

# **How To Remain Strong**

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**October 12, 2011**

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## 2 Cor. 4:16-18

2 Cor. 4:16-18, *“For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”*

Earlier in this chapter Paul shows why he suffered for the Lord’s ministry, and why he was confident.

In these verses Paul shows why he remains strong. This is very relevant for the Christian today.

Paul said, *“We faint not.”* Gk. *Faint not* — To give in to evil, lose courage.

Paul’s faith was strong.

Let us notice some reasons why he remained strong.

## Remember the Lord is with you

In the first part of this chapter Paul gave several reasons why he remained confident. Notice these:

### **His comparisons show that God was with him.**

2 Cor. 4:8-9, *“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;”*

The Lord aided him in every type of difficulty he faced.

### **He maintained a strong 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;”*

He maintained a strong faith in the word of God and boldly taught it.

He believed in 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.”*

And he believed that we all would be raised one day.

## **He rejoiced at the good that he was doing.**

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.*”

Not that he should boast, but that others would benefit from his preaching the word of God; he gave God the glory for their acceptance of His word for he knew that the Lord was with him when he preached.

Matt. 18:20, “*For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*”

## **Remember the inward man was being renewed day by day**

2 Cor. 4:16, “*For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.*”

### **His outward man was perishing.**

There was the natural aging process of our body. There was the deterioration of the body because of persecution, stress, and problems.

- 1 Pet. 1:24, “*For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away.*”
- James 4:14, “*Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.*”
- Job 29:18, “*Then I said, I shall die in my nest, and I shall multiply my days as the sand.*”

Job looked forward to the time that he would be with his Lord and live forever in heaven.

### **The inward man was being renewed.**

The inward is the inner spirit or soul. (The hidden man of the heart).

1 Pet. 3:4, “*But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.*”

## Note our spirit:

**The spirit knows, reasons, thinks.** 1 Cor. 2:11, “*For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? ...*”

**The spirit goes back to God who gave it.** Eccl. 12:7, “*Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.*”

## How is it renewed?

### By feasting upon the word of God.

- 1 Pet. 2:2, “*As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.*”
- 2 Pet. 3:18, “*But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*”

Our spirit is also renewed when we partake of the Lord’s Supper.

## Remember to consider problems as “light affliction” compared to eternal life

2 Cor. 4:17, “*For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,*”

### Note these scriptures that relate to this subject.

2 Tim. 2:12, “*If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us.*”

Paul certainly suffered in his service to Christ.

- 1 Pet. 4:13, “*But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.*”
- Rom. 8:17, “*And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*”

### Note some of Paul’s afflictions that he considered to be light.

2 Cor. 11:22-28, “*Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten*

*with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.”*

Paul considered these afflictions light as compared to heaven and eternal life.

Peter wrote exceeding joy — Heavenly glory far exceeds any kind of suffering on this earth. That is why Paul considered it light.

Paul wrote weight of glory — Gk. Having great weight. In comparison, heaven had much more substance in beauty and joy, than the pain of suffering. One might think at times that pain carries a lot of weight. It does not when viewed in comparison to the joys of heaven.

## **Remember to look at the things not seen**

2 Cor. 4:18, *“While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”*

**Things seen** — Gk. Temporary, for a season.

This includes suffering.

This includes things that excite the lust of the flesh.

1 John 2:15-16, *“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”*

**Things not seen.**

These are the spiritual, eternal things. Includes things pertaining to the strengthening of the soul.

The Hebrew writer captured the spirit of this statement.

- Heb. 11:1, *“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”*
- Heb. 11:3, *“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”*

- Heb. 11:7, “*By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.*”

We don't see heaven as yet, but we know by faith that it exists for the Lord has told us so.

## Conclusion

All these points Paul makes relevant for all of us as Christians.

All the service God calls on us to perform, every burden he lays on us to bear, every affliction which we endure are intended for our good; and, if received in the spirit of obedient and faithful children, we will enjoy the richest blessings God has in store for them that love him.

### **Say not the burden of the Lord.**

*Jer. 23:33-40, “And when this people, or the prophet, or a priest, shall ask thee, saying, What is the burden of the LORD? thou shalt then say unto them, What burden? I will even forsake you, saith the LORD. And as for the prophet, and the priest, and the people, that shall say, The burden of the LORD, I will even punish that man and his house. Thus shall ye say every one to his neighbour, and every one to his brother, What hath the LORD answered? and, What hath the LORD spoken? And the burden of the LORD shall ye mention no more: for every man's word shall be his burden; for ye have perverted the words of the living God, of the LORD of hosts our God. Thus shalt thou say to the prophet, What hath the LORD answered thee? and, What hath the LORD spoken? But since ye say, The burden of the LORD; therefore thus saith the LORD; Because ye say this word, The burden of the LORD, and I have sent unto you, saying, Ye shall not say, The burden of the LORD; Therefore, behold, I, even I, will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, and cast you out of my presence: And I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.”*

The Christian who neglects his duties and shirks his responsibilities will find himself unqualified for the honors and glories God has in reserve for this faithful servants.











