

DO NOT LOSE HEART, PRESS ON JOYFULLY

AUGUST 28, 2022

WORSHIP

Christ Our Hope in Life and Death, This Is the Day, Amazing God, We Praise You, Great is Thy Faithfulness, Never Once/How Great is Our God, We Have Overcomes

WELCOME

Have you been losing heart lately? What is it that you need to hear from God for you to be strengthened and have renewed hope?

WORD

2 CORINTHIANS 4:16-18, 5:14-15

¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, ¹⁸ while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal...

¹⁴ For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; ¹⁵ and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

Have you ever felt like giving up? Have you felt like losing heart? Many of us have that experience. When your heart begins to grow cold, you lose interest, you stop trying, and you want to give up. In fact, Satan wants to amplify problems and minimize the power of God in our lives.

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The Bible tells us in **Galatians 6:9**, that we should “**not lose heart in doing good**” because we will “**reap if we do not grow weary**”. Some even lose heart with God or the church. How do we fight this? We look into this through a simple picture – **P.A.L.M.** We will see all of these in **2 Corinthians 4** and **5**. We are in the palm of God’s hand. How can this assurance help us to press on and persevere?

If ever there is somebody who encountered serious problems, it was the Apostle Paul.

2 Corinthians 11:23-27 describes what Paul had to go through for the ministry – imprisonments, beatings, lashes, stoning, shipwrecks, dangerous journey – if ever there is somebody who would be discouraged, it should be Paul!

But what made Paul different?

1. PERSPECTIVE

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 shows us that Paul was very realistic. He understood that physical pain is real, and bodies do decay and people lose heart. Yet his perspective was that he was being renewed – therefore he sees these experiences as “momentary light afflictions”, in contrast to the “eternal weight of glory”. His perspective was that if you live for God, it is going to produce an amazing weight of glory – it is never a waste!

He points out the difference of temporal and eternal things. Educate your perspective! Sometimes, you don’t see the whole thing. Sometimes, success blinds us. We focus on the NOW, but Paul’s perspective was eternal.

In **2 Corinthians 5:1-5** Paul talks about the “earthly tent” – his own body. It is a temporal abode, and he contrasts it with “a building from God” – to describe eternal life. In this body we will groan and go through pain. Paul was very sure of his future – when his body passes away, immortality will take over. Paul is telling all of us that we can all be sure of our future “superbody”.

Having the Holy Spirit as a guarantee, our perspective in life will be very different. **1 Corinthians 15:52-54** is a great comfort – this mortal body is perishable, but with the right perspective, we can be victorious over pain, fear, and look forward to that amazing transformation in eternity! Paul’s conclusion in **2 Corinthians 5:6-8** points to Paul’s steady, dependable courage – as we “**walk by faith and not by sight**”, we experience this strength and power through the presence of God. **1 John 3:2** says that when Jesus comes again and we meet Him face to face, we will be like Him – have a real and immortal body that can eat, taste, but never grows old or sick!

2. ACCOUNTABILITY

Paul’s goal was to be PLEASING TO GOD (**2 Corinthians 5:9-10**). What is your ambition? Is it power? Is it riches? The most important

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ambition we should all have is to BE PLEASING TO GOD. Once you realize who you are serving, you will have greater passion. If your commitment is to make God happy, you will act differently because we know that we will face God’s judgment! One day all of us will stand accountable, each one “**may be recompensed**” – to be reimbursed. Sometimes we are discouraged because serving seems to be a thankless job. But God will recompense us one day!

SALVATION VS. REWARDS

SALVATION	REWARDS
Grace	Works
Free Gift	Earned by faithful service
What Christ did on the Cross for us	What we do for Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit
Present	Future
Same among believers	Different among believers
His Faithfulness	Our faithfulness

In **Matthew 25:21**, Jesus shared a story of a master rewarding a faithful slave. In **Luke 19:16-19** we see a similar example where the master rewards the faithfulness of the slaves by entrusting greater things! Jesus does not have to promise anything to us, He does not have to reward us, but He did both. He assures us that He will be with us and sustain us through the journey.

3. LOVE

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 mentions that the love of Christ controls us. We can press on because of this great love. The strongest motivation in life is really LOVE. It is what controls us. Paul is a man of gratitude. Do we know what Christ did for us? He loved us so much that He gave His life for us! When Peter denied Jesus three times, how did Jesus restore him? He spoke to Peter and asked him three times – DO YOU LOVE ME? The only way for us to not lose heart and press on is when we love Jesus. We will only love Him if we realize how great His love is for you and me!

4. MISSION

Lastly, the Apostle Paul was pressing on because of his clear mission. In **2 Corinthians 5:20**, he reminds the people that they are all **AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST**. Ambassador is the highest political position you can ever have in a foreign country; you represent the king or the president; you represent the entire country in that foreign place. What message do we need to carry? You need to speak about the greatest gift for all people – RECONCILIATION WITH GOD.

Once, the Christian movement lost a great opportunity when the great land of the Mongolian Empire because Christianity failed to deliver the amazing gospel – God loves them, God is willing to forgive them, and God is willing to assure them of eternity with Him! We need to offer this message of reconciliation with God. **1 Corinthians 2:9** assures us of great things unseen, unheard, and unimagined – God prepared those for all who LOVE HIM. But if people are not reconciled to God, **2 Thessalonians 1:7-10** tells us that they will face justice and retribution, to pay the penalty of eternal destruction! Will you surrender your rebellious heart and recognize Jesus as the King of kings and the Lord of lords? May we all access that amazing future through this reconciliation with God!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

What kind of perspectives do you have about suffering, pain, and problems?

2. Setting It Right.

How do you develop the right kind of perspectives on death, judgment, and accountability?

3. Living It Out.

What should you do about your perspective on God’s mission for you?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for people have lost heart to hear about God’s eternal plan for their lives. Show them how much Jesus cares for them by reaching to them by praying for them and with them, share God’s promises of strength, restoration, forgiveness and healing to them. Share the gospel of hope to family and friends as we celebrate God’s great power and faithfulness to the CCF family for the past 38 years!

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done for the past 38 years of the CCF Movement, and what He will do in our lives and our church family.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- For the Russian invasion of Ukraine to end; peace and order be restored, lives spared. Russian and Ukrainian soldiers, families, leaders to turn to Christ; refugees be given safe passage into surrounding nations.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends

MEMORY VERSE

2 CORINTHIANS 4:16

Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.