

Chapter 4

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HE Metropolitan Youssef ~ فسوي ابناالاهفاين تاطع · 2 CORINTHIANS 4 _ HG Bishop Youssef

<http://www.suscopts.org/diocese/bishop/bible-study/second-epistle-to-the-corinthians/session-04/>

Introduction

- In 2 Corinthians 3, St Paul compared the Ministry of the Old Covenant with that of the New Covenant and explained how that of the New Covenant is much more glorious
- The Old Covenant brought a curse, was according to the Letter; but the New Covenant is based on grace and gave life
- In Chapter 4, St Paul continues his defense of his ministry
 - In Verse 1-2, he says that because we have this ministry, we don't get discouraged. Instead, we renounce deceitful practices and openly proclaim the Gospel of Christ.
 - In Verse 3-4, he says that for some people the gospel is veiled, they don't understand the message of the Gospel; but it's only veiled to those whom Satan blinded their hearts.
 - In Verse 5-6, he says that we are not preaching ourselves, but we are preaching Christ and we are the servants of Christ because God has shone light in his heart and he wants to share this light of the Gospel with everybody, that all may enjoy the life with Christ
 - In verse 7-15, he speaks about this ministry as a treasure. This treasure is an earthly vessel. The treasure is the message of salvation and we are the weak vessels - that we experience suffering, pain, persecution, etc. in our ministry but God uses this that His might and His power may be manifested in us. I am not preaching by my words, but when people see how the Light of Christ is working in my weak body, they will give thanks to God
 - In verse 16-18, he says that's why we do not lose heart
 - This chapter is a very important chapter in the life of Hope
 - Even if the outward man is perishing, the inward man is renewed daily
 - The suffering that is here on earth cannot compare with the glory in heaven
 - What we see is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal

The Light of Christ's Gospel

¹ Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart. ² But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God

deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. ³ But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴ whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. ⁵ For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. ⁶ For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

- We do not lose heart
 - Although there are many hardships, persecutions and troubles facing him on a daily basis, he does not lose heart for two reasons.
 - We have this ministry - a glorious ministry!
 - We have received mercy - I am not serving by my own words, my own power, etc. but I am serving because of His mercy. St Paul would say "I , myself, was a persecutor and a blasphemer, but God had mercy on me. So I will not lose heart."
- Renouncing the hidden things of shame
 - The servants of Christ must turn away from all dishonest preaching and practices, trickery, etc. Some people try to win others to their religion with dishonest practices
 - I am not ashamed of this ministry; to say that Christ was crucified; to say that God became man; to say that sin is evil and wrong
 - St Paul is rebuking the false teachers who were trying to bring the Corinthians under the old Jewish Covenant by perverting the word of God (e.g. by introducing elements of Jewish tradition to the Torah)
- Those whose conscience is inspired by the Holy Spirit, they will know that I am a true Apostle of the Lord Christ
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Cast Down but Unconquered

⁷ But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. ⁸ *We are* hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; *we are* perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed— ¹⁰ always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

¹¹ For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. ¹² So then death is working in us, but life in you.

¹³ And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke," we also believe and therefore speak, ¹⁴ knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present *us* with you. ¹⁵ For all things *are* for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

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Seeing the Invisible

¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward *man* is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory, ¹⁸ while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen *are* temporary, but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

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Revision #7

Created 2023-03-22 11:27:57 UTC by Morcous Wahba

Updated 2023-03-23 02:09:06 UTC by Morcous Wahba