

Do Not Lose Heart

Daily Devotional - Concord church of Christ - May 15, 2020
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Paul sent the Corinthian church multiple letters that include strict discipline, pointed instructions, and strong warnings. However, there are also parts expressing hope, rejoicing, and encouragement. One part that is especially encouraging to me is 2 Corinthians 4:7-18, often titled: **Treasure in Jars of Clay**.

*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.*

Our current situation continues to create challenges for us in light of what we once called “normal life”. For some it’s causing hardship and suffering much like Paul describes. For others it’s a terrible case of cabin fever. Blaise Pascal, the French mathematician, said, “All men’s miseries derive from not being able to sit in a quiet room alone.” After a few months of quarantine, I believe we can relate to what Mr. Pascal was alluding to (or we’re really wanting our room to be quiet).

Whatever level of challenge you are facing, reread the previous section with the perspective of the race that we are running. Focus on each time Paul says “but not”. We may be in hard times, **but not** separated from our God (Rom 8:38-39). Paul also adds encouragement by reminding us that through Jesus’ resurrection we have confidence of the same.

*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.*

So, for whatever the days ahead may hold, listen carefully to Paul’s encouragement at the end of this section.

*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.*

During this time do not lose heart. We may be isolated, **but not** alone. We may be quarantined, **but not** separated from God. Whatever trouble that is currently in sight, remember we are looking forward to that which is unseen, that which is eternal.