

TEMPORARY TO
TIMELESS
-WEEK ONE-

Read **2 Corinthians 4:1-6**. As you read the verses, what are some words, phrases or themes that jump out at you?

Read the verses again, only slower this time. What do you think is the main point that Paul was trying to convey when he wrote these words back in the first century?

What part of these verses speaks to the present-day Church?

Now read the verses again, thinking about your life. What from these six verses is a good take away for you personally in your current season of life?

1. One of the very first things that we encounter as we study these verses is that because of God's mercy, Paul has been given a ministry (you could also call it a mission); and that because Paul has a mission, he will not lose heart. Paul and his ministry team have been struggling, read **2 Corinthians 11:23-27** to get a feel for how difficult it has been.

But despite all that, he says because we have a purpose, a mission, a ministry, we will not lose heart. Losing heart means to give up, to be discouraged, to lose the internal fire to keep fighting toward your goal. It is important that we see the power of this concept.

Having a mission or purpose stops you from losing heart.

- Have you ever lost heart while pursuing a goal?
- Have you ever lost heart while trying to grow spiritually?
- Can you identify a mission or ministry that God in His mercy has given to you that is relevant right now, in this season of your life?
- Does your mission stop you from losing heart?

2. Paul goes to great lengths in these verses to remind the Corinthians that he and his team do things the right way. They reject secret, shameful ways of doing ministry and they don't distort the Word of God. While addressing this issue, Paul makes a somewhat shocking theological statement, he says; *"the god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel."*

- Who is the god of this age?
- What do you think the phrase "blinded the minds of unbelievers" means?
- Can you recall a time in your life where you felt blinded from seeing who God was and what Jesus had done for you?
- How might their blindness be removed so they begin to see?
- How do you think we should treat unbelievers since they don't see, understand or accept who Jesus is?

3. There are a few fascinating and interesting elements in verse six, Read it aloud please. 2 Corinthians 4:6; *For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.* Here Paul poetically compares God's work in creation with His work in our hearts. Certainly, this phrase about God shining His light speaks to God's work to open the blinded eyes of unbelievers. Also notable is that in Genesis 1:3 God speaks and creates the light but then God, through Jesus Christ, becomes the light of the world. Jesus not only declared that He was the light of the world, but He also said that we are the light of the world. I am sure that one of the ways God opens eyes that have been blinded is through the example of His followers, shining His light through their lives.

- Do you connect with the idea that you are called to be the light of the world, and that your example helps others see the light of Christ?
- Could you honestly and humbly admit some of the things that prevent you from shining the light of Christ?
- To whom this week will you intentionally try to demonstrate the light of Christ?