

We Believe
2 Corinthians 4:13-18

He was overcome by trouble and sorrow. In fact, he believed his death was close at hand. At the very edge of despair, he says this, **“I believed; therefore I said,”** What did he believe? He believed he was greatly afflicted but he also believed the Lord was gracious and compassionate and the Lord saved him. Who is the he who believed and said this in Psalm 116? I do not know.

Centuries later Paul would be inspired to quote these words from Psalm 116, **“I believed therefore I have spoken.”** Like the one who wrote Psalm 116, Paul found himself constantly in danger and on the brink of death but when he spoke, he didn't speak, “Oh woe is me. My life is ruined. There is no hope. Why does this always happen to me? I cannot take it anymore!” Instead he spoke this, ¹⁶ **Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light and momentary troubles..”** You call being shipwrecked, stoned, beaten, thrown in prison light and momentary troubles? How could you not lose heart after being stoned the second time? **“I believe because I know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise me and present me with you in his presence.”**

With all that has happened to us in our lives the past few months who of us hasn't felt like we are just wasting away? Have any of us considered what we have and are going through light and momentary? I do not know about you but I lost my heart about 10 executive orders ago.

But it is written: **“I believed; therefore I have spoken.”** So you know what saints of God with that same spirit of faith of the one who wrote Psalm 116 and the apostle Paul we also believe and speak that we will not lose heart, through outwardly everything just seems to be wasting away and that what we are going through is light and momentary. How can we speak and believe such nonsense? Because we believe the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence.

What we are going through is no joke. Covid -19 can kill and our reaction to the virus has put a suffocating burden on our lives. We can in part relate to what the psalmist said, **“The cords of death entangled me, the anguish of the grave came upon me; I was overcome by trouble and sorrow.”** Yet we can look upon all that has happened to us and all that will happen to us as light and momentary. Why? We have an eternal glory that far outweighs anything we are enduring right now. Paul explained it this way to the saints in Rome, ¹⁸ **I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.”**

If there was a way for us to be able to fix our eyes what is taking place in heaven right now, all of our troubles of what we are going through would seem light and momentary. If only we were able to see what we cannot, we would see what is truly important and just how temporary all this is. For what is unseen is eternal. I know it may not seem like it now but the day will come when all this nonsense will come to an end. Covid-19 will be no more. But the glory we have waiting for us with our Savior is eternal.

We know this because 43 days ago our Lord was raised from the dead proving to us we also we will rise. We believe the one who raised Jesus from the dead will also raise us from the dead where we will be in the presence of our God for all eternity. Saints of God, do not forget, believe these words of our Savior, **“Because I live, you also will live.”** Jesus' resurrection is proof you have an eternal glory to look forward to and why we can believe even something like covid-19 is in the big scheme of things insignificant.

More than a few people are mocking Christians claiming us to be irrational, unrealistic, ignorant and not willing to face reality because we are not shaking and quaking in our boots with fear. Even if we are irrational and ignorant, that is not the reason we are not paralyzed in fear. The reason is because we believe that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead and the one who raised Jesus from the dead will also raise us. We are not naïve or arrogant enough to believe the virus cannot have a devastating effect on our lives. It could kill us. Being a Christian does make us immune. But we believe. Therefore we have this perspective that goes far beyond on all the problems our eyes can see now and we know so well to the glory we cannot see but know with all certainty that awaits us. We believe. If that makes us ignorant. So be it.

We believe therefore we do not lose heart. Even when we look in the mirror and can see we are wasting away and what has been happening is only contributing to our grey hair and wrinkles we will not lose heart because what we can see happening to us on the outside is not at all indicative to what is taking place on the inside. Inwardly we are being renewed day by day. The power of the good news of the one who raised Jesus from the dead will also raise us from the dead makes us stronger and stronger every day. The power of the good news we have this unseen eternal glory with our God in his presence, causes our heart to beat like it has never done before. Though outwardly we are wasting away, every day we believe and therefore we speak, “I know that my Redeemer lives and in the end I will see God with my own eyes, I am not another.” “I will not die but live and proclaim what the Lord has done.”

Do you see? The Father raising the Son was for your benefit. He did this for you. Through faith, the grace of God has reached you. In all of this trouble you believe as the psalmist, **The LORD is gracious and righteous; our God is full of compassion. ⁶ he LORD protects the simplehearted; when I was in great need, he saved me.**” Your heart is not lost. It is as confident as ever that I have life. Your troubles are not heavy and overwhelming. They are light and momentary. You believe and this has caused thanksgiving to overflow to praise of God. You have been given this desire to no longer live to your praise and glory but for the glory of the one who was raised proving to you that you too will be raised with Jesus. And during this pandemic you have shown your thanksgiving to God by being concerned about others and encouraging those who may be particularly troubled of what is happening. You can speak to others of the sure and certain hope you have because you have a Savior who has been raised from the dead. Especially now, your actions can speak louder than words in showing thanksgiving to the glory of your God in how you conduct yourself with others.

“I Believe. Therefore, I have spoken.” As you believe, believe the prayer you heard your Savior pray for you today As you hear this prayer believe, the troubles and hardships upon us cannot and will not mute our enthusiasm over what we cannot see: the eternal glory that awaits. ” ⁹ **I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. ¹⁰ All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. ¹¹ I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name—the name you gave name. Amen.**