

4/22/12

**SERIES: II CORINTHIANS: THE HEART AND HUMILITY OF
A MAN OF GOD, WEEK 16**

TITLE: WHAT KEPT PAUL GOING THROUGH SUFFERING?

TEXT: II CORINTHIANS 4:10-15

**INTRODUCTION: (1) THE CASE CAN BE MADE THAT NO
CHRISTIAN SUFFERED MORE FOR THEIR FAITH THAN THE
APOSTLE PAUL.**

*** IN FACT, SUFFERING WAS A WAY OF LIFE FOR PAUL, IT
WAS NON STOP AND AS WE WILL SEE IN OUR TEXT
TODAY, IT WAS "ALWAYS."**

**** AND I CAN SAY WITHOUT EXAGGERATION THAT PAUL'S
LIFE WAS LIVED AS A LIVING SACRIFICE FOR THE LORD,
CONSTANTLY BEING DELIVERED OVER TO DEATH FOR
JESUS' SAKE.**

***** DEATH WAS KNOCKING AT HIS DOOR CONTINUALLY.**

****** NOW THE QUESTION CAN BE ASKED WITH THAT SAID,
WHAT KEPT PAUL GOING THROUGH ALL THE SUFFERING
HE WENT THROUGH FOR HIS SAVIOR?**

**(2) WELL, WE WILL SEE TODAY, THAT WHAT PAUL
BELIEVED ABOUT THE FUTURE HAD EVERYTHING TO DO**

WITH THE WAY HE HANDLED SUFFERING AND BEING IN THE GRIP OF DEATH REGULARLY.

*** IN OTHER WORDS, WE WILL SEE THAT WHAT PAUL BELIEVED ABOUT THE FUTURE HAD EVERYTHING TO DO WITH THE WAY HE LIVED.**

**** AND FURTHER, THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PAUL AND MANY CHRISTIANS LIES RIGHT HERE. AND WE WILL SEE THE TRUTH THAT SEPARATES PAUL FROM MANY OF US OVER THE NEXT MONTH OR SO IN OUR STUDY OF II CORINTHIANS 4&5.**

***** AND THAT IS, PAUL HAD AN ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE, HE LONGED FOR HEAVEN AND LIVED LIKE HE BELIEVED IN HEAVEN AND HE WAS ENCOURAGED IN HIS BELIEF IN THE TRUTH OF FUTURE RESURRECTION.**

****** HOWEVER, FOR MANY BELIEVERS, WHO TRULY BELIEVE IN FUTURE RESURRECTION AND HEAVEN, IT IS NOT A POINT OF MEDITATION VERY OFTEN AND IS VIEWED AS A DISTANT, FUZZY EVENT, WITH NO RELEVANCE FOR TODAY.**

(3) IT IS NOT SEEN AS A GRAND COSMIC CERTAINTY AND IS CERTAINLY NOT VIEWED AND LIVED FOR WITH THE INTENSITY THAT PAUL VIEWED AND LIVED FOR IT.

*** YET, HOW AND IN WHAT TERMS WE THINK OF THE FUTURE IS A DECISIVE QUESTION AND CONTEMPLATION.**

**** AND FOR SOME CHRISTIANS, THE CONTEMPLATION OF RETIREMENT TRUMPS THE CONTEMPLATION OF HEAVEN AND FUTURE RESURRECTION.**

***** AND THAT STATEMENT IS NOT A STRETCH FOR FAR MORE THOUGHT, ENERGY, PLANNING AND DREAMING IS GIVEN TO EARTHLY RETIREMENT OVER HEAVENLY RETIREMENT.**

****** AND I DON'T HAVE A PROBLEM WITH, NOR AM I AGAINST RETIREMENT, AS LONG AS IT IS NOT VIEWED AS HEAVEN ON EARTH AND IS USED FOR GOD'S GLORY AND NOT HEDONISM AND SELFISHNESS.**

(4) FOR IT SHOULD BE USED FOR GREATER SERVICE FOR JESUS CHRIST AS IT IS MODELED BY SOME OF OUR DEAR RETIRED PEOPLE AT THIS CHURCH WHO HAVE SERVED SACRIFICIALLY. (ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS LOOK AROUND THIS BUILDING WITH PROJECTS THAT HAVE BEEN DONE AND CLEANING AND OTHER MINISTRIES TO SEE THEIR HAND PRINT ALL OVER THIS CHURCH.)

*** YOU DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS ARE REAL ENCOURAGMENTS TO ME.**

**** YOU ARE NOT LIVING FOR LEISURE WORLD, BUT A FUTURE WORLD.**

***** AND PAUL'S ETERNAL FUTURE, LOOKING AHEAD TO IT, WAS A MOTIVATION FOR MINISTRY AND ENDURING SUFFERING.**

****** HE KNEW ONE DAY HIS SUFFERINGS WOULD BE OVER AND THAT HE WOULD OBTAIN GOD'S REST AND REWARDS.**

(5) PAUL WAS A CHRISTIAN FOCUSED ON THE FINISH LINE, HE LIVED FOR THE ETERNAL, AND GOING THROUGH THE NASTY NOW AND NOW WAS ENABLED BY LIVING FOR THE SWEET BY AND BY, AND CONTEXTUALLY FOR TODAY, FUTURE RESURRECTION, OTHERS AND GOD'S GLORY. (3 THINGS THAT KEPT PAUL GOING.)

*** WITH THAT SAID, I'VE TITLED OUR SERMON FOR TODAY, "WHAT KEPT PAUL GOING THROUGH SUFFERING?" (QUESTION MARK)**

**** AND BY GOD'S GRACE I WILL ATTEMPT TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION BY LOOKING AT 3 POINTS. NO. 1 THE PRINCIPLE OF DEATH AND LIFE, VV. 10-12; NO. 2 THE PROFESSION OF FAITH THAT PAUL MADE ABOUT HIS BELIEF, VV. 13&14; AND NO. 3 THE PRAISE, THE PURPOSE OF LIVING FOR OTHERS AND GOD'S GLORY, V. 15.**

***** SO WE'LL LOOK AT THE PRINCIPLE, THE PROFESSION AND THE PRAISE UNDER THE THEME OF WHAT KEPT PAUL GOING THROUGH SUFFERING?**

****** AND WITH THAT QUESTION AND OUTLINE TO DIRECT US, LOOK AT V. 10 PLEASE, WHERE WE'LL START TO SEE OUR FIRST POINT TODAY, THE PRINCIPLE.**

I. THE PRINCIPLE, (READ V. 10)

A. NOW V. 10 SUMMARIZES THE CONTRASTS, THE PARADOXES THAT PAUL COMMUNICATED IN VV. 8&9.

*** AND V. 10 ALSO TO SOME DEGREE INTERPRETS THESE CONTRASTS OR PARADOXES BACK IN VV. 8&9.**

**** AND SPECIFICALLY THERE ARE 4 CONTRASTS IN VERSES 8&9 THAT WE LOOKED AT LAST SUNDAY.**

***** AND THESE CONTRASTS WERE COMMENTARIES OF PAUL'S OWN EXPERIENCE, THE HARDSHIPS, THE TRIALS, THE SUFFERINGS HE WENT THROUGH.**

****** YET THESE HARDSHIPS DID NOT DESTROY HIM BUT STRENGTHENED HIM, FOR WHEN HE WAS BATTERED AND SUFFERED HE WAS STRENGTHENED THROUGH GOD'S POWER, THEY MADE HIM DEPENDENT ON THE LORD.**

1. PAUL FOUND STRENGTH IN HIS FRAILTY AND WEAKNESS AS A CRACKED CLAY POT BECAUSE THE POWER OF GOD FLOWED UNHINDERED THROUGH HIM.

*** THEREFORE HE WAS SQUEEZED BUT NOT SQUASHED, HE WAS AT THE BRINK OF DEFEAT, BUT NOT DEFEATED, HE WAS PERSECUTED, BUT NOT FORSAKEN BY THE LORD, HE WAS KNOCKED DOWN, BUT NOT KNOCKED OUT.**

**** THEREFORE PAUL'S SUFFERINGS AND TRIALS WERE THE OCCASION FOR GOD'S POWER.**

***** PAUL VIEWED HIMSELF AS A JAR OF CLAY, A CRACKED POT, BUT THROUGH THOSE SUFFERINGS, THE LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL, THE TREASURE OF THE GOSPEL SHINED THROUGH BRIGHTLY.**

****** PAUL WAS AT THE END OF HIS RESOURCES, BUT NOT GOD'S. HE WAS AT THE END OF HIS ROPE, BUT NOT AT THE END OF HOPE. PAUL HAD VICTORY, NOT BY EESCAPING SUFFERING, BUT BY ENDURING IT BY GOD'S POWER AND STRENGTH.**

2. THEREFORE AS WE GO BACK TO V. 10, PAUL SUMMARIZES AND INTERPRETS THE CONTRASTS AND PARADOXES IN VV. 8&9.

*** HENCE IN V. 10 HE SAYS: "ALWAYS CARRYING ABOUT IN THE BODY THE DYING OF JESUS."**

**** NOW IN THAT PHRASE, PAUL SUMS UP HIS SUFFERINGS, HIS EXPERIENCES OF BEING AFFLICTED, PERPLEXED, PERSECUTED AND STRUCK DOWN IN HIS BODY IN SUFFERING FOR JESUS.**

***** AND WE WILL SEE AS WE COME TO V. 11, THAT THE DYING OF JESUS IS ALSO EXPLAINED AS ALWAYS GIVEN OVER TO DEATH FOR JESUS' SAKE, V. 11A.**

****** IT IS TO SAY, PAUL CONSTANTLY FACED DEATH WHICH LED HIM TO WRITE IN I CORINTHIANS 15:31, "I DIE DAILY.**

3. PAUL SAID IN ROMANS 8:35-37 (QUOTE THEM).

*** NOW PAUL WAS NOT SPEAKING OF THESE SUFFERINGS IN THEORY OR SECOND HAND, NO, HE HIMSELF HAD FACED THOSE SUFFERINGS AND MANY MORE FOR HIS SAVIOR, PEOPLE TRIED TO KILL HIM OFTEN, HE LIVED WITH THE THREAT OF DEATH.**

**** AND AS WE GO BACK TO II CORINTHIANS 4:10, HE BEGINS V. 10 BY SAYING “ALWAYS” CARRYING ABOUT IN THE BODY THE DYING OF JESUS.**

***** AND THE WORD ALWAYS COMMUNICATES THE UNRELIEVED, THE CONTINUAL NATURE OF HIS SUFFERING.**

****** HE CALLS IT THE DYING OF JESUS AND THE GREEK WORD RENDERED DYING HERE REFERS TO THE PROCESS OF DYING RATHER THAN TO THE FINAL STATE OF DEATH.**

4. MEANING PAUL CONSTANTLY FACED DEATH. AND PAUL WAS INSPIRED BY THE SPIRIT TO USE THIS GREEK WORD FOR DYING TO EMPHASIZE NOT JUST ONE ACT, BUT THE REPEATED SUFFERINGS THAT WERE DIRECTED AGAINST HIS LIFE IN ORDER TO PUT HIM TO DEATH.

*** AND CONTEXTUALLY, THE TRUTH THAT PAUL WAS CONTINUALLY CARRYING ABOUT IN HIS BODY THE DYING OF JESUS WAS A POWERFUL REBUKE AND REBUTTAL TO**

THE ASSERTIONS, THE ALLEGATIONS OF HIS ENEMIES AT CORINTH, THE FALSE TEACHERS AND APOSTLES.

**** FOR IT APPEARS THEIR ARGUMENT WAS PAUL SUFFERED SO MUCH BECAUSE GOD WAS CHASTENING HIM FOR HIS SECRET LIFE OF SIN.**

***** BUT IN REALITY PAUL SUFFERED AT THE HANDS OF THE ENEMIES OF GOD BECAUSE OF HIS IDENTIFICATION WITH HIS LORD JESUS.**

****** FOR THOSE WHO HATE THE LORD PERSECUTE HIS PEOPLE.**

******* THEREFORE PAUL'S TRIALS, FAR FROM BEING A SIGN OF JUDGMENT OR GOD'S DISPLEASURE, WERE ACTUALLY A BADGE OF HONOR, A BADGE OF PROOF OF HIS APOSTLESHIP, HIS AUTHENTICITY AS A PREACHER OF TRUTH.**

**5. AND THAT'S WHY PAULS SAID IN PHILIPPIANS 3:10&11
-**

V. 10 – THAT I MAY KNOW HIM AND THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION AND THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERING, BEING CONFORMED TO HIS DEATH;

V. 11 – IN ORDER THAT I MAY ATTAIN TO THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD.

*** AND THEN PAUL SAID IN COLOSSIANS 1:24 – NOW I REJOICE IN MY SUFFERINGS FOR YOUR SAKE, AND IN MY FLESH I DO MY SHARE ON BEHALF OF HIS BODY, WHICH IS THE CHURCH, IN FILLING UP WHAT IS LACKING IN CHRIST’S AFFLICTIONS.**

**** AND HERE PAUL’S MOTIVATION FOR ENDURING SUFFERING WAS TO BUILD UP AND BENEFIT CHRIST’S CHURCH. AND PAUL WAS EXPERIENCING THE PERSECUTION INTENDED FOR CHRIST.**

***** FOR THE WAY PEOPLE LASH OUT AT CHRIST TODAY, SINCE HE IS NOT ON EARTH PHYSICALLY NOW IS THE WAY THEY LASH OUT AT HIS SERVANTS LIKE PAUL.**

****** THUS PAUL WOULD SAY IN GALATIANS 6:17 (QUOTE IT).**

6. NOW PAUL RECEIVED THOSE MARKS IN 4 WAYS CONTEXTUALLY GOING BACK AGAIN TO II CORINTHIANS 4:8&9, FOUR KINDS OF SUFFERING WHEN HE WAS AFFLICTED, V. 8A; PERPLEXED, V. 8B; PERSECUTED, V. 9A; AND STRUCK DOWN, V. 9B.

*** AND THESE THINGS WERE THE DYING OF JESUS.**

**** AND PAUL’S POINT IN THE LIFE OF A SERVANT OF JESUS IS ONE OF CONSTANT DYING, JUST AS THE LORD**

JESUS HIMSELF, WAS CONSTANTLY EXPOSED TO PERSECUTION AND ULTIMATELY DYING, SO THOSE WHO FOLLOW HIM WILL GET THE SAME TREATMENT, AS JESUS SAID THEY WOULD IN JOHN 15:20.

***** NOW FOR WHAT PURPOSE? WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF PAUL'S SUFFERINGS IN THIS CONTEXT?**

****** WELL AS YOU LOOK BACK AT THE 2'D PART OF V. 10 "SO THAT" A HINA PURPOSE CLAUSE IN THE GREEK, SO THAT, THE LIFE OF JESUS ALSO MAY BE MANIFESTED IN OUR BODY.**

7. NOW HOW WAS THE LIFE OF JESUS MANIFESTED IN PAUL'S BODY?

*** WELL, THE WORD MANIFESTED IN THE GREEK LIT. MEANS TO MAKE VISIBLE, TO MAKE KNOWN, TO EXPOSE.**

**** THEREFORE PAUL MADE CHRIST VISIBLE IN HIS LIFE, FOR THOSE WHO OBSERVED PAUL SAW THE LIFE OF JESUS IN THE AMAZING POWER THAT WAS DISPLAYED THROUGH PAUL'S SUFFERINGS AS HE WAS NOT SQUASHED, NOT BEFUDDLED, NOT ABANDONED, NOT KNOCKED OUT, GOING BACK AGAIN TO VV. 8&9.**

***** I MEAN TO SEE PAUL'S LIFE WAS TO SEE JESUS, FOR WHOM HE SUFFERED AND THROUGH WHOM PAUL BRILLIANTLY SHINED FOR JESUS IN THE CRACKS IN HIS**

BODY, THE CLAY POT, FOR THOUGH THOSE SUFFERINGS CAUSED CRACKS, THE TREASURE OF THE GOSPEL BRILLIANTLY SHINED THROUGH HIM.

****** GOD'S POWER FLOWED THROUGH THIS SHATTERED JAR OF CLAY NAMED PAUL AND WAS EVIDENCE THAT HE WAS CHRIST'S APOSTLE.**

8. AND V. 11 REITERATES AND REPEATS FOR EMPHASIS THE TRUTHS OF V. 10. LOOK AT V. 11 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 11. NOW IN V. 11 PAUL REPEATS AND EXPANDS WHAT HE SAID IN V. 10 BY SAYING, FOR WE WHO LIVE, WE THAT ARE ALIVE AND SERVING JESUS, SPEAKING OF PAUL AND HIS ASSOCIATES, WERE CONTINUALLY CONSTANTLY BEING DELIVERED OVER TO DEATH FOR THE LORD'S SAKE, FOR JESUS' SAKE.

*** IN OTHER WORDS, PAUL AND HIS FELLOW SERVANTS AND MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL WERE CONSTANTLY PERSECUTED FOR LIVING FOR JESUS.**

**** THEY HATED THEM AND THREATENED THEM WITH PHYSICAL DEATH BECAUSE OF THEIR ASSOCIATION WITH JESUS.**

***** IMMINENT DEATH AGAIN WAS THEIR CONSTANT COMPANION.**

****** AND THE VERB DELIVERED OVER IN THE GREEK IS FROM THE SAME VERB USED TO DESCRIBE JESUS BEING DELIVERED OVER FOR CRUCIFIXION, TO WHAT? TO DIE!**

1. AND LIKEWISE FOR PAUL AND HIS ASSOCIATES LIVING WITH DEATH THREATS AND SUFFERING, BEING DELIVERED OVER TO DEATH, WAS FOR THE PURPOSE, SO THAT, ANOTHER HINA PURPOSE CLAUSE, SO THAT THE LIFE OF JESUS WAS MADE VISIBLE OR KNOWN IN THEIR MORTAL FLESH.

*** AND THE WORD MORTAL HERE REMINDS US OF THE TEMPORARY TRANSITORY NATURE OF OUR BODIES, THAT WILL DIE PHYSICALLY ONE DAY THAT ARE DECAYING EVERY DAY WE LIVE.**

**** BUT PAUL'S AND HIS ASSOCIATE'S SUFFERINGS WERE FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING CHRIST AND THE GOSPEL TREASURE KNOWN.**

***** FOR THEIR SUFFERING AND LIVING WITH DEATH AS THEIR CONSTANT COMPANION RESULTED IN THE POWER OF GOD BEING UNLEASHED IN THEIR LIVES.**

****** THEREFORE THE LIFE OF CHRIST, THE LIFE OF THE RESURRECTED JESUS WAS MADE KNOWN, VISIBLE, EXPOSED THROUGH THEIR WEAKNESS AND SUFFERING AND WE WILL SEE LATER THAT MANY WILL BE SAVED AS A RESULT OF THAT.**

2. SO WHAT WE SEE IS THE PRINCIPLE OF DEATH AND LIFE IN VV. 10&11. WE SEE THE DYING OF JESUS, THE LIFE OF JESUS AND DEATH FOR JESUS' SAKE AND AGAIN THE LIFE OF JESUS USED 4 TIMES IN VV. 10&11, AS THE NAME OF JESUS IS USED 4 TIMES.

*** AND DEATH PARADOXICALLY LEADS TO LIFE, FOR IN CHRIST, DEATH LEADS TO LIFE FOR HIS PEOPLE. AND THROUGH WEAKNESS AND SUFFERING CHRIST'S POWER IS MADE KNOWN THROUGH HIS SERVANTS TO BE GREAT LIGHTS FOR THE GOSPEL, BRILLIANT BEAMS OF LIGHT FOR CHRIST.**

**** AND THE PRINCIPLE OF DEATH AND LIFE IS REPEATED AGAIN IN V. 12. LOOK AT V. 12 PLEASE.**

C. READ V. 12. NOW THE PHRASE, "DEATH WORKS IN US," REFERS BACK TO THE TRUTHS OF VERSES 10&11, THAT PAUL AND HIS ASSOCIATES FACED DEATH EVERY DAY IN PROCLAIMING THE TREASURE OF THE GOSPEL

WHICH BRINGS WHAT? ETERNAL LIFE, FOR THOSE GOD WILL SAVE THROUGH THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL.

*** TO SAY IT ANOTHER WAY, V. 12 SUMS UP ALL THAT PAUL HAS SAID BY REMINDING THE CORINTHIANS BELIEVERS THAT IT WAS THROUGH PAUL AND HIS ASSOCIATE'S CONSTANT SUFFERINGS THAT LIFE (ETERNAL LIFE) CAME TO THEM.**

**** PAUL'S PHYSICAL SUFFERINGS AND LOSS IN HIS MORTAL BODY MEANT SPIRITUAL GAIN TO THE CORINTHIANS.**

***** A. T. ROBERTSON IN HIS WORD PICTURES OF THE N.T. SAID IN WORD STUDY OF II CORINTHIANS, AND I QUOTE: "HIS DYING (PAUL'S) WAS WORKING OUT FOR THE GOOD OF THOSE WHO WERE BENEFITTED BY HIS MINISTRY." (END QUOTE)**

****** PHILIP E. HUGHES SAID IN HIS COMMENTARY ON II CORINTHIANS AND I QUOTE:**

1. IT IS THE UNCONQUERABLE LIFE OF THE RISEN JESUS WITHIN THAT ENABLES HIS SERVANTS WILLINGLY AND PERPETUALLY TO BE HANDED OVER TO DEATH FOR HIS

SAKE, IN ORDER THAT THE SAME LIFE OF CHRIST MAY BE KINDLED IN THE HEARTS OF OTHERS, ENABLING THEM TO WIN OTHERS. THIS IS THE CHAIN OF FAITH...UNBROKEN THROUGH THE AGES.” (END QUOTE)

*** SO PAUL AND HIS ASSOCIATES SUFFERED THREATS OF DEATH AND DYING FOR JESUS, SO THAT ETERNAL LIFE THROUGH JESUS MIGHT BE GRANTED TO THOSE THE LORD GIVES REPENTANCE AND FAITH.**

**** PAUL FACED DEATH REGULARLY SO HE COULD BRING THE MESSAGE OF LIFE, THE PRINCIPLE OF DEATH AND LIFE.**

***** AND WE MOVE FROM THIS PRINCIPLE LIVED OUT BY PAUL AND HIS CO-LABORERS TO THEIR PROFESSIONS OF FAITH, THAT THEY COULD NOT STOP SPEAKING FOR CHRIST, LOOK AT V. 13, OUR 2'D POINT TODAY, THE PROFESSION.**

II. THE PROFESSION, (READ V. 13)

A. NOW IN V. 13, PAUL GOES BACK TO PSALM 116:10A WHERE THE PSALMIST SAID: “I BELIEVED WHEN I SAID.”

*** NOW THE CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND OF PSALM 116 IS VERY IMPORTANT, FOR THE AUTHOR IS**

COMMUNICATING A BIG THANK YOU TO THE LORD FOR SAVING HIM FROM THE JAW OF DEATH.

**** THE PSALMIST WAS IN GREAT ADVERSITY, IN PSALM 116:3A HE SAID, “THE CORDS OF DEATH ENCOMPASSED ME.”**

***** AND LIKE THE PALSIMIST, DEATH HAD ITS HAND AROUND PAUL’S NECK OFTEN. BUT PAUL HAD THE SAME SPIRIT OF FAITH, PAUL HAD THE SAME CONFIDENT FAITH AS THE PSALMIST WHO LIVED WITH DEATH KNOCKING ON HIS DOOR.**

****** FOR ACCORDING TO WHAT IS WRITTEN, WHICH REFERS TO WHAT THE PSALMIST SAID IN PSALM 116, HE BELIEVED THAT THE LORD WOULD DELIVER HIM AND SPOKE AND GAVE TESTIMONY OF THAT, HE WAS BROUGHT LOW, BUT THE LORD SAVED HIM, PSALM 116:6.**

1. SO THE PSALMIST HAD TRUST, CONFIDENCE IN THE LORD IN THE MIDST OF HIS SUFFERING AND THEREFORE SPOKE OF GOD’S GRACIOUSNESS AND SAVING HIS LIFE.

*** WELL, PAUL MAKES AN APPLICATION FROM THIS PSALM UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD, AND SAYS, “WE ALSO BELIEVE, THEREFORE WE ALSO SPEAK.”**

**** IT IS TO SAY, OUR INTERNAL FAITH COMES TO EXPRESSION IN OUR EXTERNAL TESTIMONY.**

***** SINCE WE BELIEVE THE GOSPEL, WE ALSO SPEAK THE GOSPEL. FAITH ENABLES PAUL AND HIS CO-LABORERS TO PROFESS THEIR FAITH, THEY SPEAK, THEY WILL NOT BE SILENCED IN THE MIDST OF THEIR SUFFERING.**

2. SO FAITH ENABLES HIM THERE TO GO ON SPEAKING, PREACHING, BECAUSE THEY KNOW THAT BEYOND THE SUFFERING OF THIS LIFE LIES UNSPEAKABLE GLORIES.

*** SO PAUL ALSO HAD THE SAME SPIRIT OF FAITH AS THE PSALMIST WHO TRUSTED IN THE LORD IN HIS SUFFERING, AND THAT DID NOT KEEP HIM FROM SPEAKING ABOUT HIS GOD.**

**** AND BELOVED, THOSE WHO GENUINELY BELIEVE THE TRUTH CANNOT HELP BUT SPEAK THAT TRUTH.**

***** SO IN SUMMARY IN V. 13, THE APOSTLE PAUL FELT A SPIRITUAL KINSHIP WITH THE PSALMIST BECAUSE LIKE HIM, PAUL ALSO HAD BEEN DELIVERED FROM DEATH.**

****** AND PAUL ALSO BELIEVED IN GOD'S SOVEREIGN CONTROL OF HIS TRIALS AND THEREFORE WOULD NOT STOP BEING A VOICE FOR THE LORD, AS A CLAY POT, LIVING AND COMMUNICATING THE LIGHT OF THE**

TREASURE OF THE GOSPEL. PAUL PROFESSED, HE SPOKE WHAT HE BELIEVED.

3. NOW THE REASON FOR THIS PROFESSION WAS WHAT PAUL BELIEVED ABOUT THE FUTURE. HE DID NOT LIVE FOR THE NOW, BUT FOR THE FUTURE, THEREFORE PAUL FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE TO GET HIM THROUGH THE NOW. LOOK AT V. 14 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 14. NOW PAUL WAS CONFIDENT, HE KNEW WITHOUT A SHADOW OF A DOUBT, THROUGH THE EYES OF FAITH AND TRUSTING GOD'S WORD, THAT THE GOD WHO RAISED JESUS FROM THE DEAD WOULD ONE DAY RAISE HIM FROM THE DEAD.

*** PAUL WAS BOLD AND FEARLESS IN SPEAKING, IN PREACHING THE GOSPEL, HE WILLINGLY PUT HIS LIFE ON THE LINE, KNOWING, HAVING FAITH, THAT THE FATHER WHO RAISED JESUS FROM THE DEAD WOULD RAISE HIM ALSO WITH JESUS.**

****THEREFORE DEATH HELD NO TERROR FOR HIM. AND THAT'S WHY PAUL COULD SAY IN THE GREAT RESURRECTION CHAPTER OF I CORINTHIANS 15, VERSES 55-57 THESE WORDS: (QUOTE THEM)**

***** AND THAT'S WHY PAUL SAID IN ROMANS 8:18 (QUOTE IT).**

****** AND THAT'S WHY PAUL AT THE END OF HIS LIFE WHEN HE AWAITED EXECUTION COULD MAKE THE STATEMENT HE WROTE TO TIMOTHY IN II TIMOTHY 4:6-8 (QUOTE THEM).**

1. BELOVED, PAUL WAS CONFIDENT, HE KNEW THAT GOD WOULD DELIVER BOTH HIMSELF AND HIS ASSOCIATES AND THE CORINTHIANS AT THE COMING OF CHRIST TO HIS GOD, THAT HE WOULD BE RESURRECTED ONE DAY.

*** SO WHAT KEPT PAUL GOING THROUGH SUFFERING? AN ETERNAL FOCUS AND REALIZING THE MORTAL BODY WILL DIE, BUT WE WILL RECEIVE AN IMMORTAL BODY ON THE RESURRECTED DAY, AND THAT ETERNAL SURE HOPE KEPT PAUL GOING THROUGH SUFFERING.**

**** BUT MOVING ON TO OUR LAST POINT, NOT ONLY ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE, BUT LOVE FOR OTHERS AND ULTIMATE PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING TO THE GLORY OF GOD, KEPT PAUL GOING.**

***** LOOK AT V. 15 PLEASE WHERE WE'LL QUICKLY SEE OUR LAST POINT TODAY, THE PRAISE.**

III. THE PRAISE, (READ V. 15)

A. NOW PAUL'S STATEMENT AT THE BEGINNING OF V. 15 THAT HE DID ALL THINGS FOR THE CORINTHIANS SAKE REVEALS HIS SELFLESSNESS, HIS SACRIFICIAL HEART.

*** AND THE ALL THINGS HE TALKS ABOUT CONTEXTUALLY ARE HIS SUFFERINGS, DEATH KNOCKING ON HIS DOOR, ALL THE SACRIFICES HE MADE FOR THE GOSPEL.**

**** AND MANY OF THE CORINTHIANS WERE SAVED BECAUSE OF PAUL'S SUFFERING FOR PROCLAIMING THE TREASURE OF THE GOSPEL.**

***** BUT BEYOND THEIR SAKE, THERE WAS A GREATER PURPOSE AND WE SEE IT IN THE TWO WORDS "SO THAT" OR "THAT," ANOTHER HINA PURPOSE CLAUSE IN THE GREEK, SO THAT WHAT, AS WE MOVE ON IN V. 15.**

****** THAT GOD MIGHT BE GLORIFIED BY THE SAVING GRACE THAT WAS SPREADING TO MORE AND MORE PEOPLE THROUGH THE EVANGELISTIC EFFORTS OF BOTH HIMSELF AND HIS CO-LABORERS, WOULD CAUSE THROUGH GOD SAVING THE CORINTHIANS, THE GIVING OF THANKS TO ABOUND TO THE GLORY OF GOD.**

1. SO WHAT KEPT PAUL GOING THROUGH SUFFERING? IT WAS THAT MORE VOICES WOULD BE ADDED TO THE

HALLELUJAH CHORUS OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP TO GOD THROUGH GOD'S SAVING GRACE OF HIS GOSPEL.

*** AND PAUL'S SPIRITUAL MATH WAS IMPECCABLE. IN THE HERE AND NOW THE MORE PEOPLE WHO COME TO CHRIST, THE MORE PEOPLE WILL GIVE THANKS TO THE GLORY OF GOD FOR AMAZING GRACE THAT SAVES WRETCHES LIKE US.**

**** PAUL REALIZED THAT THE MORE HE SUFFERED, THE MORE THE GRACE OF GOD WAS GIVEN TO OTHERS AND MORE PEOPLE WERE SAVED, THEREFORE MORE PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING ASCENDED TO GOD. AND THE MORE THANKSGIVING ASCENDED TO GOD, THE MORE GOD WAS GLORIFIED.**

***** ONE PARAPHRASE OF V. 15 READS: "THESE SUFFERINGS OF OURS ARE FOR YOUR BENEFIT, AND THE MORE OF YOU WHO ARE WON TO CHRIST, THE MORE THERE ARE TO THANK HIM FOR HIS GREAT KINDNESS (GRACE), AND THE MORE THE LORD IS GLORIFIED."**

IN WRAP UP: (1) I GO BACK TO THE TITLE OF OUR SERMON FOR TODAY, "WHAT KEPT PAUL GOING THROUGH SUFFERING?"

*** WELL, WE GET 3 ANSWERS FROM OUR TEXT TODAY, NO. 1 FUTURE RESURRECTION, AN ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE ABOUT THE OUTCOME OF OUR MORTAL BODIES, WE WILL PUT OFF THE MORTAL TO PUT ON IMMORTALITY.**

**** NO. 2 OTHERS, "ALL THINGS ARE FOR YOUR SALES." PAUL WAS FOCUSED ON OTHERS NOT HIMSELF AND HIS PRESENT SUFFERING, IT WAS ALL ABOUT THE GOSPEL AND THE SALVATION OF OTHERS. HE WAS SELFLESS NOT SELFISH.**

***** AND NO. 3, ULTIMATELY, THE GLORY OF GOD! GIVING THANKS BY PEOPLE THAT GOD SAVES THROUGH THE GOSPEL OF GRACE THAT ABOUNDED TO THE GLORY OF GOD.**

****** THREE GREAT MOTIVATIONS, DON'T YOU THINK? 3 THINGS THAT WILL GET US THROUGH SUFFERING AS IT COMES AND IT DOES.**

(2) AND WHEN IT DOES, WHEN WE ARE AFFLICTED, WE ARE NOT CRUSHED, AND WHEN WE ARE PERPLEXED, WE ARE NOT DESPAIRING, WE ARE PERSECUTED, BUT NOT FORSAKEN, AND KNOCKED DOWN, BUT NOT KNOCKED OUT.

*** WE ARE JARS OF CLAY, CRACKED POTS FOR THE GLORY OF GOD.**

**** AND ONE LAST QUICK APPLICATION. OFTEN TIMES WE (INCLUDING ME) HAVE THE TENDENCY TO CRY OUT TO THE LORD IN SUFFERING WHICH OBVIOUSLY WE SHOULD DO.**

***** AND WE ASK HIM TO DELIVER US FROM SUFFERING THAT WE MIGHT SERVE HIM BETTER.**

****** BUT PERHAPS AND WITHOUT QUESTION WE SHOULD GIVE THANKS FOR OUR AFFLICTION AND SUFFERING IN OUR LIVES AND GLORY IN OUR INFIRMITIES AND SUFFERINGS THAT THE POWER OF CHRIST WOULD REST UPON US.**

(3) AND THAT GOD WOULD BE GLORIFIED THROUGH OUR SUFFERING. (LET'S PRAY)

