he had the young man to speak at his church, and after the sermon Morgan asked his wife, “Wasn’t that wonderful?” She quietly replied, “Yes, but it will be more wonderful when he has suffered.” Morgan adds: “Well, he suffered, and it was more powerful.”
 - **Wiersbe: “The test of a true ministry is not stars, but scars”**

Galatians 6:17 (NKJV)

17 *From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.*

- **2nd Death in us, but life in you:**
 - Here is the irony.

- The Corinthian Christians despised Paul because of his great sufferings
- That Paul was SOMEHOW doing ministry Wrong because he was suffering
- They did not see that their lives of victory were only possible because God made Paul such an effective servant through suffering.

REST Upon The Promises of God vs. 13-14

• First: We also believe and therefore speak v. 13

2 Corinthians 4:13 (NKJV)

13 *And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, “I believed and therefore I spoke,” we also believe and therefore speak,*

- Paul KNEW That God had a purpose in his death-like sufferings!!!
- Paul is quoting Psalm 116:10
 - A psalm about someone facing death.
 - The verses just before this are:

Psalm 116:8–10 (NKJV)

8 *For You have delivered my soul from death, My eyes from tears, And my feet from falling.*

9 *I will walk before the LORD In the land of the living.*

10 *I believed, therefore I spoke, “I am greatly afflicted.”*

- And then he writes, “I believed and therefore I spoke”
 - Paul had the attitude that even though he faced DEATH he would continue to Speak

• Second: The Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus v. 14

2 Corinthians 4:14 (NKJV)

14 knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you.

- **1st Paul's Confidence**

- He didn't despair in his sufferings.
 - Every death-like trial was just the Prelude to Resurrection Power.

- **2nd Jesus will also raise us up**

- Paul is confident that if God raised Jesus from the dead, that he too would be raised from the dead.
- He's not worried if he dies from all the hardships he's facing because he'll be raised one day.

RETURN All The Glory To God v. 15

- **First: THAT GRACE, having spread through the many v. 15a**

2 Corinthians 4:15 (NKJV)

15 For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

- **THAT God's GRACE would SPREAD**

- THAT ALL GLORY WOULD GO TO GOD

- **Second: May cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God v. 15b**

2 Corinthians 4:15 (NKJV)

15 For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

- **This will cause Thanksgiving to ABOUND**

- Praise of God is the goal

- **Lesson – Servant of God – Point to God**

- Illustration

- My example
- I have NEVER been more convinced that I AM NOTHING and He is everything
- All GLORY goes to HIM

RENEW The INNER MAN Each Day v. 16

- **First: Therefore we do not lose heart v. 16a**

2 Corinthians 4:16 (NKJV)

16 Therefore we do not lose heart. *Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.*

- **Even though this MINISTRY has led us to SUFFER –**

- We DO NOT LOSE HEART!!!
- We DON'T QUIT
- We HANG IN THERE
- We Have CONFIDENCE – in JESUS

- **Second: Even though our outward man is perishing v. 16b**

2 Corinthians 4:16 (NKJV)

16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, *yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.*

- **1st Even Though the OUTWARD man is Perishing**

- Not ONLY are we FACING outside persecution
- Our own bodies are starting to fail

- Second law of thermodynamics
 - Everything is going from a state of order to disorder
- Anyone want to agree with me on this?! Haha

○ **2nd Lesson**

▪ **The Body doesn't work like it used to**

- How Many
 - Look in the mirror and wonder where the person went that used to show up?
 - When you bend down to tie your shoe look for anything else that needs to be done while your down there
 - Loss of hair, hearing, eye sight, weight gain, etc...
 - Getting old is NOT for wimps
- Illustration – Pics that demonstrate this

○ **Pics - 1982 / 1988 / 1993 / 1999 / 2009 / 2019**

○ **3rd BUT the inward ... renewed day by day**

- **The outside may be decaying**
 - BUT the inside SHOULD BE getting better!!!
- **Lesson – Better or Bitter?**
 - So AS YOU are getting OLDER ARE you getting Bitter or Better?
 - This “renewal” that Paul talks about is not automatic.

- This doesn't happen for every person.
- It doesn't happen for every Christian.
- Some people get increasingly bitter with each difficulty they go through.
- Are you BEING Transformed?

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV)

18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

- That involves daily spiritual disciplines such as:
 - Waiting on God
 - Worshipping God
 - Praying
 - Studying God's Word

REMEMBER What Is ETERNAL vs. 17-18

2 Corinthians 4:17–18 (NKJV)

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,

18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

• First: Our Light Affliction

- 1st Remember Who Wrote this! - PAUL
 - Paul knew a thing or two about suffering as we read earlier
 - 2 Corinthians 11:23-28:

- Stripes
- Prisons
- Beaten
- Stoned
- Shipwrecked
- Perils of waters
- Robbers
- In perils of my own countrymen
- In perils of the Gentiles
- In perils in the city
- In perils in the wilderness
- In perils in the sea
- In perils among false brethren
- In weariness and toil
- In sleeplessness often
- In hunger and thirst
- In fasting often
- In cold and nakedness
- Those were just the physical, outward sufferings
 - What about the spiritual burdens he FACED
- Paul Said – They ARE LIGHT – WOW

○ **2nd WHY Light Affliction**

- Why is our affliction light and not heavy?
- **1st Our Affliction are light Compared to what God accomplishes in us through our affliction:**
 - A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.
- **2nd Our affliction is light compared to what others suffer.**
 - Many have it worse
 - Self-Piety is one of the worst things we can HAVE
- **3rd Our affliction is light compared to what we deserve.**
 - We deserve HELL
- **4th Our affliction is light compared to what Jesus suffered for us.**
 - What Jesus went through to bring us to HIM
- **5th Our affliction is light compared to the blessings we enjoy.**
 - We are blessed
- **6th Our affliction is light as we experience the sustaining power of God's grace.**
 - God's Got THIS
- **7th Our affliction is light when we see the glory that it leads to.**
 - Only for a MOMENT

- Heaven is coming

▪ Guzik; “It is as if Paul says, “Go ahead and get out the scale. Put all your afflictions on one side of the scale, and even put your thumb down on that side. Then let me place the weight of glory on the other side of the scale, and you will see what a light affliction you really have.”

• **Second: We do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen:**

- **1st Paul meant this especially about his own life and ministry.**
 - In the world’s eyes, Paul’s life was an incredible failure.
 - From Heaven perspective – HUGE success
 - Stop look at the things of this world – Look at heaven
- **2nd Lesson - What Are your Eyes ON**
 - I don’t want to seem unsympathetic,
 - but the reality is that no matter what we go through,
 - Even if it lasts for 100 years
 - IT is nothing compared to eternity in heaven with Jesus.
 - Where are your eyes?
 - We can choose to look at things that are “seen”.
 - Those are the things around us, our circumstances.
 - We can choose to look at things that are eternal, that are “unseen”.
 - That’s Jesus.

- That's heaven.

Hebrews 12:1–2 (NKJV)

1 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)

7 For we walk by faith, not by sight.

Closing

- Illustration
 - In old age, Pierre-Auguste Renoir (ruhn -waar) the great French painter, suffered from arthritis, which twisted and cramped his hand. Henri Matisse, his artist friend, watched sadly while Renoir, grasping a brush with only his fingertips, continued to paint, even though each movement caused stabbing pain.
 - One day, Matisse asked Renoir why he persisted in painting at the expense of such torture.
 - Renoir replied, “The pain passes, but the beauty remains.”
 - He had his eyes on something other than his pain.
 - He saw the goal