

SALVATION & SUFFERING — 2 Corinthians 4:1-18

When a person commits to something bigger than himself, he is connecting to a higher purpose. God's purpose of choosing us was to get the world lit with his glory. *For God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ (2 Corinthians 4:6).* We shine the light of Jesus in a dark world, but how does that actually play out?

What God didn't intend to do was to make the world suffer. He was not the author of it; however, he uses it in a way that has been very effective since the fall of humanity to sin. God uses suffering in a very unconventional way to achieve unbelievable results. Many people have committed their lives to Christ, willing to live and die for the purpose of sharing the light of Jesus. Elijah shared the inevitability of suffering, and the difference between what we're *suffering from* and what we're *suffering for*. Unless our suffering is for Jesus, it all goes to waste. That is why we cannot let our suffering be purposeless. Ultimately, suffering reminds us of the fall humanity, and our need for redemption. Jesus paid the price for our sin, but he did it through *suffering*. Again, unconventional, and if you look at the timeline of history – everything heaven worthy came through great sacrifice and suffering. Jesus promised us that we have eternal glory coming our way. We are being transformed and renewed as if we're already there. That's why we do not lose heart in the struggle to live for God in this dark world.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/NEXT STEPS:

- July 2 - Outdoor Worship and Baptism Bash
- Arrows (Parenting Seminar in August)

PRAY TOGETHER

- Salvation, that more people will come to know Jesus.
- For Pastor Jon and Pastor Ta as they attend the convention of our association of churches in Phoenix.

GOAL FOR THIS STUDY:

Our goal in studying *our suffering* is to see the reality, purpose, and calling Jesus ordained us. We do not make our lives miserable, instead we simply look to God and his Word whenever we face miserable situations. Encourage your DGroup to use this session as a time to reflect on what they're learned throughout this study and to find a practical way to respond to this study.

Connection and Action

Questions to promote conversation and connection

Question:

The Apostle Paul was defending the integrity and sincerity of his apostleship throughout these letters from false teachers. Have you ever suffered from false accusations and false rumours?

Question:

In verse 15, Paul refers to the sufferings Christians we go through as beneficial. What are the benefits of suffering for Jesus?

Question:

How do we keep on keeping-on, when life hits us hard and our suffering seem to never end?

Bible and Belief

Questions to help believers develop a biblical point of view.

Question:

What ministry was the Apostle Paul speaking of in verse 1?

Question:

How do you understand 2 Corinthians 4:10 -11, For we who are alive are always given over to death, so that his life may also be revealed in our body?

Question:

In verses 7-10, speaks of us as clay, and the light of Jesus in our hearts reveals the treasure we have. What treasure have you received from God according to these verses?

Question:

In verses 5 and 6 Paul speaks of preaching Jesus and letting his light shine in our lives, how do you make sure your life shows more of Jesus and less of you?

Question:

In verse 14, Paul speaks of the resurrection. How do you know that you will be raised with Jesus when you die, and know for certain you didn't waste your life for a hoax?

Question:

In Verse 16, Paul urges us to go on, and be encouraged by the fact that we are being renewed inwardly, with the very thing that is destroying us outwardly. How so?

Growing in Leadership

Questions to help people grow as leaders.

Question:

Do you see yourself having the same ministry, or at least as a co-partner of it?

Question:

In verse 3, Paul speaks of committing ourselves to others in the sight of God, what does it mean to live with integrity and how does it affect our witness?

Question:

Paul continues to uphold the idea of the good coming from the bad. How do you take the negative things in your life, to produce some positive things?

Question:

In verse 18, Paul finishes the chapter and focuses our attention to the unseen. What exactly should we focus on?