

Weak yet strong

Series on 2 Corinthians

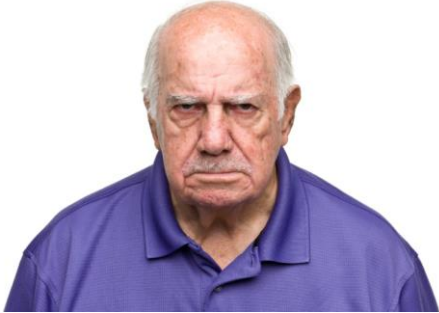
Read: 2 Corinthians 4:1-18; Rom. 7:1-6.

1. Have you ever felt like walking away from your Christian faith? If it is possible to share the reasons, then do so with your group? [Please be wise in what you share!]
2. Steve shared some statistics on American pastors, which included the detail that 71% of pastors stating that they were burned out and battle with depression, and that only 10% will actually retire as a minister due to the stresses and strains of their work. Did these stats surprise you? Have you ever struggled with burn-out yourself? What advice would you offer to others?
3. See v1. Why does Paul link “this ministry” (a reference to the ministry of the new covenant that God gave him to proclaim to the Gentiles, see 2 Corinthians 3) with not losing heart?
4. In which way is the old covenant like a grumpy old husband? In which way is the new covenant a different kind of husband? Read Romans 7:1-6 in two or three Bible translations. See below (on next page) PowerPoint slide used by Steve.
5. Read through v2-6 in various translations. Discuss the relevance of these words with other group members.
6. Read v7-9. What is the treasure, and what is the jar of clay that Paul refers to? Why is it so important not to over-estimate our own abilities?
7. Read 10-15 in various translations. Discuss the relevance with your group members.
8. Read v16-18.
 - ~ What is Paul referring to in our wasting away outwardly, but being renewed inwardly?
 - ~ See Rom. 8:18. What does Paul say about our present troubles in the light of eternity?
 - ~ Is it a good thing to be a “heavenly minded Christian?”

How did the old covenant bring condemnation?

Old Covenant

Mosaic laws



- Telling his wife what to do
- How to do it
- Pointing out faults
- Never lifts a finger to help
- Loads of rules
- He's always right

New Covenant

Jesus and the Spirit



- Written rules on our hearts
- Can't do enough for us
- Standards are high, but
- So encouraging
- Never wags his finger
- Never raises voice
- He has won our hearts

It works !