

2 Corinthians: Chapters 3 and 4

Opening Question: How does Paul describe himself in this section of his letter?

Key Takeaways:

1. Paul is in the “we/us” group in this letter along with Timothy and Titus and describes himself as a servant of the New Covenant.
2. The “we” group who are being physically persecuted in this section includes Paul, Timothy, and Titus (4:8).
3. Paul values the eternal over the temporal, and his hope is in his own resurrection and the resurrection of those who have believed in his gospel.
4. Paul knows that He who raised Jesus from the dead will also raise him from the dead.
5. Knowing the reality of his coming resurrection and eternal life enables Paul to endure his present suffering.
6. Enduring suffering for the gospel is Paul’s way of life which he anticipates continuing until he dies and is resurrected.
7. Paul contrasts the Old and New Covenants in this section.

Discussion Questions:

1. Read aloud together 2 Corinthians chapters 3-4. What does Paul explain about the Old and New Covenants in this section and why does he include this in his letter? (Recall from the overview who the antagonists are and what they believe which is causing Paul to write.)
2. What does Paul say about his suffering in this section and why is this important for the Corinthians to understand?
3. How is Paul’s gospel meant to be an encouragement to his original audience to endure until Christ’s return? How is this the same encouragement to us today?

Practical Application:

1. Re-read or listen to 2 Corinthians which will take about 40 minutes. Explain what Paul is saying in chapters 1-4. How do each of these sections contribute to the reason Paul is writing this letter?
2. From what Paul is saying in this section, identify what the antagonists are promoting that Paul opposes, causing him to write?
3. Why does Paul follow the section of his suffering with the truth of Christ's resurrection and his own resurrection within a few sentences? How does Paul's relate temporal suffering to eternal glory and how can this truth encourage you in your faith?

Closing Prayer:

Father, Thank You for the knowledge that we will suffer in this life as faithful ministers of Your truth. Thank You for our future with Jesus at His return. Thank You for Paul's words which You have given to encourage and strengthen us as we wait in hope for Jesus' return and our own resurrection. Amen.