

Waiting Part 3—Faith

May 3, 2009

2 Corinthians 4:7-18

“...for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

I was doing some work on my computer one time. I was careful to not touch anything I shouldn't I was careful to ground my hand on the chassis before I touched the stuff I was supposed to. I get it all together and it doesn't work. I spent much time going back over what I did, checking this and that. I finally discovered my problem was that the power bar was turned off. Sometimes we get so caught up in details we lose sight of the most basic things. Sometimes it is the basic things that aren't working and that shuts everything down. Today we look at faith, one of the most basic things of our... faith.

The context of 2 Corinthians 4 talks of problems. Listen to the chapter again and look at how faith interacts with the difficulties of life.

Faith is following Jesus by living intentionally (by our choices) regardless of circumstances or emotions, having an eternal perspective in the present.

The Object of our Faith: Faith is not based on who we are, but on who God is.

Earthen vessels=cardboard boxes, but not a statement of worth

- 1) *God can do anything He wants (healing, raising from the dead, change weather, create the world/universe, use a man or woman caught up in sin in successful ministry)?*
- 2) *God is aware of all that we do and think (even in the darkest night, or when we are alone, or when horrible things are done to us or ones close to us)?*
- 3) *God knows the big picture, from eternity to eternity, and thus has at His disposal all that information to inform his actions towards me.*
- 4) *God is basically love, and so He interacts in human history out of that context.*
- 5) *Holiness is the character of God, and so reflects in all His dealings with people.*

The Crisis of our Faith: Faith is choosing to rely on God and His power for His promises.

The story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Cf Romans 8:35-39

The Application of our Faith: Faith is lived out in our day to day life.

Hebrews 12:1-2

- 1) *find encouragement in those who have gone before us (fellowship) – this is a choice*
- 2) *lay aside the obstacles and the sin (sanctification) – this is a choice*
- 3) *run with endurance (perseverance) – this is a choice*
- 4) *fix your eyes on Jesus (who modeled this for us) – this is a choice*

2 Corinthians 4:7-18 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.



For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death works in us, but life in you. But having the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I BELIEVED, THEREFORE I SPOKE," we also believe, therefore we also speak, knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will present us with you.

For all things are for your sakes, so that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God. Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Daniel 3: 13ff Then Nebuchadnezzar in rage and anger gave orders to bring Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego; then these men were brought before the king. Nebuchadnezzar responded and said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I have set up? Now if you are ready, at the moment you hear the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery and bagpipe and all kinds of music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, very well But if you do not worship, you will immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire; and what god is there who can deliver you out of my hands?" Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.

Hebrews 12:1-2 "Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."