



Part 7: Secrets of Staying Power *2 Cor. 4*

“...we do not lose heart.” 2 Cor 4:1 (NIV)

“...we don’t give up and quit.” 2 Cor 4:8 (NLT)

“...we do not lose heart.” 2 Cor 4:16 (NIV)

“...we’re not about to throw up our hands and walk off the job just because we run into occasional hard times.” 2 Cor 4:1 (Message)

One of the essential qualities for success in the Christian life is persistence. Paul was a man of amazing endurance! In this passage, Paul shares his...

Four secrets of staying power:

1. I fail, but _____ (v. 1-6)

“Therefore, since **through God’s mercy** we have this ministry, we do not lose heart.”

“Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God. And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For **we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord**, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake.”

2. I’m weak, but _____ (v. 7)

“But we have this **treasure in jars of clay** to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.”

3. I struggle, but _____ (v. 8-12)

“We are hard pressed on every side, **but not crushed**; perplexed, **but not in despair**; persecuted, **but not abandoned**; struck down, **but not destroyed**. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body. So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.”

4. I can’t see it, but _____

Four things Paul is looking forward to about his future:

• **Future** _____

“It is written: ‘I believed; therefore I have spoken.’ With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence.” v. 13,14

• **People** _____

“All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.” v. 15

• **Inward** _____

“Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.” v. 16

• **Heavenly** _____

“For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.” v. 17

“So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.” v. 18

Daily Meditations

Here’s a chance to spend some time each day this week meditating on today’s topic!

This week’s memory verse: “So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.” 2 Cor. 4:18

Monday

Read 2 Cor. 4. Think back over last weekend’s sermon. What encouraged you most? Why?

How does this passage help you cope with your present difficulties and anxieties?

Write down the name of two people you can encourage with the truths you learned last weekend.

Thank God today for His power and presence in your life. Thank Him for His mercy and love. Ask Him to help you daily live a life that is confident and dependent on Him.

Tuesday

Read 2 Cor. 4:1-6. How did Paul receive his ministry? How does that impact the way he conducts his ministry?

What do you learn from Paul about sharing your faith? What should be your emphasis when you share the Gospel?

When have you seen the light of Christ shine in the darkness? What impact did that have on you?

What opportunities do have in front of you to be Christ's light in darkness?

Thank God today for the light of His truth. Thank Him for His mercy. Ask to give you boldness in sharing your faith and pray that the light of Christ in you will attract those around you to Him.

Wednesday

Read 2 Cor. 4:7-12. What is the treasure we have? Why do you think "jar of clay" is a good way to describe people? When do you most feel like a "jar of clay"?

Reread verses 8-9. How can you relate? How have you seen God work through times when you felt crushed, perplexed, persecuted and struck down? How do these verses encourage you?

What value did Paul see in his sufferings? How can you relate to that?

How does Paul's struggles (and yours!) show God's power and Jesus' life?

Thank God today that He redeems the difficulties in your life. Talk to Him about the ways you feel crushed and struck down. Ask Him for a real sense of His presence with you today.

Thursday

Read 2 Cor. 4:13-16. What truths keep Paul going in spite of his hardships? Why does God allow Paul to go through them? How does this encourage you?

How has suffering in your life produced an opportunity for God's grace to shine?

What truths proceed the "Therefore we do not lose heart"? How does it connect to not losing heart?

Thank God today for His power. Thank Him for His grace. Pray that you will have perseverance in trouble and confidence in God's power to work in you and sustain you.

Friday

Read 2 Cor. 4:16-18. These must be some of the most encouraging verses in the Bible! How can you be "outwardly wasting away, but inwardly renewed day by day"? How have you seen this in your life?

Troubles certainly do not feel light and momentary at the time. What is it that can make the troubles feel that way?

What makes it difficult for you to fix your eyes on God? What is the main benefit of the unseen? Write down a few of the "unseen things" in your life.

Thank God today that the best of life is yet to come. Ask Him to give you eternal "eyesight". Pray that you will be an encouragement to those in your life with the truths you have learned this week.

Saturday

Review any devotions you may have missed and memorize that verse on page two! Please pray for this weekend's service. Thanks!