

# Discussion Questions

June 12, 2022

## The Unveiled Life



1. Read 2 Corinthians 4:13-18. Paul calls for the Corinthians to “not lose heart” in this passage. Summarize his reasons for why believers should not lose heart in the midst of suffering, difficulty, and loss.
2. How did Paul’s understanding of the future determine how he lived in the present? What does that mean for us today?
3. Read 2 Corinthians 4:16, What does it mean for our “inner man” to be renewed while our “outer man” is wasting away? Explain why Paul would say this is a necessary process.
4. Paul lived with an eternal perspective that allowed him to see all hardship as temporary when compared to the weight of God’s eternal glory. This was illustrated with a rope and tape during the sermon. Discuss this illustration and what it means for us to live with an eternal perspective today. In what ways do we spend more energy on planning for retirement than we do eternity?
5. Paul says that Jesus’ life is made visible to the world in us when we endure hardships as we bring glory to God. What does that look like for us today to honor God even in our suffering and draw others to Him?



*Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, "I believed, and so I spoke," we also believe, and so we also speak, knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.*

*So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.*

**2 Corinthians 4:13–18**

*We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you.*

**2 Corinthians 4:8–12**

*...now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, so that through my being with you again your boasting in Christ Jesus will abound on account of me.*

**Philippians 1:20b-26**

*For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

**1 Corinthians 1:18**

*"Only three or four years later, a few months before his death, I saw the same man in the library of our club, a gaunt, gloomy, silent figure, hunched over the fire, staring into nothing, face to face with oblivion. When I left the club some time later, he was standing in the rain without a coat. I offered him a lift; he told me not to bother. He had come to the end, and nothing seemed to matter any more." - Sir Frederic Catherwood*

*"A man of middling size, and his hair was scanty, and his legs were a little crooked, and his knees were far apart; he had large eyes, and his eyebrows met, and his nose was somewhat long."*  
Acts of Paul, appx 160AD

So we can see that what Paul believed about the future had everything to do with the way he lived. And more, the difference between Paul and many Christians lies right here. Many Christians do not truly believe in a future resurrection. Or if they do, they see it as a distant, fuzzy event with no relevance for today. Certainly they do not see it as the grand cosmic certainty that they will actually share with Christ. And they don't believe it with the intensity of Paul. (cont)

For most Christians, the contemplation of retirement trumps the contemplation of their ultimate destiny. For most, eschatology (i.e., the study of the last things) is defined by a single word — retirement. Far more energy and thought is given to enhancing the health and wealth of the final twenty years of earthly existence than to eternal existence. Clearly, we are called to focus on future resurrection and exaltation if we have any desire to live as we ought.

- Dr Kent Hughes