

"We do not Lose Heart"

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Introduction: In the Christian life there are plenty of opportunities to quit.

- A. Everyone has the desire to be accepted by others.
 - 1. The message we preach goes against the majority of the world. (**Mt 7:13-14**)
 - 2. Even our example will be a threat to others. (**John 16:1-4**)
- B. There will be those in the church who give in to these pressures but at the same time stay within the church. (**Phil 3:18-19**)
 - 1. The most hurtful things will happen within the church. (**2 Tim 4:14-15; Gal 2:4-5**)
 - 2. There is also the discouragement of seeing those who never grow or even fall away. (**2 Cor 11:28**)
 - 3. Still in all of these things there is a way to keep a strong heart.
 - 4. Paul wanted the Corinthians not to be discouraged in the midst of these things. (**2 Cor 1:3-5**)

I. The mercy of God will not hide the truth (V1-6)

- A. Sometimes it seems that the truth is at a disadvantage!
 - 1. The weapons of error seem to "get results".
 - 2. A wise man will examine those "results" carefully.
 - 3. If you use falsehood to teach, what will you produce in the life of the one taught? (**1 Cor 3:12-13**)
 - 4. How many "fads" have come and gone?
- B. The mercy of God will want to give to others what they have received!
 - 1. It is God's grace and God's word, not man's! (**Acts 20:32**)
 - 2. The work of God will often take time to work in the heart. (**Lk 14:33**)
 - 3. How does one handle the word deceitfully?
- C. How do you reach a blind man? (V4)
 - 1. Some think that we should appeal to them with the wisdom of the world. (**Jn 15:18-21; 1 Cor 1:31-2:5**)
 - 2. Those who use the deceit of the world are not servants of Christ. (**2 Cor 10:3-5**)
 - 3. There are some who will not receive the gospel of Christ. (**Jn 3:19-21**)
 - 4. What does the world like? Great Men, Great Speakers, A Show of Wealth and Numbers.
- D. Our goal is to preach Christ and put men in the background. (V5-6)
 - 1. The light in our hearts is the knowledge of God. (**1 Cor 15:34; Col 1:10; Note 2 Cor 10:5**)
 - 2. It is this knowledge of God's character that is the foundation of our own character. (**Rom 8:29; 2 Cor 3:18**)
 - 3. What happens when our emphasis is off?

II. God's purpose of our lives is to glorify Jesus. (V7-12)

- A. Some may be concerned about the suffering of the apostles who are delivering God's message!

1. Paul wanted the Corinthians to see as God sees. What is a man? "An earthen vessel"!
 2. Our glory should come in being used in this life rather than seeking glory. Our glory will come in the next life. **(2 Tim 2:20-21)**
 3. When we seek to glorify a man or a church building, what does this do? (Ex. What kind of frame do you use for a priceless picture?)
- B. The Christian life is a series of paradoxes!
1. To the world we seem one way, but to the man of faith we are another. The world will never understand this. **(1 Cor 2:13-14)**
 2. Consider each of the trials the Christian will endure: "Hard pressed on every side", "perplexed", "persecuted", "struck down". What does God do? He will allow us: not to be "crushed", "not in despair", "not forsaken", "not destroyed".
- C. Why does God let this happen? So that God may be glorified! (10-12)
1. When we suffer there is the best time to show what Jesus means to us. **(1 Pet 2:11-13)**
 2. Do you really want to glorify God?
- III. The Resurrection of Jesus causes us to see the unseen. (V13-18)***
- A. Why can we have confidence in eternal life?
1. God demonstrated His power in the resurrection of Jesus. (Rom 1:3-4)
 2. This powerful evidence can produce faith in any who will honestly hear.
- B. What happens when we really believe?
1. We see the unseen. (Heb 11:27)
 2. We are thankful (v15)
- C. How does the mind of faith work? (V16-18)
1. What do you see?
 2. In what are you "being renewed?"
- Conclusion:*** God has made powerful provisions that we "do not lose heart"