

LIVING THROUGH DISTRESS

THE POWER OF GOD IN CHRIST

*"We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed;
we are perplexed, but not in despair;"*

~ 2 Corinthians 4:8

1. The Present Distress

- a. Distress ~*def.* A state of danger, affliction, anxiety, sorrow, trouble.
- b. COVID, stocks, closures, jobs, life disrupted, isolation, stress, fear, death. Lk 21:25?
- c. We live in a present evil world, but in good times we forget. Gal 1:4
- d. This teaching is not new ... what has changed are the circumstances.
- e. It can be easier to shine the light in the dark. Phi 2:15

2. 1 Cor 1:17-24

- a. 17 – *"but to preach"* - Religion and rituals is not what we do. (e.g. baptisms, ashes, etc.)
- b. 18 – *"foolishness"* - The answer to the present distress is an instrument of death?
- c. 19 – *"to nothing the ... prudent"* - You cannot escape sickness and death.
- d. 22 – *"signs"* - God is real, but not the time for signs. *"wisdom"* is good, but not w/o God.
- e. 23 – *"stumblingblock"* - they want trouble gone.
- f. 24 – *"Christ the power of God"* - The power of God in distress is Christ.

3. 2 Cor 4:1-8

- a. A soldier learns the true value of his weapon in battle not training.
- b. 4:6 – We have light = knowledge. *Of what?* The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.
- c. 4:7 – *"earthen vessels"* - mortal, breakable. *"power ... not of us"* - sufficient grace.
 - i. It requires greater power to live through hardship than to be spared from it.
- d. 4:8 – *"yet not distressed... not in despair"* - why?
 - i. 1) Hope of glory - 2 Cor 4:14, 4:17 ← grace
 - ii. 2) The knowledge of Christ in us – 2 Cor 2:14, 4:10-11 ← grace
 - iii. Grace is most needed when you break down. This is the dispensation of grace.

4. Phi 4:1-9

- a. The Bible is written to give hope in distress. Especially Paul's writings under grace.
 - b. To live is to know the fellowship of his sufferings - Phi 1:21, 1:29, 2:8, 3:8-10
 - c. Read Philippians in light of a people in distress. Want comfort and strength?
 - i. 1 – *"stand fast in the Lord"* - not in yourself or the world.
 - ii. 2 – *"be of the same mind"* - only possible in the Lord these days.
 - iii. 3 – *"help"* - Minister/serve/bear burden gives strength, love not fear - Ro 15:1
 - iv. 4 – *"Rejoice in the Lord"* - Joy not found elsewhere these days. Christ lives!
 - v. 5 – *"moderation"* - instead of fear or wreckless denial. (Turn off the news)
 - vi. 6 – *"in everything by prayer"* - 1Ti 2:2, 1Th 5:18, and receive the peace of God.
 - vii. 8 – *"think on these things"* - sing it, pray it, reflect, take time. Eph 5:19, Co 3:16
 - viii. 9 – "do" what God has called you to do, trust him.
 - ix. 10-13 – Strengthen your faith: learn to be abased to know the power of Christ.
5. Keep it in perspective: you have faith, hope, peace, blessings, strength, riches, reason, ministry
- i. Nothing separates you from the love and power of Christ - Rom 8:35-39