

## INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **2Corinthians 4:1-15**.
- B. Read the text as an introduction to the lesson.
- C. Truly it can be said that Paul believed in Christ, and the power of the gospel message.
- D. Tonight, four important reasons of why Paul endured great trials for the gospel's sake.

### I. AN OLD TESTAMENT QUOTE (2Cor. 4:13).

- A. Paul says that he has the same spirit of faith that existed in the OT times in reference to death.
- B. Paul's quote is from Psa. 116:10 and the entire psalm is thanksgiving to God for his deliverance from death to His saints.
- C. Undoubtedly, Paul must have quoted this verse (and the entire psalm) during many of his trials and sufferings.
- D. We are probably more familiar with 116:15 which says, "Precious in the sight of the Lord, are the deaths of His saints."

### II. FOUR REASONS FOR ENDURING GREAT TRIALS.

- A. One, **he believed in the gospel** (2Cor. 4:13):
  - 1. A person can easily see through a fake after a period of time.
  - 2. He can also see through one after glory or money.
  - 3. The apostle proved his sincerity by being delivered unto death (4:11) everyday, but not giving up.
- B. Two, **he knew that death would not rob him of the crown of life** (2Cor. 14):
  - 1. Death is feared by all, but is the avenue to God.
  - 2. Paul expected all living at Corinth to die before JC returned.
  - 3. Death means destruction to some, salvation to others (Jn. 5:28,29).
- C. Third, **his sufferings were grounding and establishing other Christians in the faith** (2Cor. 4:15a):
  - 1. We have a powerful example (our life) to others.
  - 2. The Christian life is not an easy one, an example of triumph in the midst of tragedy can be encouragement to others (Col. 1:28).
  - 3. Paul suffered the hardships while the Christians in Corinth reaped all the benefits; this is agape love (2Cor. 4:12).
- D. Fourth, **his sufferings meant others were being won to Christ** (2Cor. 4:15b):
  - 1. No price is too great to pay in trying to win others to Christ.
  - 2. Suffering should not be new to the Christian, they will be saved through great difficulty (1Pet. 4:18).
  - 3. Paul was showing his great faith, not only by what he said, but by what he did.

### III. LESSONS FOR US (QUESTIONS FOR US).

- A. How much do we really believe? Do we really believe enough to do what is required of us? Do we believe as strongly about Christ and the gospel, as did the apostle Paul?
- B. Do we believe enough to preach and live the gospel despite great persecution?
- C. Do we believe enough in the gospel to not be scared of death coming our way?
- D. Do we believe enough in the gospel to go through sufferings to help our fellow brethren mature in the faith?
- E. Do we believe in the gospel enough to go through the rejection and persecution of the world, as we try to save souls?
- F. Can we say with Paul, "we also believe, therefore we also speak"?

**CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.**

- A. The proof of our belief is in our obedience. It is the fruit of our labor and attitude.
- B. We should never make the statement, "I believe" and not be prepared to act on that belief while enduring the hardship that comes with living a faithful Christian life.
- C. Resolve to do better in your Christian life so that you may act on your belief in the gospel.
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.