

Do Not Lose Heart in Ministry

Ministry of the Spirit

2 Corinthians 3:1-12 Amplified Bible (AMP)

Ministers of a New Covenant

3 Are we starting to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, like some [false teachers], letters of recommendation to you or from you? [No!] ² You are our letter [of recommendation], written in our hearts, recognized and read by everyone. ³ You show that you are a letter from Christ, delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

⁴ Such is the confidence *and* steadfast reliance *and* absolute trust that we have through Christ toward God. ⁵ Not that we are sufficiently qualified in ourselves to claim anything as *coming* from us, but our sufficiency *and* qualifications come from God. ⁶ He has qualified us [making us sufficient] as ministers of a new covenant [of salvation through Christ], not of the letter [of a written code] but of the Spirit; for the letter [of the Law] kills [by revealing sin and demanding obedience], but the Spirit gives life.

⁷ Now if the ministry of death, engraved in letters on stones [the covenant of the Law which led to death because of sin], came with such glory *and* splendor that the Israelites were not able to look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, [a brilliance] that was fading, ⁸ how will the ministry of the Spirit [the new covenant which allows us to be Spirit-filled] fail to be even more glorious *and* splendid? ⁹ For if the ministry that brings condemnation [the old covenant, the Law] has glory, how much more does glory overflow in the ministry that brings righteousness [the new covenant which declares believers free of guilt and sets them apart for God's special purpose]! ¹⁰ Indeed, what had glory [the Law], in this case no longer has glory because of the glory that surpasses it [the gospel]. ¹¹ For if that [Law] which fades away *came* with glory, *how* much more *must* that [gospel] which remains *and* is permanent abide in glory *and* splendor!

¹² Since we have such a [glorious] hope *and* confident expectation, we speak with great courage,

Greatest message ever

1 Timothy 1:11 Amplified Bible (AMP)

¹¹ according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted.

Handle it properly

2 Corinthians 4:1-4 Amplified Bible (AMP)

Paul's Apostolic Ministry

4 Therefore, since we have this ministry, just as we received mercy [from God, granting us salvation, opportunities, and blessings], we do not get discouraged *nor* lose our motivation.² But we have renounced the disgraceful things hidden because of shame; not walking in trickery or adulterating the word of God, but by stating the truth [openly and plainly], we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.³ But even if our gospel is [in some sense] hidden [behind a veil], it is hidden [only] to those who are perishing;⁴ among them the god of this world [Satan] has blinded the minds of the unbelieving to prevent them from seeing the illuminating light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Persevere in persecution

- It is treasure that others need.
- We will meet resistance.
- Our life may be threatened.
- We should be compelled to speak.
- We must look beyond the immediate.

2 Corinthians 4:7-18 Amplified Bible (AMP)

⁷ But we have this *precious* treasure [the good news about salvation] in [unworthy] earthen vessels [of human frailty], so that the grandeur *and* surpassing greatness of the power will be [shown to be] from God [His sufficiency] and not from ourselves.⁸ We are pressured in every way [hedged in], but not crushed; perplexed [unsure of finding a way out], but not driven to despair;⁹ hunted down *and* persecuted, but not deserted [to stand alone]; struck down, but never destroyed;¹⁰ always carrying around in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the [resurrection] life of Jesus also may be shown in our body.¹¹ For we who live are constantly [experiencing the threat of] being handed over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the [resurrection] life of Jesus also may be evidenced in our mortal body [which is subject to death].¹² So *physical* death is [actively] at work in us, but [spiritual] life [is actively at work] in you.

¹³ Yet we have the same spirit of faith as he had, who wrote in *Scripture*, "I believed, therefore I spoke." We also believe, therefore we also speak,¹⁴ knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will also raise us with Jesus and will present us [along] with you in His presence.¹⁵ For all [these] things are for your sake, so that as [God's remarkable, undeserved] grace reaches to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of [our great] God.

¹⁶ Therefore we do not become discouraged [spiritless, disappointed, or afraid]. Though our outer self is [progressively] wasting away, yet our inner *self* is being [progressively] renewed day by day.¹⁷ For our momentary, light distress [this passing trouble] is producing for us an eternal weight of glory [a fullness] beyond all measure [surpassing all comparisons, a transcendent splendor and an endless blessedness]!¹⁸ So we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen; for the things which are visible are temporal [just brief and fleeting], but the things which are invisible are everlasting *and* imperishable.

Even when others are in tribulation

- Their persecutions.
- Doing it for you, others, and the Lord.

Ephesians 3:8-12 Amplified Bible (AMP)

⁸ To me, [though I am] the very least of all the saints (God's people), this grace [which is undeserved] was graciously given, to proclaim to the Gentiles the good news of the incomprehensible riches of Christ [that spiritual wealth which no one can fully understand], ⁹ and to make plain [to everyone] the plan of the mystery [regarding the uniting of believing Jews and Gentiles into one body] which [until now] was kept hidden through the ages in [the mind of] God who created all things. ¹⁰ So now through the church the multifaceted wisdom of God [in all its countless aspects] might now be made known [revealing the mystery] to the [angelic] rulers and authorities in the heavenly *places*. ¹¹ This is in accordance with [the terms of] the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him [that is, our faith gives us sufficient courage to freely and openly approach God through Christ].