

Confidence In Time Of Sacrificial Service

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2 Cor. 4:8-15

2 Cor. 4:8-15, “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you. We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak; Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.”

Paul shows the attitude that we need in doing the work of the Lord - especially difficult work. We can learn from his example.

He references the Olympic games to show the extent of his trials. Let us notice his confidence, which confidence should be ours.

Paul’s confidence is seen in his comparisons

Pressed on every side, yet not crushed.

2 Cor. 4:8, “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;”

Troubled (Pressed) - (Gk. To crowd; or like squeezing grapes).

Paul’s preaching was like a large crowd of people pressing against him. But the crowd Paul refers to is intent on doing him harm.

Not distressed (Not crushed) — Sometimes in such a crowd it is hard to breath.

Paul felt this at times. So will we from time to time. The ministry is not always easy.

God helped Paul out of those tight situations.

We have confidence that God will get us out of the crowd.

Perplexed, but not in despair.

Perplexed — Have no way out; at a loss mentally.

Paul was in many situations where he was at a loss mentally. At times this will be us.

Not in despair — Paul had absolute confidence that God would overcome all perplexing situations. This should be our confidence in God’s ministry.

God is with us.

Persecuted, but not forsaken.

2 Cor. 4:9, “*Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed,*”

Persecuted — To pursue. Like hunting and chasing a wild animal.

Paul’s persecution was relentless. Acts 23:12, “*And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.*”

We may feel that same in our work in the ministry.

Not forsaken — To forget or leave.

Paul never felt forsaken. Heb. 13:5, “*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*”

We must trust God in this promise. We will do great things if we remember this.

Struck down, but not destroyed.

2 Cor. 4:9, “*Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed,*”

Cast down (Struck down) — To throw down, or knock down.

Paul had been dealt many blows that knocked him down many times. Such will be our lot from time to time.

Not destroyed — To perish; be destroyed.

Paul was knocked down, but not knocked out. Acts 14:19, “*And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.*”

We will have our lumps, but God will get us back up again.

Confidence in the privilege to serve

2 Cor. 4:10, *“Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.”*

It was a privilege for Paul to suffer as did his Lord Jesus; always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. He suffered carrying out the ministry as his Lord did.

- 1 Cor. 15:31, *“I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.”*
- Rom. 8:36, *“As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”*

That the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 2 Cor. 4:11, *“For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.”*

It was a privilege for Paul to reproduce in his life the life of his Lord.

So then death is working in us, but life in you. 2 Cor. 4:12, *“So then death worketh in us, but life in you.”*

Paul was happy that his dying daily produced the life of Christ in the lives of others).

Confidence is in faith

2 Cor. 4:13, *“We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;”*

Paul gives a quote from Psalms 116:10, *“I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted.”*

He says that he had the same spirit as David. David’s faith was so strong that he would proclaim it regardless of what his enemies might do. Paul believed and therefore He spoke.

Jer. 20:9, *“Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.”*

Our success will be in proportion to our faith. 1 John 5:4, *“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”*

Confidence in the hope of the resurrection

2 Cor. 4:14, *“Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.”*

Paul believed in the resurrection of Christ. He believed that the sacrificial worker would also be resurrected. Even if Paul died, he believed that God would resurrect him to heaven. That gave him confidence.

Paul was happy that the Corinthians would be with him in the resurrection. Such should also make us happy.

Confidence in the resurrection should keep us going in difficult times.

Confidence is in seeing the success of the sacrificial work

2 Cor. 4:15, *“For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.”*

Even though Paul was persecuted for preaching, he was having success. He had preached to the Corinthians, and they had believed. God’s grace was being spread in his sacrificial preaching. Paul was happy to sacrifice to bring so many to his Lord Jesus. Thanksgiving had come from the hearts of many because of it.

The same will happen today when we spread the gospel.

Conclusion

The ministry of the Lord can be hard and difficult. We should count it a privilege to serve God no matter how hard. We have the confidence that God will be with us all the way. We have joy in seeing others saved, having the hope of the resurrection.

