

Calvary Chapel of El Cajon Women's Bible Studies

2 Corinthians 4

Lesson 5

In this chapter Paul opens his heart and shares with us what it means to him to be a minister of the gospel. This chapter will challenge you and comfort you as you consider the one who acted on what he believed *not looking at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.*

DAYS ONE and TWO: Read 2 Corinthians 4

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheets and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they were about?
 - a. Chapter 4 of 2 Corinthians has been divided into three paragraph divisions. List below the subject(s) covered in each section.

Verses 1-6

Verses 7-15

Verses 16-18

How would you title each section? Record your titles on the **Chapter & Paragraph Division Titles Chart** provided with your Observation Worksheet. Now record a title for the fourth chapter of 2 Corinthians.

2. At the right-hand side of the same chart are columns labeled **Key Word** and **Symbol**. They have been provided for you to record the key words and the symbol you have chosen to represent each one. Record the key words listed below and their symbols on the chart.

God, Jesus, and Paul/we

Now, using the symbols you have chosen, mark each of the key words each time they are used in 2 Corinthians 4. Remember, as you mark the key words to mark any personal pronouns that refer to them. You do not need to mark every word that refers to them - only those that you feel are significant.

Challenge: Choose, mark and make a list of another key word.

2. 2 Corinthians 4:3,4 speaks of the *veiling of the gospel*. Describe those to whom the *gospel* may be *veiled*.
 - a. Why do they not *believe*?

3. How is Jesus described in verse 4?
 - a. How much of an exact likeness of God is Jesus? See John 12:45.

 - b. We can look at Jesus Christ and know exactly what God is like. How does this help you better understand the "God of the Old Testament"?

4. Paul used the creation event of commanding *light to shine out of darkness* as a prelude to describing what event in our hearts? verse 6
 - a. Why has He *shone in our hearts*?

 - b. Read Luke 1:79 and record what it says about why Jesus came?
 - 1.) How have you personally experienced this?

DAY FOUR: Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-15

1. *But we have this treasure* (God shining in our hearts) *in earthen vessels...* Why? 2 Corinthians 4:7
 - a. Who does the glory of winning souls belong to?

2. Record the contrasts in verses 8,9 by filling in the blanks.

We are _____ *on every side, yet* _____;

We are _____, *but* _____;

_____, *but* _____;

_____, *but* _____ --

- a. What hope do these verses give you when you are feeling *pressed on every side, perplexed, persecuted or struck down*?

Challenge: Verse 10 begins with the words *always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus*. Explain the meaning of verse 10 by using verses 11 and 12.

3. Paul claimed that he preached because he had the same kind of faith that the psalmist had (verse 13). Paul was quoting from Psalm 116 when he wrote *I believed and therefore I spoke*. In this psalm we discover that the psalmist, like Paul, had been delivered from great trouble and sorrow. How has experiencing God's deliverance in trouble increased your faith?

- a. What is to be the action that follows *belief*? (*I believed and therefore I _____*).

- b. Read Romans 10:9. How does this verse parallel 2 Corinthians 4:13?

- c. Why is verbally declaring what we believe so important?

4. What *knowledge* motivated Paul to preach? verse 14

5. *I am willing to endure anything if it will bring salvation and eternal glory in Christ Jesus to those God has chosen* (2 Timothy 2:10 NLT). This was Paul's attitude as it was also reflected in 2 Corinthians 4:15. Because Jesus was first in Paul's life, others were second. How does knowing Jesus cause a person to be "other minded"?

- a. Who is to receive the *glory* when we sacrifice for others? Verse 15

- 1.) How might our attitude in serving be different if our goal for the *glory* or the attention is for God rather than ourselves?

DAY FIVE: Read 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

1. In the midst of suffering and persecution Paul stated in 2 Corinthians 4:16 that he *did not lose heart*. What did he say was *perishing*?
 - a. What did Job say about this in Job 19:26?
 - b. Even though our bodies are becoming less and less efficient, what can get better and better?
 - c. This *inward renewal* does not spontaneously occur just because we are saved. What is our part in this *renewal* according to Colossians 3:10 NLT (*In its place you have clothed yourselves with a brand-new nature that is continually being renewed as you learn more and more about Christ, who created this new nature within you.*)
2. Looking back at Paul's description of his afflictions in 2 Corinthians 1:8 and 4:8 and 9, we might tend to describe them as severe. How does he describe them in 2 Corinthians 4:17?
3. Using verses 17 and 18, compare the afflictions of this life to the things of heaven.
 - a. How is Jesus an example of this attitude? See Hebrews 12:2
 - 1.) Hebrews 12:3 encourages us to consider Jesus and the *hostilities* He endured for us. According to this verse, what will doing this help to prevent in our lives?

*Let heaven fill your thoughts.
Do not think only about things down here on earth.*

- Colossians 3:2 NLT

