

# 2 CORINTHIANS 4:1-18 / DECEMBER 7

## SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

### Read & Pray

Read **2 Corinthians 4:1–18** together. After reading, spend 60 seconds in silent listening prayer. What applications or thoughts about the text came into your mind? Might those be from the Spirit? Close with a prayer to God for wisdom to apply these truths.

### Sermon Recap (to *apply*, not rehash the sermon)

Review the sermon with your group, highlighting the following:

- "For Jesus, the way to glory led through the cross. His humility led to his exaltation; his weakness led to triumph."
- "God saved us ... not through prosperity but through suffering. The greatest act of God involved an unjust cross and unfair suffering."
- "Life in the world only comes through death in the church ... spiritual life among your friends ... comes only through death in you."
- "One of the most important truths ... about God's glorification of the believer is that it happens stage by stage, with the inside happening first."

### Group Discussion

1. When you hear Paul describe believers as "jars of clay" holding a treasure, what images or feelings come to mind about weakness and God's power?
2. How have you seen the "theology of glory" (equating God's favor with visible success) shape expectations of the Christian life, in yourself or in church culture?
3. Paul says our "light momentary affliction" prepares an "eternal weight of glory." How does this perspective challenge or encourage you in current trials?
4. Pastor J.D. said, "Life in the world only comes through death in the church." How does this reality challenge our approach to being a witness, knowing that our sacrifice or suffering may be the very thing that brings life to others?
5. Paul contrasts our outer self wasting away with our inner self being renewed. What practices or habits help you pay attention to your inner life?

#### SCRIPTURE

- ☐ "But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God." - 1 Corinthians 1:27–29 (ESV)

#### PRAYER

- Ask God to sustain those in our congregation
- ☐ who are suffering, reminding them that their inner self is being renewed day by day.
- ☐ Pray that the Holy Spirit would display his surpassing power through our weaknesses, helping us embrace our identity as fragile jars of clay.