



Why is the Christian life so hard? Pastor leads his family in today's "Hopewell @Home" passage. 2Corinthians 4:8–18 prepares us for the first part of the morning worship service on the coming Lord's Day. In these eleven verses of Sacred Scripture, we learn that our troubles and ongoing weakness make it plain that all of the good that comes out from us in the midst of it is only from Jesus. By using this means to fit us for eternally weighty glory, and bring us into eternally weighty glory, Jesus is much glorified in our lives. How blessed, then, is the usefulness of our many troubles and increasing neediness!

Tuesday, June 1, 2021 • Read 2Corinthians 4:8–18

Questions from the Scripture text: What four things have happened to the apostle and his companions in vv8-9? What four accompanying results have not ended up happening? What are they carrying about (v10)? How often? For what reason—what does this display in them? What are they currently doing (v11a)? But what is always happening to them? What does this display in their mortal flesh (v11b, cf. 1:8-10)? In whom else, then, does the life of Jesus operate (v12)? What do those who believe do (v13)? What will He who raised up the Lord Jesus also do (v14)? Why does God save so many by grace (v15)? What do we not lose (v16)? What is perishing? What is being renewed day by day? What kind of affliction do we have (v17)? For how long? What is it working for us? How much and for how long? What do we look at (v18)? What is the difference in how long the seen lasts vs. how long the unseen lasts?

Next week's Call to Worship, Prayer for Help, Song of Adoration, and Prayer of Confession all come from 2Cor 4:8–18, so that we will see that we are singing God's thoughts after Him with *My Faith Looks up to Thee*.

In the first part of this chapter, the apostle defends a plain, biblical ministry by the fact that this is the kind of ministry through which the Lord reveals His glory to and in the hearts of believers. And he concludes in v7 that our being earthen vessels ensures that the power of the glory will obviously belong only and all to God.

Well, that's something that continues for the rest of the Christian life: many, various troubles and trials, so that as the Lord sustains us through them all, it will be plain that whatever is happening in our lives is His glorious work (v8–9).

We have a Savior Who suffered and died, and we too suffer as we proceed toward our death in this life (v10a, 11a). But, just as He has risen from the dead, it is His resurrection and not our impending death that drives how we go through our troubles (v10b, 11b).

And now he brings this reasoning back to his ministry: he doesn't try to appear as anything more than a mortal man (v12a), because God Himself will employ such a ministry to produce resurrection life in the Corinthians themselves (v12b). So we live as those who depend upon Him to save us by faith (v13a), and we speak as those who depend upon Him to use it by faith (v13b). We expect God to get all the glory, as He presents us all rejoicing and giving thanks (v14–15).

As in ministry, so also in death. We are afflicted for a while now, and we will die. But how eternal and how weighty is the glory that this affliction and death brings us to (v17)! So, we are encouraged and invigorated by being pushed into increasing dependence upon Him (v16), looking forward to a glory that can only be "seen" by faith (v18).

Whether in conversion, throughout life, in the ministry, or facing death, this is our creed: my faith looks up to Thee, Thou Lamb of Calvary!

In what ways are you feeling your weakness and mortality? How does this glorify God?

Suggested songs: ARP46 "God Is Our Refuge and Our Strength" or TPH466 "My Faith Looks up to Thee"

For more Hopewell @Home devotionals, please visit bit.ly/harpCHAH

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

Second Corinthians 4 verses 8 through 18, these are God's words. We are hard pressed on every side yet not crossed. We are perplexed but not in despair. Persecuted but not forsaken. Struck down, but not destroyed. Always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. That the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus's sake. That the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our marbles. So then death is working in us but life in you. And since we have the same spirit of faith. According to what was written. I believed and therefore I spoke.

We also believed and therefore speak. Knowing that he who raised up the Lord Jesus. We'll also raise up up with Jesus and will present us with you. For all things are for your sakes. So that grace having spread through the many may cause Thanksgiving to a bound. To the glory of God.

Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing. Yet the inward man is being renewed today by day. For our light affliction, which is bucked for a moment is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Well we do not look at the things of our scene.

But at the things that are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary. But the things which are not seen or eternal.

So the apostle. Has just finished saying that he needs God to do the work through his ministry. And now he gives us a reminder. That the way our bodies work and the way our circumstances work in this life continually reminds us that we need Jesus to be the one who is ultimately doing the work in each of our lives.

And so he gives an example of this circumstances so circumstances are. Hard-pressed perplexed persecuted struck down always being delivered to death. This is not how you sell something he's sell somebody well if you take our product or join our group, you will get to be hard pressed perplexed persecuted struck down and always being delivered to that.

But the apostle Paul here is saying it just the same thing that Jesus did didn't he said if you want to follow me you're gonna have to take up a cross every day. And the cross was not yeah a lyric in a pop Christian song at the time up until that point the only thing they had known cross has were the most gruesome torchless painful way to die in the history of mankind.

And Jesus said yep your circumstances are gonna be like that on a daily basis if you follow me. And Paul says yep, our circumstances are like that on a daily basis but. We are earth and vessels and part of the earth been this is not only our bodies and our weakness but also our circumstances.

But in them the excellence of the power of God in Jesus Christ is displayed, so we are hard pressed yet not crushed. We are perplexed don't know what to do. But not in despair don't get depressed about not knowing what to do or give a pope. Persecuted. There are lots of people who do what they can to make things hard for us and hurt us.

But not forsaken there's one divine person who makes all things work together for our good and he doesn't leave us alone or abandon us. Struck down. Even went to death. But not destroyed if they kill the body what do they do but accelerate your sanctification and send you into perfect happiness?

Always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus that. The life of Jesus may also be manifested in our body. The fact that we are full of hope and growing in grace and glad to serve and not despairing and so forth. All those things are display of a life and power that doesn't come from us.

And it's precisely the difficulty in pain of our circumstances and our own personal weakness. That shows that this power doesn't come from us and it is a great power because it cannot be overcome by our circumstances. And so the apostle says, That the way we go through difficulty in the Christian life has something in common with the way he preaches.

He preaches in a plain way and God does great miracles through it so that it will be displayed that the glory is of God and the power of the saving is of God. And how we go through difficulties by faith not despairing clinging to Christ expecting that the difficulties will come so that his glory will be shown.

Those things also show that the power and the glory is from him because since we have the same spirit of faith according to what it is what is written I believed and therefore I spoke we also believed and therefore speak says our speaking is out of trust in Jesus.

And even if. We end up being killed for it or whatever hardship comes to us for it or whatever people say about how crazy we are unimpressive as speakers or whatever. God is gonna work by resurrection power in you through that speaking and so we're glad for whatever comes to us.

He says knowing that he who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus and we'll present us with you. He says, I don't get to stand with the persecutors in the last day on the last day when we were raised up. I'll get to get to stand with you and everyone will see what Jesus has done with you.

And in you and I will get to know that he actually used my ministry to do some of that. And that's what's going to matter. The suffering is temporary and light. The glory is forever and weighty. And the suffering now is actually bringing about the glory. So, I wouldn't we be thankful even for the suffering.

Which is for all things or for your sakes. The grace having spread through the many may cause Thanksgiving to abound glory of God. Therefore, we do not lose heart even though our outward minisparaging yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. Every single day the calm pray for the help of God and we do the things that God says he'll work through and we trust him that he is the one who was working through them and every single day as we walk with him by faith if we walk with him faith.

We'll be growing and faith and grace enjoying that inwardly being renewed. For our light affliction, which is bought from a moment is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we do not look at the things which are seen we can't see the last day yet, we can't see the resurrection yet.

We can't even see what we are going to be like on that day. But. We are looking to those things. We see what do we see? We see our weakness we see how much we still need to be sanctified. We see the difficulty of our circumstances. We see the troubles that come upon us is look at all those things.

I look at the things that I can't see. It's kind of like a holy. Pun or dad joke as if Christians are people who look at what you can't see. They look at the last day. They look at the things that learned to period. That's the essence of faith.

The book of Hebrews tells us. For the things which are seen or temporary. That the things which are not seen. Are eternal so we need to look by faith we need to live for that which is eternal and when we have difficulty or weakness or persecution or hardship. Or all the things that Scripture told us to expect.

We need to see that they are actually the means by which God is working in us and for us an eternal weight of glory and look to him by faith and be thankful even for and in the circumstances. That's great.

Lord help us to live by a faith that looks to Jesus. We thank you that we are weak and we are often in difficulty because this helps us. Lose any confidence that we would have had in ourselves. Or any dependence upon and delight in current circumstances. We pray that you would make us to.

Look to that which is unseen. To depend entirely upon you have our confidence entirely in you and live for that eternal weight of glory that you are have earned for us and that you are working in and for us. Help us to live by faith we pray with pray that you would.

Help us all to be more regular and continual in our continual prayer life more regular in our. Set times of private prayer family workshop. That we may have this faith strengthened and those moments and activities in which you give us especially to look to that which is unseen. So we pray that you keep helping us now even as we.

Finish in the singing that you would stir up our hearts to look to Christ by faith. Yes in his name and then.