

LESSON 7: 2 CORINTHIANS 4:1-18

The Glorious Ministry of the Spirit (Review!)

1. What are the key words that are repeated in 3:7-11? What is being compared here? What point is Paul making, especially concerning his contrasts of “glory” then and now (vv. 10-11)? How is ministry more glorious under the New Covenant than under the Old?
2. Why are we bold (v. 12)? How is your boldness to be exhibited?
3. “We are not like Moses,” Paul writes in verse 13, “who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away.” (See Exodus 34:29:35.) In what way does the veil remain when the old covenant is read? In what way is it taken away (v. 14)?
4. “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom,” Paul writes in verse 17. In what way is this so? How free are you and what are you free to do?
5. What does verse 18 tell you about the goal of your life? What evidence do you see of this glorious transformation?

Treasure in Earthen Vessels

1. Of what “ministry” is Paul speaking in verse 1 (see 3:6). In verse 2, what are the practices of evangelists who discredit the gospel? How may Paul’s ministry be seen in contrast? How do “we commend ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God”? Must we be as careful today as Paul was then? Why?

2. What do you think Paul means in verse 4 when he writes, “And even if our gospel is veiled...”? How so, and in what way? Examine and explain the phrase “the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.” What then is preached in the right preaching of the gospel (v. 5)? What forces are behind those who accept and those who reject the gospel? What dangers do you see in the world today?

3. Can you relate Paul's statement in verse 6 that God “made his light shine in our hearts” to his conversion experience as he recounts it in Acts 26:12-18? What does it mean to you that you have been given the “light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ”? How does this effect your daily walk of life?

4. “But we have this treasure in jars of clay (v. 7). Why has the gospel been allowed to be proclaimed by weak, common vessels?

5. What is Paul’s point in verses 8-9? How can you as a believer be troubled on all sides and yet not be distressed? What is Paul’s answer in verses 10-11?

6. How does the experience of “always being given over to death for Jesus’ sake” allow the life of Christ to be revealed in our mortal bodies (vv. 11-12)? What is Paul saying to you? How are you related to the life of Jesus, and how is that life to be manifested in you?

7. In verse 12, Paul writes “I believed, therefore I have spoken.” What point is he making in this and the following two verses?

8. “Therefore we do not lose heart,” Paul writes in verse 16. On what basis does he say this? On what basis can we ourselves affirm it?

9. In verses 17-18 Paul sets forth a powerful principle for Christian life. What is it? Do you understand your life in this way? How does that understanding impact your daily walk?