***Big Questions: Looking to God’s Word for Answers  
“…always being ready to make a defense…” I Peter 3:15***

**Does the Way I Live My Life Matter after I Die? II Corinthians 4:16-18**

**Exposition of II Corinthians 4:16-18**

**I. Background to the Passage, II Corinthians 4:7-15**

* **Paul constantly faced affliction, persecution, and even death**
* **Paul endured all this for the sake of the Gospel: the knowledge of the glory of God, grace, and eternal life all found in the Son of God, Jesus Christ**

**II. “Therefore, we do not lose heart” (also in II Corinthians 4:1)**

* **We endure, we do not quit, we do not give up, we do not despair, we do not lose our focus**
* **Specifically, we do not stop declaring this treasure of the Gospel of the glory of God experienced, seen, enjoyed in the Son of God, Jesus Christ**

**III. How and why do we endure?**

* **Though our bodies decay, God is renewing our spirit continually**
* **Though we face affliction, it is temporary and insignificant**
* **Though we face affliction, it is producing a weighty reward**
* **Though we face affliction, we keep our eyes on what is unseen**
  + **Because what we can see is passing away**
  + **Because what we cannot see is eternal**

**Conclusion: Nothing that we see in this world, our bodies, money, houses, cars, investments, sports, hobbies, entertainment, will survive. Only God, the souls of people, and things done in the name of Christ for the glory of His Father will remain forever. God will reward all suffering and sacrifice done in the name of Christ and His Gospel, exceedingly, abundantly, and abidingly greater than anything we give up in this life.**

**Next Week: Can I Trust the Bible? Psalm 19**

**2 Corinthians 4**

**7**But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; **8**we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; **9**persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; **10**always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. **11**For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. **12**So death works in us, but life in you. **13**But having the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I BELIEVED, THEREFORE I SPOKE," we also believe, therefore we also speak, **14**knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will present us with you. **15**For all things are for your sakes, so that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God.

**16**Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. **17**For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, **18**while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

**I. Scripture Reading**

* **Read II Corinthians 4:7-18 (Slides)**

**Exposition of II Corinthians 4:16-18**

**I. Background to the Passage, II Corinthians 4:7-15**

* Appropriate passage considering that our world is on fire
* Since the last time I gathered with you, Japan has been devastated by a massive earthquake and tsunami and we are now involved in a new conflict in Libya
* Beyond this, the continued violence in Southern Sudan as independence is sought
* Paul and the early church new something of trials, difficulties and affliction
* **Paul constantly faced affliction, persecution, and even death**
* **Read II Corinthians 4:7-8 (Slide 2)**
* **Read II Corinthians 4:9-10 (Slide 3)**
* **Paul endured all this for the sake of the Gospel: the knowledge of the glory of God, grace, and eternal life all found in the Son of God, Jesus Christ**
* **Read II Corinthians 4:15 (Slide 4)**

**II. “Therefore, we do not lose heart” (also in II Corinthians 4:1)**

* **Read II Corinthians 4:16 (Slide 5)**
* **Read II Corinthians 4:1-2 (Slide 6)**
* We don’t quit even when there are false teachers using the bible to advance their own personal financial gain or reputation
* **Read II Corinthians 4:16 (Slide 7)**
* **We endure, we do not quit, we do not give up, we do not despair, we do not lose our focus**
* “We do not lose heart” which we could say is the theme of this entire chapter
* He opens with this great statement
* **Specifically, we do not stop declaring this treasure of the Gospel of the glory of God experienced, seen, enjoyed in the Son of God, Jesus Christ**

**III. How and why do we endure?**

* How do we endure?
* “We do not lose heart” – we don’t quit, we don’t give up, we don’t despair of this ministry that God has given to us
* This last few weeks, I have come to my tenth year of pastoring here at Matthew Road Baptist Church – a very short time compared to a lifetime of faithful service
* How do I endure so that at the end of my life I can say with even a little bit of conviction of Paul, “I have kept the faith, I have finished my course, in the future there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord Himself will reward to me.”
* **Read II Corinthians 4:17 (Slide 8)**
* **Though our bodies decay, God is renewing our spirit continually**
* 1. We will endure when we value spiritual life over physical life
* **Though we face affliction, it is temporary and insignificant**
* We will endure when we realize that troubles in the life are temporary and insignificant
* Light, temporary, insignificant?
* Read II Corinthians 11:23-33
* **Though we face affliction, it is producing a weighty reward**
* Notice the comparison, light affliction and heavy glory
* 2. We will endure when we realize that these temporary and insignificant troubles produce something – an eternal weight of glory
* This is consistent with Jesus’ statements
* **Read Matthew 5:11-12 (Slide 9)**
* Paul then gives this helpful means of knowing which things are lasting and which things are temporary
* **Read II Corinthians 4:18 (Slide 10)**
* **Though we face affliction, we keep our eyes on what is unseen**
  + **Because what we can see is passing away**
  + 3. We will endure when we realize that all that we see in this life is going away
  + **Because what we cannot see is eternal**
  + 4. We will endure when w realize that the spiritual aspects of this life are the only eternal reality of our lives
* Closing illustration: rope from Francis Chan