

A Study of the Epistles of Paul

NT Survey Lesson 133—2 Corinthians 4

Introduction: Having a glorious ministry of righteousness, Paul did not lose heart, but instead endured the greatest suffering for Christ's sake. Yet in it all, it was evident that God was working in him to bring glory to Himself, not to Paul.

Lesson aim: To show the attitude the gospel preacher should have toward his work.

Paul describes his conduct as an encouraged minister of the new covenant—2 Cor. 4:1-15

1. What did Paul affirm that he and his fellow-workers did not do? (v. 1) Why?
2. List four things Paul said he did as a servant of the new covenant (v. 2)
3. If the gospel was veiled in any sense, it was only to what people? (v. 3) What did Paul say Satan had done to them?
4. Who is it that Satan wants to keep men from seeing? (v. 4) Who then did Paul proclaim among men? (v. 5)
5. Had Paul himself experienced the illumination of truth? (v. 6)
6. In what had God placed the "treasure" of His truth about salvation? (v. 7) Why did He choose to reveal it by means of men?
7. In v. 8-12 Paul mentions some things that show the servants of the word were brought under the power of evil men. List these things.
8. In contrast in v. 8-12, Paul mentions some things that show how God was working in these men to accomplish his purposes. List these things.
9. The result of these processes is mentioned in v. 12. Paul said, "_____ works in us; but _____ in you".

10. Though Paul suffered so many things, he did not allow it to defeat him. Instead he possessed what spirit? (v. 13) How does this spirit express itself?
11. Though death was working in Paul, upon what had Paul put his faith? (v. 14)
12. All that Paul endured was endured for whose sake? (v. 15) For what purpose?
13. Thought question: Why do you think Paul spent so much time here speaking of his work and his sufferings? Did he want people to feel sorry for him? What do you think he hoped to accomplish?

Paul further explains the reason for his ability to continue and not lose heart—2 Cor. 4:16-18

(We will discuss this section in the next lesson).