

GOSPEL-TRANSFORMATION GUIDES OUR SERVICE TO CHRIST

2 CORINTHIANS 4:1-6

¹ Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart.

² But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.

³ And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing.

⁴ In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

⁵ For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.

⁶ For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Paul tells the Corinthians that because he has been transformed by the Gospel, he serves Christ and them with perseverance and integrity through the proclamation of an unchanging message.

So, what does that mean for us?

▪Gospel-transformation empowers _____ in serving Christ. 1, 6

▪Gospel-transformation requires _____ behavior in the service of Christ. 2a

▪Gospel-transformation is grounded in the _____ message of the Lordship of Christ. 2b, 5

▪Gospel transformation enables personal _____ in serving Christ. 2c

▪Gospel-transformation is only _____ by those who believe in Christ. 3, 4

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Open: How do we know what sources we should trust for information?

Read & Discuss: 2 Corinthians 4:1-6

1. In verse 1 and again later in 16 Paul says, "we do not lose heart." How might the attacks on Paul and his ministry have made discouragement a potential problem for Paul? What are some reasons we may be tempted to get discouraged in being ministers of the Gospel?
2. Paul reassures the Corinthians that his ministry is conducted with integrity according to his response in verse 2. (*See also 2 Corinthians 2:17.*) If you have heard someone teach the Bible in a way that was dishonest or manipulative, what effect do you think it had on those who heard it? How do we discern integrity in this area?
3. How does Paul describe his ministry in verse 5? In what way does Paul's focus help keep his ministry from error? What would it mean for us to replicate being "servants" of others "for Jesus' sake"? Why is this a difficult perspective to keep in ministry?
4. The opponents of Paul apparently accused him of obscuring the Gospel in some way. In verses 3-4, Paul acknowledges that the Gospel is, in fact, obscured ("veiled") to unbelievers, but not because of Paul's teaching. Rather, it is veiled because the god of this world has blinded the mind of the unbeliever. How have you seen this kind of blindness manifest in unbelievers? Do you remember experiencing such blindness before you were a believer? Explain.
5. What two similar phrases are used to describe the Gospel in verses 4 and 6? How do these expressions help you think about the Gospel more fully? How has your faith in Christ been like a light in the darkness?
6. Why do you think Paul connects conversion in verse 6 to the imagery of creation in Genesis 1:3-4? In what way should this humble us? How might it inspire us to share the Gospel?

Apply: How will the light of the Gospel be shone from your life this week? How would you like to see the impact of that light grow?

Pray: Plead with God to open the eyes of the blind. Pray for opportunities to carry the light of Christ into dark places.

2 Corinthians 4:1-6

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