

“The Heart of an Apostle” - Part 6

2 Corinthians 4:1-6



“Overcoming Ministry
Discouragement”

We live in a time when the worldview is inclined away from godliness, and godly living is discouraged in the name of tolerance. We are encouraged to be more culturally relevant by pin balling between the opinions and preferences of others, emphasizing that there are no real absolutes and everyone’s ideas are as good as another’s.

Big Idea: “since our ministry of the New Covenant is from God, we must not abandon our calling”

Our Supernatural Weapon (4:1-2)

“¹Therefore, since through God’s mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. ²Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.” (2 Corinthians 4:1-2 NIV)

- The phrase “lose heart” is a military term that means “to abandoned oneself to cowardly surrender”.
- Our motivation for ministry will be shown in how we handle the Word of God.

Our Supernatural Enemy (4:3-4)

“³And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.” (2 Cor 4:3-4 NIV)

- Paul informs us that the veiling of the gospel is not because of the content or the preacher but because of

the god of this world, Satan.

- This darkness is so thick that the natural man cannot see the light of the gospel of Christ.

Our Supernatural Victory (4:5-6)

“⁵For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake. ⁶For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.” (2 Cor 4:5-6 NIV)

- Preaching is and always will be about lifting up Jesus Christ and making Him the preeminent one.
- Though Satan may blind the hearts of the unregenerate with an impenetrable darkness, God the Holy Spirit says His people, “Let there be light!”

So What?

Paul encourages us stay at our post because by God’s mercy we our doing God’s glorious work. This work is characterized by:

- Being rightly motivated to preach the undiluted, unadulterated God Word. We should not seek the attraction of man but the approval of the God who views all.
- Understanding that we have a supernatural, powerful enemy whose sole mission is to blind the hearts of fallen mankind so that they do not respond to the light of the gospel.
- Realizing that the creative power of God commands this darkness to be light and translates the children of God into His blessed kingdom.

“Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.” (1 Cor 15:58 ESV)