

Not Disheartened

2 Corinthians 4



Becoming Disheartened

When might people become disheartened?

How might following Jesus make us disheartened?

It seems: "If we're living as God asks us to, and if God is good, and if God answers prayer, this life shouldn't be so challenging!"

What are we to do when life in Jesus is still pretty disheartening?

2 Corinthians 4

Paul will say:

- Following God can be disheartening so we can be tempted to find easier roads
- But God brings His Light into our darkness
- God puts His goodness into our troubles (like treasure into clay pots) as it was for Jesus: death brought life
- So by faith we are inwardly strengthened, to the praise of God in future glory



Death of Jesus

hard pressed, perplexed, persecuted, struck down
BECAUSE of the Gospel

Life of Jesus

Not destroyed, fruit of Spirit, fruitful ministry, hope, perseverance
Then resurrection to glory

What is seen → What is obvious now

What is unseen

What is not obvious now
What will be true after death



The Big Idea

Living out our relationship with Christ can be disheartening

By God's design as we live in the Gospel...

we live in weakness and trouble
with inner renewal today
for future eternal glory

This is the nature of true discipleship

What are we to do?

Do not lose heart → be zealous

Fix our eyes on the unseen

Today: inward renewal by the Spirit

Future: overwhelming glory with Christ

Follow Jesus by faith

Philippians 2:5-8: have the same mindset as Christ Jesus

Jesus taught: If we aren't experiencing challenge BECAUSE OF the Gospel, we must ask if we are truly living according to it

Death of Jesus

Jesus made himself nothing, living as a servant, even to death

Life of Jesus

Glorious transforming presence in trouble

Then joining in His glory in paradise forever!

Reflection Questions for later today or this week...

1. What do you find to be disheartening in life?
2. What do you find to be disheartening in following Jesus?
3. What is your reaction to the idea that, by God's design, those who live in the Gospel live in weakness and in trouble?
4. How do you experience the inner renewal of the Spirit, even amid the troubles of life? What is our role in this inner renewal by the Spirit?
5. What about future glory in Christ is exciting and motivating to you?
6. What does it look like to "keep our spiritual zeal," even in the troubles of life?

Conversation starters this week

What do you find to be disheartening?

Where do you find hope?