



# — SECOND — CORINTHIANS

*The Comfort of God FOR and THROUGH His People*



Part 19 — “Openly Proclaiming Christ as Lord” (2 Cor. 4:1-6) — 10 March 2024

## Introduction:

Paul has defended the ministry entrusted to him and his companions, contrasting it with that of Moses in terms of both its content and its openness. They are ministers of the New Covenant in which sinners are forgiven and justified and the Spirit regenerates and empowers. This ministry is glorious because it openly displays Messiah, who transforms His people in a continuous and progressive way through the indwelling of His Spirit. Because of his critics, however, Paul must address the difficulties they have faced and how they have borne up under them.

**Main Point:** Believers resist \_\_\_\_\_ in the ministries God has entrusted to us by remembering that it is our Lord Jesus whom we are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

## Paul’s Declarations About His Ministry—2 Corinthians 4:1-6

- In light of all he has said in the prior chapter, Paul explains their encouragement and describes the manner in which they have carried out the ministry entrusted to them. (4:1-2)

### Observations:

1. The ministry of the New Covenant is not just their message, it is the source of their own \_\_\_\_\_.  
“by the mercy of God”

“lose heart”—ἐγκακέω (*egkakeō*)—To lose one’s motivation or enthusiasm to continue certain conduct, to be discouraged; to be afraid in the face of difficulty.

2. They have never conducted their ministry in a way that was disgraceful or deceptive.  
“underhanded ways”

**They do not:** “practice cunning”

“tamper with God’s Word”

**They do:** “commend themselves to everyone’s conscience”

“...Paul, while concerned that the conduct of his ministry should commend itself to people’s consciences, was concerned ultimately to minister in a way that finds God’s approval.” —Colin Kruse

**Key Point:** Having a clear conscience before \_\_\_\_\_ in terms of how we handle His Word should lead us to have a clear conscience before \_\_\_\_\_ in terms of how we relate to them.

- Paul then explained why some do not respond rightly to their ministry of the gospel. (4:3-4)

### Observations:

1. The imagery of a veil is once again employed to explain why some to whom Paul ministered did not \_\_\_\_\_.

“The veiling has nothing to do with the particular way that Paul communicates the gospel...It has to do with the fundamental nature of the gospel that strikes Greeks as foolishness and Jews as scandalous.” —David Garland

“those who are perishing”

1 Cor. 1:22-23—<sup>22</sup>For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, <sup>23</sup>but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles

2. Unbelievers are further hindered from understanding the gospel by the activity of \_\_\_\_\_.  
“the god of this age”

⇒ Satan has a certain amount of authority in the world (Matt. 4:8-8; John 12:31) that he and his forces exercise to promote those things to which our flesh is prone (Gal. 5:19-21).

*"blinded the minds of unbelievers"*

⇒ Satan uses \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to keep unbelievers from seeing their need for Christ.

*"the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God"*

1 John 2:16—For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.

**Key Point:** The message of the gospel \_\_\_\_\_ unbelievers with the reality of their sin and the necessity of turning to Christ and so it should not surprise us when they \_\_\_\_\_ it.

- Paul goes on to explain that he and his companions proclaimed Christ and not themselves because of the glorious work that God has done in their own lives. (4:5-6)

Observations:

1. Jesus' position of \_\_\_\_\_ in their lives directed the course of their ministry.

*"Jesus Christ as Lord"*

*"ourselves as your servants"*

2. They had themselves experienced the \_\_\_\_\_ of the good news that they now proclaimed.

⇒ Paul quoted from Gen. 1:3 to illustrate the power of God that had been exercised in their lives to overcome their own spiritual blindness.

1 Cor. 15:3-4—<sup>3</sup>For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup>that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures

3. It is through Christ that the \_\_\_\_\_ of God is truly displayed.

Col. 1:13-15—<sup>13</sup>He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, <sup>14</sup>in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. <sup>15</sup>He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

**Key Point:** The \_\_\_\_\_ power of God's work in our lives is the reason we can remain encouraged as we serve Him and others throughout the days of our lives.

### Concluding Thoughts

- We are all prone to growing \_\_\_\_\_ in carrying out our vocations.

Gal. 6:9—And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

- Closeness with God through His Word reminds us that we carry out our vocations in His \_\_\_\_\_.

Heb. 4:14-16—<sup>14</sup>Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. <sup>15</sup>For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. <sup>16</sup>Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

*We are guarded from \_\_\_\_\_!*

*We are reminded of His \_\_\_\_\_ towards us!*

- Our vocations are ultimately about bringing glory to the Lord and not ourselves as we \_\_\_\_\_ others.

Mark 10:42-45—<sup>42</sup>And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. <sup>43</sup>But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, <sup>44</sup>and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. <sup>45</sup>For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."



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