

# Dealing with Despair

2 Corinthians 4:8-18

United Community Church, 2-24-24

Ron Burks, pastor

Truth: Everyone faces despair and feelings of desperation in life. However, the Bible teaches us that we can overcome despair by relying on God's power and His promises for us.

Every problem falls into one of three categories:

1. Problems you can control – you and your immediate family (spouse, children). Problems include physical, spiritual, relationships, financial, or life issues like job, house, car, etc.
2. Problems you can't control but you can influence – adult children, friends, relatives, co-workers, etc.
3. Problems you can neither control nor influence – catastrophic events, natural disasters, people who make bad choices that impact your life.

How those problems impact your life depends on how close they are to your inner circle (you, family, friends/relatives, others) and how you respond to those problems. The key is learning how to rely on God's power and promises by faith in your mind and choose with your will to follow Him with your heart.

## FOUR Practical Ways to Deal with Despair with God's Help

1. Believe that our treasure, God's surpassing power, fills our jars of clay, 4:7
  - Bad news – we are jars of clay human and weak.
  - Good news – we are never alone because God fills us with His presence, power, and the promise that He will supply our needs.
2. Keep our eyes on God to keep everything in perspective, 4:8-9
  - We are afflicted but not crushed
  - We are perplexed but not in despair
  - We are persecuted but not forsaken
  - We are stuck down but not destroyed
3. We must die to self so Christ can live in and through us, 4:10-15
  - God can't work in our life when we refuse to let Him
  - When we let Him work, He will use us to influence others

4. Don't lose heart, 4:16-18

- Because His Spirit lives in us
- Because God will use our trials to renew us inwardly
- Because our trials are temporary compared to eternity in heaven

BOTTOM LINE

Life is filled with problems and trials, but God uses every trial in life to make us stronger in our faith, draw us closer to Him, and use our testimony to lead others to Him.