

We Do Not Lose Heart

2 Corinthians 4



Apostle Paul (~ 5 – 67 A.D.)
By Andrei Rublev (1410)

We Do Not Lose Heart Introduction



We Do Not Lose Heart Introduction

- It's probably good that this chapter appears around the holidays.
- This is a time of year when we are supposed to feel good.
- In reality we may not feel good at all.

We Do Not Lose Heart Introduction

- Maybe you have had an especially tough week – or year.
- The pressure to feel good is only making you feel worse than you do already.

We Do Not Lose Heart Introduction

- Paul has something to tell us.
- “We do not lose heart.”

We Do Not Lose Heart Introduction

Our affliction is temporary – and is nothing compared to the glory that will one day be ours.

We Do Not Lose Heart Introduction

1. We do not lose heart. 4:1-6
2. Treasure in jars of clay. 4:7-15
3. We do not lose heart. 4:16-18

1. We do not lose heart. 4:1-6



1. We do not lose heart. 4:1-6

- 4:1 We do not lose heart.
- Underline that statement. We will see it again later.

1. We do not lose heart. 4:1-6

- Paul is comparing himself with ministers in Corinth who misrepresented the gospel.
- They made false promises and made themselves look better than they really were.

1. We do not lose heart. 4:1-6

- A true Christian faith requires honesty.
- It requires honesty about who we are (nobody special).
- And honesty about who Christ is – Lord – and the most perfect representation of God that there can be.

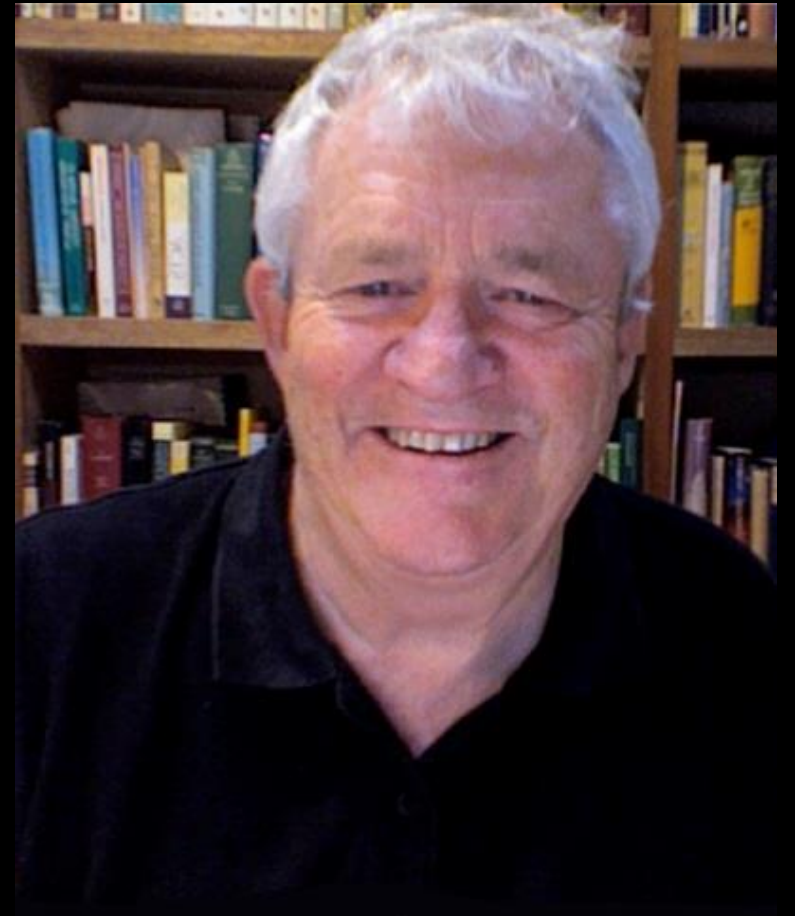
1. We do not lose heart. 4:1-6

- False teachers like those in Corinth still abound.
- What's worse, the real Jesus is ignored and not believed.
- But still, **we do not lose heart** – and this statement is not just for apostles or pastors.

1. We do not lose heart. 4:1-6

The need for perseverance ... is not confined to stipendiary ministers. The New Testament is clear that every believer is given gifts by God with a view to ministry. Times of discouragement come to everyone ... with the accompanying temptation to give up ...

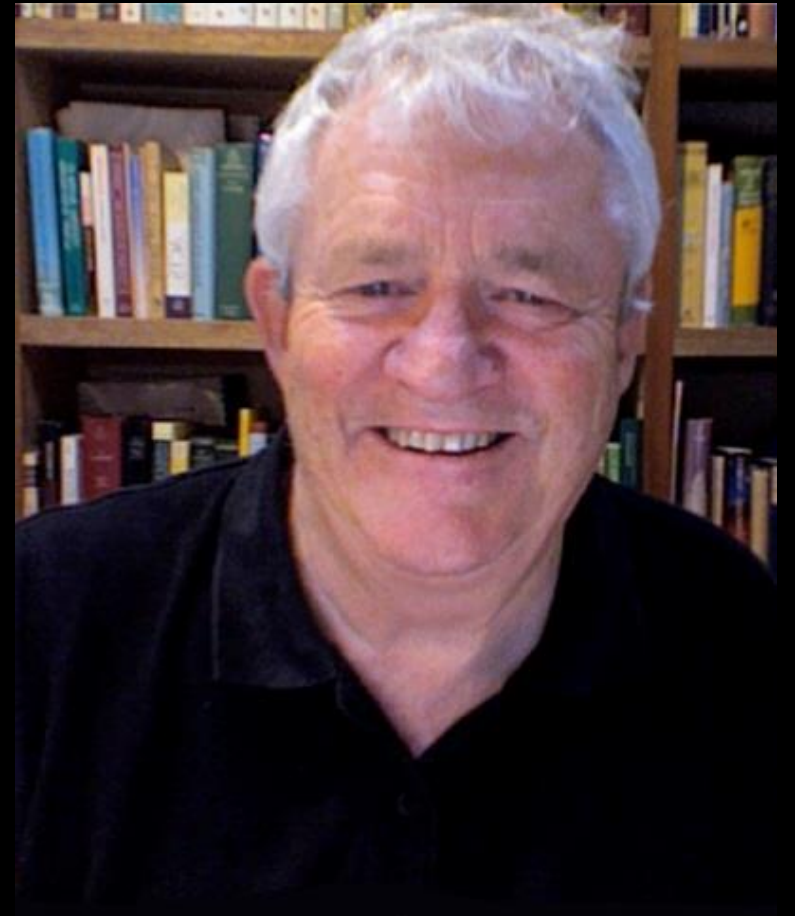
*– Paul Barnett,
Anglican Bishop, Sydney, Australia*



1. We do not lose heart. 4:1-6

Whatever our ministry may be, we do well to say with Paul: Since ... we have this ministry, we do not lose heart.

*– Paul Barnett,
Anglican Bishop, Sydney, Australia*



2. Treasure in jars of clay. 4:7-15



2. Treasure in jars of clay. 4:7-15

- 4:1 We have this treasure in jars of clay.
- We may be imperfect, but we have been entrusted by God with the gospel.
- He has given each one a role, each one a place of service.

2. Treasure in jars of clay. 4:7-15



God has made us the way we are so that we can do the work He wants us to do ... The important thing about a vessel is that it be clean, empty, and available for service ... We are vessels so that God might use us. We are earthen vessels so that we might depend on God's power and not our own.

– Warren Wiersbe

2. Treasure in jars of clay. 4:7-15

- 1 Thessalonians 2:4 (ESV)

But just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts.

2. Treasure in jars of clay. 4:7-15

- 4:13 “I believed and so I spoke.”
- Paul quotes from Psalm 116. It would be worth reading that Psalm all the way through.
- It is a good one in times of discouragement.

2. Treasure in jars of clay. 4:7-15

Our affliction is temporary – and is nothing compared to the glory that will one day be ours.

3. We do not lose heart. 4:16-18



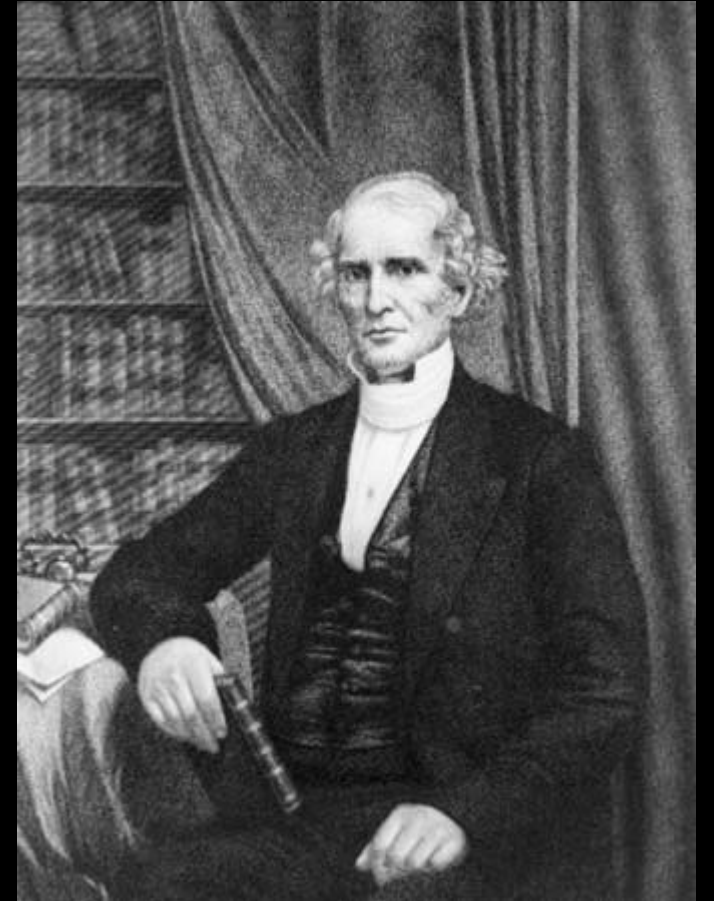
3. We do not lose heart. 4:16-18

- 4:1 We do not lose heart.
- Underline that statement. We've seen it before.
- Let's listen to **Albert Barnes** explain why not.

3. We do not lose heart. 4:16-18

That is, because we are sure of a glorious resurrection, and are satisfied that our present sufferings and labors will advance the glory of God. We faint not, we do not become discouraged and give up the conflict.

*– Albert Barnes (1798 – 1870),
Philadelphia pastor,
vocal opponent of slavery*



3. We do not lose heart. 4:16-18

- 4:17 This light momentary affliction.
- Three things about our affliction:

3. We do not lose heart. 4:16-18

- 4:17 This light momentary affliction.
- Three things about our affliction:
 1. It is light. We can handle it with God's help.
 2. It is momentary. We can be sure it will not last.
 3. It is preparing us for something better.

3. We do not lose heart. 4:16-18

- 4:17 An eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.
- Three things about our future glory:

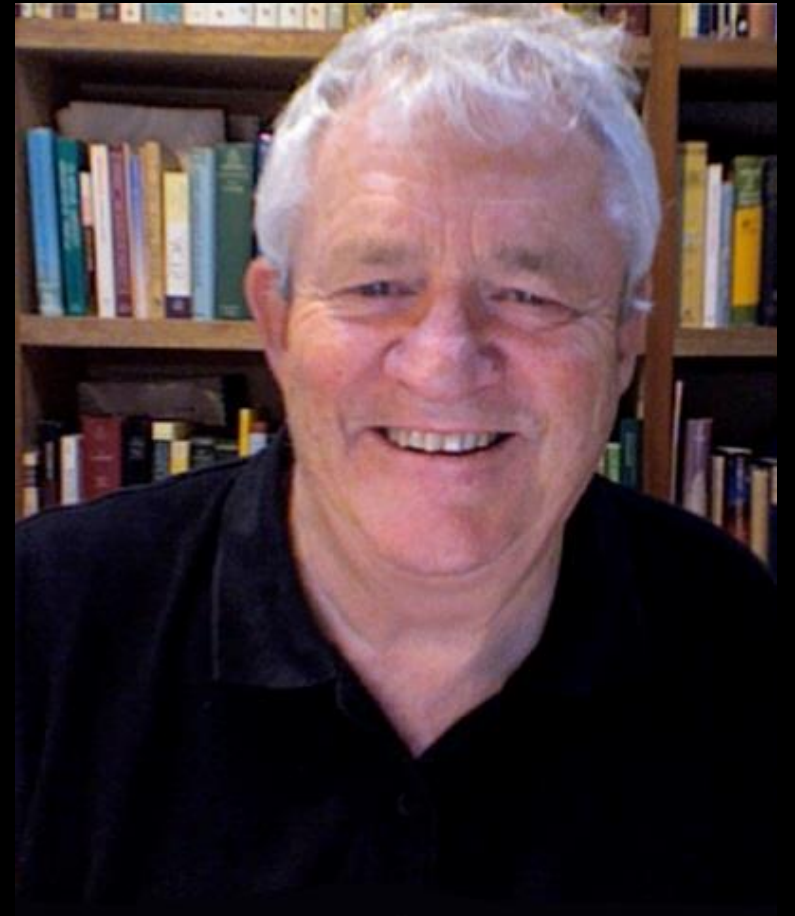
3. We do not lose heart. 4:16-18

- 4:17 An eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.
- Three things about our future glory:
 1. It is **weighty**. It is so overwhelming it cannot even be compared with our trials at present.
 2. It is **eternal**. It will last, and last, and last, and last.
 3. The glory to come is more real than our present affliction.

3. We do not lose heart. 4:16-18

Troubles help us to understand that there is no future for us here in this tawdry, fading existence. Therefore we focus, increasingly, on the unseen, resurrected and glorified Christ ...

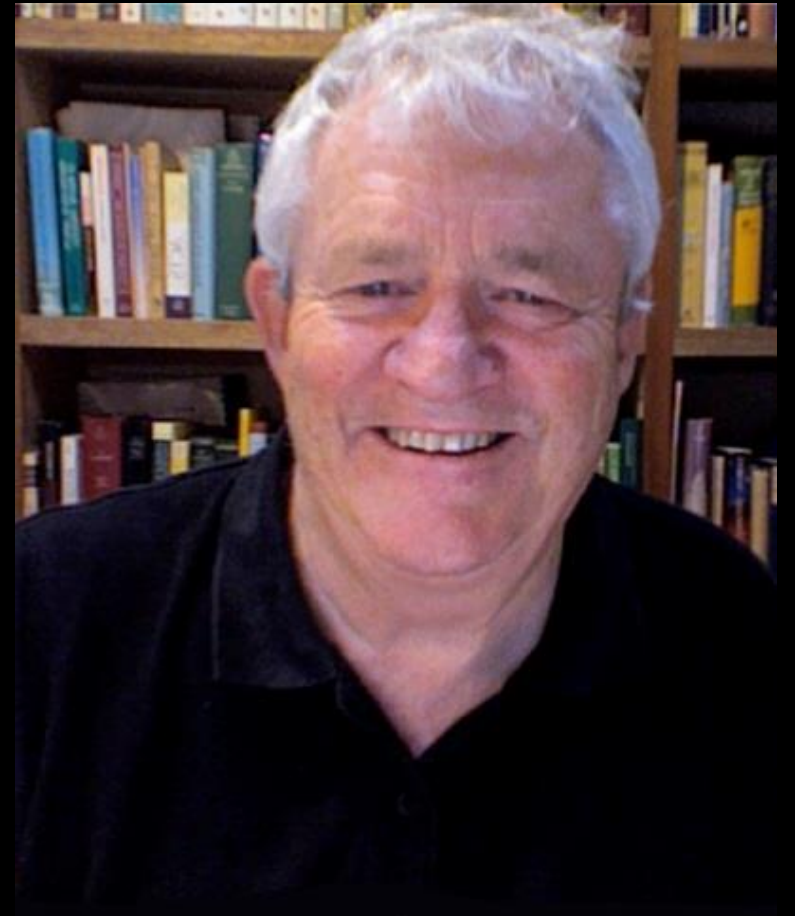
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3. We do not lose heart. 4:16-18

Bodily needs are important, certainly; and so are the needs of others. Yet what we are to long for is not the pleasures and possessions put before us by the advertising agencies in the media, but the promises of the gospel in the Bible.

*– Paul Barnett,
Anglican Bishop, Sydney, Australia*



3. We do not lose heart. 4:16-18

- 4:18 Our future existence is our true existence.
- Our present existence is merely a preparation for that.

3. We do not lose heart. 4:16-18

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We Do Not Lose Heart **Conclusions**



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- Paul's strength was born out of difficulty and hardship.
- It was much better than a shallow or simple optimism.
- It was determination and faith born out of a life of affliction.

We Do Not Lose Heart **Conclusions**

- Three things to take home.

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 2. Consider how God may want to use you to be a blessing despite your difficulties, or even because of them.

We Do Not Lose Heart **Conclusions**

- Three things to take home.
 1. Don't be distracted from the plans that God has for you.
 2. Consider how God may want to use you to be a blessing despite your difficulties, or even because of them.
 3. Adopt a *kick the devil in the face mentality*. When you feel you can't go on, do something to please God and really upset the devil.

We Do Not Lose Heart **Conclusions**

3. A *kick the devil in the face mentality* does things like this when the going gets hard:

- Get on your knees and pray for the lost.
- Give some extra money to a missionary.
- Find some needy person to love on.

We Do Not Lose Heart **Conclusions**

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