**2 Corinthians 4-6**

Today’s Summary: Paul reminds us today of how much he had to suffer for doing God’s work – spreading the Gospel and Good News of Jesus to the world. And yet, he considered nothing compared to how much he loved Christ and how much he KNEW, without a doubt, that this life is short and he eagerly awaited his resurrection body and to be reunited with Christ. It is such a sobering reminder of why we are here and how we are to live. After you listen to this, please make some time today to BE STILL and ask your Father how you need to suffer more for His Name’s Sake and spreading the Gospel. Or where you need to be more bold and preach His Good News even more, if he is being merciful and protecting you from persecution or hardship.

Present Weakness and Resurrection Life

**4**Therefore, since through God’s mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. **2**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 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**The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. **5**For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake. **6**For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God’s glory displayed in the face of Christ.

**7**But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. **8**We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; **9**persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. **10**We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. **11**For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. **12**So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

**13**It is written: “I believed; therefore I have spoken.” Since we have that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak, **14**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 to himself. **15**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.**

**16**Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. **17**For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. **18**So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Awaiting the New Body

**5**For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. **2**Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, **3**because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. **4**For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. **5**Now the one who has fashioned us for this very purpose is God, who has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

**6**Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. **7**For we live by faith, not by sight. **8**We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. **9**So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. **10**For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

The Ministry of Reconciliation

**11Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others.** What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. **12**We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. **13**If we are “out of our mind,” as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. **14**For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. **15**And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

**16**So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. **17**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! **18**All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: **19**that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. **20**We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. **21**God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

**6**As God’s co-workers we urge you not to receive God’s grace in vain. **2**For he says, “In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.”I tell you, now is the time of God’s favor, now is the day of salvation.

Paul’s Hardships

**3**We put no stumbling block in anyone’s path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. **4**Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; **5**in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; **6**in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; **7**in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; **8**through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; **9**known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; **10**sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

**11**We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians, and opened wide our hearts to you. **12**We are not withholding our affection from you, but you are withholding yours from us. **13**As a fair exchange - I speak as to my children - open wide your hearts also.

Warning Against Idolatry

**14**Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? **15**What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? **16**What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.”**17**Therefore, “Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.”**18**And, “I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”