

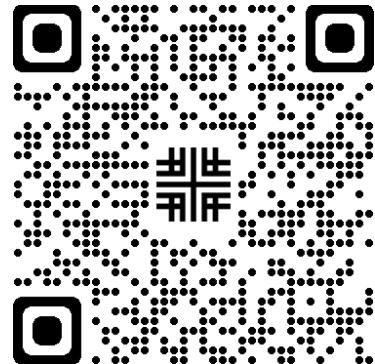
HOME CHURCH

HOME CHURCH GUIDE:

- CHECK-INS: Introduce, check-in
- CARE: Needs in the group
- COMPASSION: What is the group planning? Are you inviting your neighbours to join in?
- GROUP ANNOUNCEMENTS Church-wide and group-only
- DIG IN: "Breaking the Ice" question (group facilitator), discuss questions as a group
- PRAYER: Final questions, prayer huddles for personal requests. Consider breaking into small groups (huddles) of 2-4, by gender, if large enough.

FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION:

1. Check-In and Opener: When have you experienced something being explained but not understood?
2. Read 2 Corinthians 4:1-
3. Many people in ministry are resigning or considering resigning right now. What do you think Paul might have to say to them in light of vvv.1-2? (This question will come up next week too!)
4. How can understanding mercy, and receiving mercy potentially change how one approaches ministry and the Jesus way of living?
5. Paul has an experience of light that changed his life forever. Do people still have damascene experiences? What do you think of that? What role does the local messy church play in this regard?
6. What charges or allegations was Paul facing?
7. What does Paul say/express with the image of light in v. 4-6?
8. What do you think of an active agent of evil trying to keep people from seeing who Jesus truly is? What do you think would be the most effective way to keep people from knowledge of Jesus?
9. What does Paul see as his job description?



CONNECT

- Need Prayer?
- Meet with Pastor Shel
- Get information
- Make Comments
- Ask Questions
- Sign-up for our weekly e-newsletter
- Join a Home Church

JANUARY 16, 2022

2 CORINTHIANS SERIES



PREFLIGHT

Showman or Servant? Shiny or Simple? Staged or Sustainable? Acting or Accountable? This Sunday, we explore the call to authenticity and truth. Authenticity in life and ministry, assumes there is such a thing as inauthentic ministry. But to be a Jesusy human, our belief must be rooted in the pursuit of truth—continuously allowing the curtain to be lifted. Paul continues to teach us what real leadership looks like.

TAKE OFF: Startling Stats and Story

39% of Americans see pastors as honest. After briefly stabilizing, Americans' positive opinions of the ethics of pastors have declined eight of the last 10 years. This marks the second time since Gallup began surveying Americans about their trust of various occupations that fewer than 2 in 5 gave clergy the highest ratings. Two years ago, pastors reached their lowest mark at 37% who say they have high or very high honesty. Last year, they climbed back up to 40% before dipping back down to 39% in the last survey.

2 Corinthians 4:1-6 (Common English Bible)

This is why we don't get discouraged, given that we received this ministry in the same way that we received God's mercy. Instead, we reject secrecy and shameful actions. We don't use deception, and we don't tamper with God's word. Instead, we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God by the public announcement of the truth. And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are on the road to destruction. The god of this age has blinded the minds of those who don't have faith so they couldn't see the light of the gospel that reveals Christ's glory. Christ is the image of God.

We don't preach about ourselves. Instead, we preach about Jesus Christ as Lord, and we describe ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. God said that light should shine out of the darkness. He is the same one who shone in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

FLIGHT THROUGH THE TEXT

Baker Exegetical Outline/Believers Church Outline

A Ministry of Integrity **2 Corinthians 4:1-6**

i. Perseverance of an authentic ministry **2 Corinthians 4:1-2**\On Staying in the Ministry

ii. Why the gospel is "hidden" to some **2 Corinthians 4:3-4**\Why Some Cannot Grasp the Good News

iii. The object and basis of authentic ministry **2 Corinthians 4:5-6**\Enlightened Slave-Ministers

2 Corinthians 4:1 *This is why we don't get discouraged, given that we received this ministry in the same way that we received God's mercy.*

"...he must engage in what Plutarch calls "inoffensive self-praise" (Mor. 539E-545B). According to Plutarch, self-praise was acceptable when telling the truth about oneself would serve a good end, when it was necessary to reply to those who envied one's position, when one had been reproached for one's triumphs, when self-praise could be coupled with an attribution of some of the glory to a god or with a list of one's own minor flaws or faults, in disagreement with some praise offered in favor of alternatives to one's own deeds, ideas, or methods, and when it was necessary to counter the praise and emulation of evil" (Witherington, Conflict and Community in Corinth, 385).

2 Corinthians 4:2 Instead, we reject secrecy and shameful actions. We don't use deception, and we don't tamper with God's word. Instead, we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God by the public announcement of the truth.

Remember the Sophists - high-power story-teller, speakers, who sought fame and fortune by wowing the crowds with their words. But, now Paul appeals to plain terms no trickery, being frank for the sake of those he speaks to and also with good will.

"Everybody has a conscience to which this message will make its appeal, like a message from an almost-forgotten relative, awakening memories and hope" (Wright, 42).

2 Corinthians 4:3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are on the road to destruction.

2 Corinthians 4:4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of those who don't have faith so they couldn't see the light of the gospel that reveals Christ's glory. Christ is the image of God.

THIS AGE:

Evil at Work **Galatians 1:4**

False Wisdom **1 Corinthians 1:20, 2:6, 3:18**

Own Rulers **1 Corinthians 2:8**

Own Passing Perspective **Romans 12:2**

Itself Is Passing **1 Corinthians 7:31**

2 Corinthians 4:4

the god of this world 'God,
has blinded
the minds of the unbelieving
with the result that they don't see
the light emanating from the gospel,
which is Christ's glory;
he is the image of God.

2 Corinthians 4:6 (lines are numbered and reordered)
the one who said, "Light will...."
has shone
in our hearts
which is the personal comprehension
the light,
of God's glory
in the face of Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:5 We don't preach about ourselves. Instead, we preach about Jesus Christ as Lord, and we describe ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake.

2 Corinthians 4:6 God said that light should shine out of the darkness. He is the same one who shone in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

This is about encountering the God who created everything!

LANDING

"At best, parish ministry is characterized by generosity of spirit combined with an evangelical sense of outreach and a prophetic passion for justice---especially for the outsider"

-R. Ferguson.