

FIX YOUR EYES

READ 2 CORINTHIANS 4:7-18

Sometimes it is easy to forget that the authors of the Bible faced their own moments of pain and persecution. In 2 Corinthians 4:7-18, Paul is reflecting on one of the most painful moments in his life. Yet, out of that pain, Paul found thanksgiving and glory. Sometimes we need to pray through the pain we feel to get to the truth God has for us.

What We Carry (vv. 7-12)

At one point in Paul's life, he felt afflicted, abandoned, defeated...maybe even depressed. Paul wrote 2 Corinthians after a season in which he had been imprisoned and persecuted. When this was happening, Paul felt crushed, but looking back on that painful season, he can see how God got him through that moment. We can look around at our present circumstances and *feel* as if life is falling apart, but with some perspective we realize *what we feel isn't always the truth*.

How do you feel today? Take a few moments to search yourself and recognize your feelings. Then, tell God how you feel. Ask God to help you process your feelings.

Why We Speak (vv. 13-15)

Sometimes when we feel overwhelmed by our circumstances, we need to speak the truth of God's Word and work. These words aren't magical, but they help us to reframe what is true about the moment we are in. That even though we are in pain, Jesus is right there with us. Paul knew that he was never crushed because the living Jesus was always with him.

What are you thankful for? How have you seen grace in your life? Thank God for how good He has been to you and for the times He was with you. Enjoy God's presence for a few moments.

How We Prepare (vv. 16-18)

Paul looks at his past and present circumstances and calls them "light" and "momentary." What awaits us in heaven far outweighs the pain of today. We might feel discouraged, anxious, sad, and lonely right now, but God is doing something inside us that we should not overlook. He wants to renew us even in our current circumstances.

What is this season of life revealing to you about yourself? Ask God to show you what you don't see about yourself and your circumstances.