

The Daily Grind

2 Corinthians 4:1-9

East Berlin Community Church

Pastor Keith Mosebrook

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Introduction

- My unrealistic view of life and ministry in my early years.
- My struggle with the “daily grind” in the early years of ministry.
- The thrill at Corinth has worn off and reality has set in. The problems and struggles they were experiencing.
- While Paul had many “mountain top” experiences in his ministry career, much of his life was spent dealing with the nitty-gritty of daily life-- the daily grind!
- Paul’s answer to the drain from the “daily grind” is revealed in 2 Corinthians 4.
 - 2 Corinthians 4:1-- *“Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart.”*
 - 2 Corinthians 4:16-- *“Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.”*

The Daily Grind

A. Replace Idealism with a Realistic View of Ministry

1. Ministry is a PRIVILEGE

- 2 Corinthians 4:1-- *“Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart.”*
- a. Difference between “mercy” and “grace”
 - 1) *“Mercy” is “God withholding what we rightfully deserve.”*
 - 2) *“Grace” is “God giving to us what we do not deserve.”*
- b. Paul had experience of God’s mercy and grace
 - 1 Timothy 1:12-14-- *“And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me in the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord Jesus was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.”*
- c. We too have experience of God’s mercy and grace.

2. Ministry is a PARTNERSHIP

- 2 Corinthians 4:2-6-- *“But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God. But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus’ sake. For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”*
- a. **Our Part is to “share the gospel” in a clear, commendable way.**
 - 1) **By our lifestyle**
 - 2 Corinthians 4:2-- *“But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.”*
 - a) Not a hypocrite with a secret life, but authentic, real

- b) Not a deceiver who manipulatively uses God's Word, or twists God's Word to fit one's lifestyle. But rather one who seeks to *"commend oneself to every man's conscience in the sight of God."*
- 1 Peter 2:12-- *"having our conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation."*
 - 1 Peter 3:16-- *"having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed."*
- 2) **By our lips— We have a Simple Message:**
- 2 Corinthians 4:5-- *"For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake."*
- a) Christ crucified and raised from the dead.
- 1 Corinthians 1:23-- *"But we preach Christ crucified."*
 - 1 Corinthians 15: 3-4(paraphrase)-- *"Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day--a resurrection witnessed by many different people!"*
- b) Jesus is our Lord.
- b. **God's Part is to save!**
- 2 Corinthians 4:6-- *"For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."*
3. **Ministry is NOT PROBLEM FREE!**
- a. **We should expect Satanic Opposition.**
- 2 Corinthians 4:3-4-- *"But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them."*
- b. **We must accept human frailty—"jars of clay"**
- 2 Corinthians 4:7-- *"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us."*
- c. **We live and minister in a fallen world, where we will experience the "daily grind" of life. The "daily grind" involves....**
- 1) **Stress**
- 2 Corinthians 4:8-- *"We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair."*
 - 2 Corinthians 11:28-29-- *"Beside the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. Who is weak and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation."*
- 2) **Perplexity**
- 2 Corinthians 4:8-- *"We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair."*
- 3) **Opposition**
- 2 Corinthians 4:9-- *"persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed"*
 - 1 Peter 4:12-- *"Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trials which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you!"*
- 4) **Failure**
- 2 Corinthians 4:9-- *"persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed"*

B. Learn to Trust God in the “Daily Grind”

1. **God’s Purpose for the “daily grind”—so that we might trust Him.**
 - a. God purposefully put the treasure of the gospel in “jars of clay” so that we might trust Him.
 - b. God could have made life and ministry easy for us, but He chose not so that we might trust Him.
 - c. If there was no “daily grind” there would be no need to trust God.

2. **God’s Limits of the “daily grind”—so that we might not give up.**
 - 1 Corinthians 10:13b-- *“He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”*
 - Psalm 37:24-- *“Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; For the LORD upholds him with His hand!”*

3. **God allows us to experience stress, perplexity, opposition, and failures so that we learn to trust His power and rely upon His strength, His resources for life and ministry.**
 - 2 Corinthians 12:9a-- *“My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness”.*
 - 2 Corinthians 9b-10-- *“Therefore most gladly will I boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”*