

Do Not Lose Heart

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 4:1-6

I. Don't lose heart because you have your ministry by the mercy of God.

- A. What is the only reason you have a Gospel ministry in service to God and people? God has been merciful to you (vs. 1). Just like God saved your soul because of His mercy, God has also given you a ministry because of His mercy. The temptation for some who have lost heart with the ministry of evangelism is found in verse 2. They use cunning methods and tamper with God's Word to add people to the church. They are editors of the Bible's message and water it down. But Paul gives people an open statement of the truth about Jesus and the Bible (vs. 2).

II. Don't lose heart because you should expect ministry to be hard.

- A. Paul explains why preaching the Gospel is so hard in vs. 3: "even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing." The problem is not with the Gospel. The problem is with the people listening to the Gospel. They have a veil over their eyes that prevents them from seeing the goodness and glory of the Gospel about Jesus. What does Satan do as we tell people about the greatness of Jesus and His power to save? Satan blinds people (vs. 4) to the glory of Christ. He uses a veil (vs. 3) to keep people from seeing that Jesus is the greatest treasure in the world.

III. Don't lose heart because ministry is not about you.

- A. Paul's opponents in the Corinthian church, the super-apostles, said ministry is all about me. "Look at me" the super-apostles said. By contrast look at what Paul says ministry is about in vs. 5, "For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake." What is the message ministers speak? Jesus Christ is Lord. Paul says, "Get over yourself. It's not about you. It's about Jesus." Jesus will one day say to His humble servants the words of Matthew 25:21, **"Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master."**

IV. Don't lose heart because your ministry reveals God's glory.

- A. What happens when you tell people that Jesus Christ is Lord? Light shines in the darkness (vs. 6). We see the glory of Jesus shining most brightly at the cross. At the cross we see the amazing love of Jesus for sinners like us. Less than a week before Jesus died, he said in John 12:23: **"The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified."** The time had come for Jesus to die on the cross. It wasn't nails that held Jesus to the cross. It was love. It was love for you and me. It was love that set us free from our imprisonment to sin.

Application:

Don't lose heart in your ministry of telling others about Jesus. Keep going. Be faithful.

Sources:

The Bible

Commentaries by Trent Casto, David Garland, and Gary Millar.

Sermon Outline Questions

- 1) How do you view your ministry of being a witness for Christ? Do you see it as a good gift of God's mercy like Paul did (vs. 1)? Should we expect the ministry of evangelism to be easy or hard (vs. 3-4)?
- 2) What main message should we speak about Jesus (vs. 5)? And how should we ministers relate to people (vs. 5)?
- 3) How is someone's conversion to Christ like God saying to the world in creation: "Let there be light." (vs. 6)? Where do we see the glory of Jesus most clearly?