

Spiritual Growth Questions for April 5, 2020

(take one question each day and grow deeper in Bible study)

Opener: Share about a time when you experienced a wide range of emotions. For example grief and joy at the same time. Describe how God helped you through.

1. **Read 2 Corinthians 4:6-9 two times.** What words are important? What range of experiences did you notice? How can both be true? What principles does this passage teach us? What stands out to you from these verses?
2. **Read 2 Corinthians 10-12 two times.** What words are important? What principle is Paul trying to teach the Corinthians? How does it present Jesus? What stands out to you? How could it apply to the current trials you are facing? Who could you share these truths with this week?
3. **Read 2 Corinthians 4:13-15.** What stands out to you? What words are important? What does this passage teach about Jesus? How could this passage help you in your trials? Who could benefit from hearing this truth from you?
4. **Read 2 Corinthians 4:16-18.** What truths does this passage teach? What stands out to you? How could this passage help you face your trials? Who could you share these encouraging words with this week?
5. **Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-9.** What stands out to from the apostle Pauls' experience? What could be helpful to you during these times? Who could you share these insights with this week?
6. **Read Psalm 91.** What do you find helpful from this passage?
7. **Read Psalm 121.** Write down how the psalmist uses the word "help" and "keep" in the ESV version. What application could you make for this psalm.

Memory Verses: 2 Corinthians 4:17 For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, 18 as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

2 Corinthians 1:9 Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.

On Mission During a Pandemic
Discouraged yet Encouraged
April 5, 2020
Pastor John Lloyd

The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted our lives in unprecedented ways. Although unchartered waters, how can we seek God's help at this time? How can we point others to the help we have found in Jesus? How can we Live Sent during a pandemic? How can we move forward when we may be feeling a range of emotions every day?

2 Corinthians 4:7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. 8 We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; 10 always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. 11 For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 12 So death is at work in us, but life in you. 13 Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, "I believed, and so I spoke," we also believe, and so we also speak, 14 knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. 15 For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God. 16 So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.

Memory Verses: 17 For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, 18 as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

2 Corinthians 1:8 For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. 9 Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.

Key Question: How can I navigate through these challenging times?

Key Idea: The resurrected Christ gives us power and life to face adversities.

Background on Corinth: 1. Rugged individualism valued self-sufficiency. 2 Wealth was a key to status. 3. There was a self-display of one's own accomplishments and possessions. 4. A competition for honor viewed boasting as a natural corollary. 5. A pride in one's neighborhood was a reflection of one's social location. This created a populace for which self-appreciation became the goal and self-gratification the reward. The church had a difficult time in the world but not of the world. Scott Hafeman

I. The _____ of God is the foundation for ministry.

2 Corinthians 4:1 Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we *do not lose heart*. 2 But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. 3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. 4 In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 5 For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Mercy keeps us from losing heart,
Mercy generated motives keep us serving.
Mercy keeps us seeing the glory of Jesus.

Further study: I Corinthians 15:9-10, Titus 3:5, Lamentations 3:22-23

God's mercy shown through Jesus keeps us from losing heart!

II. God is always teaching me two things: I am weak and He is _____.

2 Corinthians 4:7 But we have *this treasure in jars of clay*, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. 8 We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; (2 Corinthians 1:8-9)

What Paul learned is that God could rescue him. God rescuing him in the past gave him confidence that God would rescue him in the future.

2 Corinthians 4:10 always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. 11 For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 12 So death is at work in us, but life in you.

Two principles: 1. continual dying to self 2. continual life from Jesus
Theology of the cross and the theology of glory are complementary.

Further study: Lamentations 4:2, 2 Corinthians 12:9-10, Psalm 16:10, I Chronicles 28:20, 2 Corinthians 6:11-13, 7:2

Let our weakness move us to depend on God's strength.

III. Seeing God's _____ in the past gives me strength in the present.

2 Corinthians 4:13 Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, "I believed, and so I spoke," we also believe, and so we also speak, 14 knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. 15 For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

Vs. 14 Knowing that –

The cross of Jesus tells why we must suffer.
The resurrection of Jesus gives us confident hope needed to persevere as we suffer.

Further study: Romans 8:28, Hebrews 11:1, 6, 13-14, Psalm 116:10

**The more people who experience this amazing grace,
the more thanks we can give to God.**

IV. _____ perspective keeps us growing in all circumstances.

2 Corinthians 4:16 So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. 17 For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, 18 as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

We do not lose heart- the rejection Paul is experiencing, suffering he must endure and the death he is facing.

Vs. 17 Light/momentary affliction –
Vs. 17 Eternal weight of glory –

The very trials that were meant to destroy Paul became the avenues God used to reveal the glory of His presence and power in his life inwardly.

Stopped focusing on seen things- didn't neglect them
Started focusing on unseen things- seen things cannot compare to unseen
Our hearts are actually strengthened by what we can't see.

"Future grace comes from looking what I cannot see." John Piper

Further study: 2 Corinthians 11:23-33, Romans 8:18, Romans 8:37-39, I Peter 1:6-7, 2 Corinthians 5:7

Seeing the bigger picture gives me stability and strength to carry on.