



Being with Jesus:

A Devotional From the Book of Mark

Week 4

The Cost of Following Jesus

Day 3

Scripture

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

— 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Prayer:

Jesus, thank You for renewing us as we follow You. Thank You for a vision of the future that fills us with hope. Thank You that what we have coming is so good that it's not even worth comparing our trouble against it. Help us to see these things when we are struggling and wasting away outwardly. Renew our spirits. Amen.

Reflection

In the scripture above, Paul is writing to the church in Corinth. He's been telling them about how he has had to go through some hard times to do the work that God has called him to do. But, at the same time, he is talking about all the good that is coming from his work. Verse 16 says the troubles do not make him lose heart because although he is having trouble externally, he is being renewed in spirit. Because his spirit is strong, the outside circumstances don't break him down.

When Paul looks at the things he will gain for his efforts, he says the things that he is suffering aren't even worth thinking about in comparison. This is a big statement coming from Paul. He was constantly dealing with trouble. Often he was in jail, beat up, made fun of, or even tortured for his faith. At the end of his life, he was even killed for it. When he saw the end coming though, he was joyful and felt like he had finished a race victoriously.

One of the secrets to Paul's joy is that he kept an eye on the eternal and spiritual things. He was looking forward to his reward in heaven and enjoyed the work that God was doing on earth in and through him. He saw the kingdom of God moving on earth and looked forward to the day when it would come in fullness. In the Christian life, we will face trouble. It will be hard. But the result of our faith far outweighs any suffering we have to endure for it.

Questions

Do you ever lose heart?

How do you spend time with God so that He renews you inwardly?

Do you ever consider the good things you are gaining by living a Christian life?