***2 Cor 4:16-18 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. 17For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 18while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.***

Last week, we learned that by the Spirit of God, dwelling in us, and manifesting the Spirit through us, that we overcome by the Spirit daily – hard pressed in body, not crushed in Spirit; perplexed in body, not in despair in Spirit; persecuted in body, not forsaken in Spirit; struck down in body, not destroyed in Spirit. We carry the dying of Jesus in the body that we might manifest, make unmissable, unmistakable, render readily apparent, the life of Christ within us. When Jesus is our Savior, our life produces the Fruit of the Spirit found in Galatians 5:22-23 - *love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.* When we stand by a tree overflowing with apples, there’s no need to Google what kind of tree it is… its fruit reveals its identity. Likewise, when we are filled with the Spirit, the life of Christ manifest in us, our fruit reveals who we are in Him.

Our scripture this morning starts *Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.*Up in verse 1, Paul starts with - *Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart.* Why don’t we lose heart? Because we have received undeserved, unearned mercy, from God through the Lord Jesus Christ. in Verse 16, Paul reiterates – therefore we do not lose heart – because of the mercy of God, allowing the Spirit to indwell us, placing in us the life of Christ, even as we die to this world. Dying to self is one of the most basic concepts of the New Testament and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In Matthew 16:24, Jesus says we are to deny ourselves and take up the Cross. The Greek word for deny means deny utterly or completely disown self. Here in verse 16, our outward man is perishing, physically dying daily. Yet, our inward man is being renewed day by day – how exciting is that?! We are being renewed, reinvigorated, and revived by the Spirit daily, when we take our eyes off this world, stop living in the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life, and start disavowing self and embracing the Spirit of God. When we have Jesus, we are no longer dry bones in the valley like in Ezekiel 37, but we are an exceedingly great army, very much alive, living for Jesus – when? Day by day.

Verse 17 *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* Our light affliction – this holds the idea of easy, feather light. This word is only found here and in Matthew 11:30 when Jesus calls His yoke easy and His burden light. In Romans 5:3-4, we’re given a roadmap to hope and it leads straight through tribulations. This should not be lost on us. Listen - *And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;**and perseverance, character; and character, hope.* We glory in these light afflictions, which are *but for a moment –* James 4:14 asks - *For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.* A vapor, like the mist that appears as the sun rises on a cool fall morning only to disappear almost as quickly in the sun’s rays. A vapor, a moment… filled with light affliction, which is working a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Affliction is a moment, glory is eternal. Affliction is light, glory has weight. Affliction is a passing vapor, glory is forever. In Matthew 5:11-12, Jesus says - *Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.**Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

Verse 18 - *While we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.* In 2 Cor 5:7, we read - *For we walk by faith, not by sight.* The word look here is an interesting word – it means – take aim at, look intently upon the things unseen, not seen. This is the word used in Matthew 6 for how God sees – He looks intently at the things in secret. In Hebrews 11:24-25, it says - *By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin*. Passing is the same word as temporary in our verse today – a passing season. The things seen are temporary, passing. Those of us that have lived a few years know that what was a crisis ten years ago, ten weeks ago, ten days ago, or even ten hours ago may seem like no big deal now. The things seen are passing away, like a vapor, like a moment, like these light afflictions, but the things unseen, like the eternal weight of glory, like the life of Jesus living within us… these are the things we focus intently upon.

This week, let’s check the focus – things of the world or things of eternity. When we look intently upon the world, we’re apt to lose heart. Paul says – look intently at the mercy we’ve received, the Spirit within us, and the eternal weight of glory, and we will not lose heart. Affliction or Eternal Glory –

the choice is ours each morning. Let’s focus wisely.