

Connect to Resurrection: Engage

2 Corinthians 4:7-18

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Dr. Jonathan Lovelady

2 Corinthians 4:7-18: 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. (NIV)

Our Vision: Connect with Christ, Church, and Community

1. _____ toward transformation

Not _____: If you only look at *us*, you might well miss the brightness. We carry this precious Message around in the unadorned clay pots of our ordinary lives. That's to prevent anyone from confusing God's incomparable power with us. 2 Corinthians 4:7 (MSG)

_____ offering: We are hard-pressed on every side, but we are not crushed, we are bewildered and confused, but we are not lost, we are persecuted, but we are not forsaken, we are knocked down, but we take a licking and keep on ticking.... We are always offering the same sacrifice as Jesus by picking up our cross so the image of Jesus may shine in our lives. 2 Corinthians 4:8-10 (JOT)

2. Engaging resurrection power

_____ faith: We boldly say what we believe...just as the psalm writer did when he said, "I believe and therefore I speak." We know that the same God who brought the Lord Jesus back from death will also bring us back to life again with Jesus...

2 Corinthians 4:13-14 (TLB)

_____ grace: All of our efforts were to lead you to God! The ultimate purpose was to dramatically increase the grace of God in this world, so that it would explode into a wealth of thanksgiving for what God has done in Jesus!

2 Corinthians 4:15 (JOT)

_____ hope: Because of all of this we do not lose heart or give up! As we encounter weariness and exhaustion we are worn down, but on the inside the resurrection power is creating new life each and every day! Compared to an eternity with our Savior all of these problems are small and light.

2 Corinthians 4:16-17 (JOT)

3. Continuing the strength of renewal

_____ to grace: You have been saved by grace through faith, you did not earn it or deserve it. It is God's gift! It is not through hard work...you are God's symphony of good works of grace through Jesus.

Ephesians 2:8-10 (JOT)

Spiritual Action Step:

Where are you tempted to "lose heart," to "give up," or "give in" to your doubts and fears? Where are you overwhelmed, burnt out, and frustrated? Where are you desperate for new life? Jesus said, *in this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.*" (John 16:33 NIV) Paul is writing this out of an experience of renewal and power in his life as well as in the lives of those around him. God wants to generate new life in your heart through Jesus Christ. Admit you need God's help and ask him into your heart! This week read, 2 Corinthians 4 and John 16 to allow the Word of God to bring new strength into your life.

Translations: NIV: New International Version; MSG: The Message; JOT: Jon's Own Translation; TLB: The Living Bible.