

2 Corinthians 8 - 4:7-15

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What we have learned about apostolic ministry:

- In triumphal procession 2:14-17
- Manifests the new covenant 3:6-18
- Commended by its fruit 3:1-3
- Manifests the truth 4:1-6
- Sufficiency from God 3:4-5

Outline for today

- Manifests death and life 4:7-15

Manifesting death and life 4:7-15

Earthen vessels 4:7

2 Corinthians 4:7 (LSB)

7But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves;

- treasure. The knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. The gospel.
- earthen vessels.
 - Common clay pots used as containers. Unattractive, weak and easily broken.
 - Used in victory processions (2:14) to hold booty.
 - At his conversion Paul was described as a vessel to take the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15)
 - 1 Cor 1:27-29 God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong...so that none may boast.
 - As Jesus in Is 53:2 ...He has no stately form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should desire Him.
- surpassing greatness of the power
 - That won the victory (2:14)
 - That transforms hearts of stone into hearts of flesh (3:3)
 - That makes Paul sufficient (3:5)
 - That transforms God's people from glory to glory (3:18)
 - That created the heavens and the earth (4:6)
 - That fulfills prophecy (4:6)
 - That manifests life in mortal flesh (4:11)
 - That will raise Paul and all believers along with Jesus and present them to God (4:14)

- will be of God and not from ourselves
 - In the victory procession in 2:14, God is the victorious general in the victory procession, the apostles are in the procession to manifest the knowledge of Him.
 - Paul wants God to be exalted rather than himself.
 - His lowliness highlights God's power (4:7)
 - His weakness enables God's power to be displayed (12:9-10)
 - His survival through his afflictions validates God's presence in his ministry.
 - 1:8-10 In his affliction in Asia Paul despaired of life but God comforted him.
- Garland: "A cracked vessel held together by the grace of God with the light of the gospel shining through the cracks."

Catalog of death 4:8-9

2 Corinthians 4:8-9 (LSB)

8 in every way afflicted, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing;

9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed;

- Four pairs that describe death manifested in Paul's life.
- in every way. Applies to each pair; they are general descriptions. Specifics in 1 Cor 4, 2 Cor 1, 6, 11, 12.
- Afflicted but not crushed
 - Afflicted. Troubled due to circumstances or people. Hard-pressed.
 - Crushed. No way out.
- Perplexed but not despairing
 - Gk play on words: "despairing but not desperate"
 - Perplexed. At a loss.
 - Despairing. Utterly without hope
- Persecuted but not forsaken
 - Persecuted. Systematically oppressed or harassed, hunted down.
 - Forsaken. Abandoned by all.
- Struck down but not destroyed
 - Struck down. In wrestling, thrown to the mat.
 - Destroyed. Made to perish.
- Progression from less serious to more serious.

Purpose of death 4:10-12

2 Corinthians 4:10–12 (LSB)

10always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

11For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

12So death works in us, but life in you.

- v10-11 Death and life
 - v10 always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus
 - Always. At all times. First for emphasis. In the procession (2:14).
 - carrying about in the body. Bearing the burden of. In his physical body.
 - the dying of Jesus
 - The process that results in death.
 - Gal 3:1 Portraying Jesus Christ as crucified
 - Gal 6:1 Bearing on his body the marks of Jesus
 - v10 so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body
 - life.
 - Jn 1:4 In Him was life
 - Jn 6:33 gives life to the world
 - manifested in our body
 - Same word as 1 Jn 1:2 and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us
 - Jesus manifested the life inherent in God; the apostles manifest in their lives the life they beheld in Him.

- v11 restates v10
- v11 For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake
 - we who live. Apostles
 - being delivered over to death.
 - Put under the power of.
 - Present passive: ongoing, done to them by God
 - As Jesus was. Ro 4:25 He who was delivered over on account of our transgressions...
 - for Jesus' sake.
 - To accomplish His purpose.
 - Jn 17:24 Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am...
 - Jn 18:9 Of those whom You have given Me, I lost not one.
- v11 so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.
 - mortal flesh.
 - Flesh that dies.
 - Eternal life being portrayed in mortal flesh.
- Ro 8:36-37 Just as it is written, "FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE COUNTED AS SHEEP FOR the SLAUGHTER." But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.
 - Simultaneous death and life
 - Put to death all day long...overwhelmingly conquering through Christ.
- Jesus repeated 4x in v10-11
- v12 Conclusion
 - So death works in us
 - death works. Is operative. As described in v8-9.
 - in us. In Paul.
 - but life in you.
 - The HS works through Paul's ministry to bring life to the Corinthians
 - They are his letter of commendation, having the gospel written on their hearts of flesh (3:2-3)
 - By his ministry they behold the glory of the Lord with unveiled faces and are being transformed into His image (3:18)
 - As 1:4 who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.
 - Paul is afflicted (the dying of Jesus)
 - He is comforted (the life of Jesus)
 - He comforts others (his ministry brings the life to them)

Walking by faith 4:13-14

2 Corinthians 4:13–14 (LSB)

13But having the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I BELIEVED, THEREFORE I SPOKE," we also believe, therefore we also speak,

14knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will present us with you.

- I BELIEVED, THEREFORE I SPOKE
 - Quoting Ps 116 from the LXX. The psalmist is in great danger, but he trusts Yahweh and speaks.
- having the same spirit of faith
 - Paul has the same spirit as the psalmist
- Knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will present us with you.
 - Walking by his faith Paul knows the truth: In spite of his circumstances (carrying about the dying of Jesus) God will raise him with the Corinthians and present him holy and blameless (Eph 5:27)
- therefore we also speak
 - In his faith, being certain in the truth he knows, Paul carries out his ministry.

All for the glory of God 4:15

2 Corinthians 4:15 (LSB)

15For all things are for your sakes, so that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God.

- For all things are for your sakes
 - 4:5 Paul is their slave, assigned by his Lord to serve them
- so that the grace which is spreading to more and more people
 - Grace from God through Paul's ministry
- may cause the giving of thanks to abound
 - Resulting in thanks to God abounding
- to the glory of God.
 - All to the glory of God.
- Cycle of blessing
 - Grace from God blesses us
 - Thanks abounding from us rise to Him
 - All glory goes to God

What we have learned today about apostolic ministry:

- Manifests death and life 4:7-15

Application: All Scripture is profitable

2 Cor 4:11 For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

- We are in God's triumphal procession to manifest the odor of Christ to all.
- One way we manifest Christ is to manifest in our body the death of Christ and the life of Christ.

2 Cor 3:16-17 All Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be equipped, having been thoroughly equipped for every good work.

- Paul wrote 2 Cor to instruct the Corinthians (who only partially understood) in what a real Christian walk looks like.
- It has been preserved in Scripture for us so that we also might understand and do.

Application: Believing, knowing, speaking

2 Cor 4:13-14

- Paul believed (v13)
- Therefore he knew (v14)
- Therefore he spoke (v13)

What do we believe? The gospel.

- 1 Cor 15:3-5 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.
 - Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures
 - He was buried
 - He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures
 - He appeared

What do we know?

- Heb 11:1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

What do we speak?

- Jn 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.
- Jn 14:2-3 "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.
- Ro 8:28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.
- Ro 8:37-39 But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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