

Question: call quotes Psalm 116: 10. True faith always compels a person to do *what*?

2 Cor 4:13-14 \_\_\_\_\_

Question: When we quote a passage from the Bible, we generally quote the whole thing. But Paul sometimes (as here) quoted one verse, knowing that his hearers would be familiar with the whole passage. Open Psalm 116 and look over verses 1-10. What kind of experiences was the psalmist going through?

Psalm 116:1-10 \_\_\_\_\_

Question: For whom did Paul say he was doing everything, suffering everything, enduring everything?

2 Cor 4:15 \_\_\_\_\_

Question: ...and to what end?

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**Questions for Further Discussion:**

Some have said that *humility* is the supreme Christian virtue – and the hardest to achieve. Why is that?

How *should* the “clay pot perspective” make Christians very different from non-Christians?

Paul was at constant risk of persecution and death because of the Gospel faith he lived and proclaimed. How has that been different, at least superficially, for us in America? In what ways might that be changing?

**II CORINTHIANS**  
**PAUL'S MOST PERSONAL EPISTLE**

**Part 7 – 2 Cor. 4:1-15 Earthen Vessels**

**Warm-up:** How did you settle on your profession? Was it what you always wanted to do, or did you kind of “fall into it”? Regardless of your profession, every Christian is first a “minister” (servant) of God – in what ways is your calling as God’s servant different than your profession?

Question: Paul has just finished discussing the superiority of the New Covenant over the Old. Paul's was the ministry of the New Covenant! What had Paul received from God that helped him carry out his ministry without losing heart?

2 Cor 4:1 \_\_\_\_\_

Question: Despite their many trials, Paul and his companions carried on with their ministry. How does Paul describe their ministry in a *negative* way?

2 Cor 4:2 \_\_\_\_\_

Question: What do you think the Apostle means by “the hidden things of shame”?

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Question: Also in verse 2, how does Paul describe their ministry in a *positive* way?

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Question: So far, Paul has used the term “veiled” in two ways —the face of Moses was veiled, and the hearts of the Jews were veiled. What is “veiled” in verse 3?

2 Cor 4:3 \_\_\_\_\_

Question: Who is it that continually tries to blind people, and keep them from hearing and believing the Gospel?

2 Cor 4:4 \_\_\_\_\_

Question: How does this verse “pile up terms” in describing Christ?

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Question: What do you think it means that Jesus is “the image of God”

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Question: the content of Paul's preaching is the same as ours and is, in fact, the center of our Christian confession. It can be expressed in four words. What are they?

2 Cor 4:5 \_\_\_\_\_

Question: in fact, not only was Paul not preaching himself and exalting himself, his ministry relegated him to what lowly role?

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Question: how was Paul's conversion—and yours!—similar to God’s creation of light at the beginning of the world?

2 Cor 4:6 \_\_\_\_\_

Question: Where is it that we see “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God”? And what do you think that means?

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Question: Paul has described at length the glorious nature of this Gospel treasure. Now the word “but” introduces a contrast. Ironically, where is this precious treasure carried?

2 Cor 4:7 \_\_\_\_\_

Question: The whole rest of the chapter is about the fragile nature of these vessels. Why did God choose flawed, fragile people to bear the glorious Gospel treasure?

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Question: in what four ways does Paul emphasize the fact that believers will suffer, but that their gracious God will not allow them to be destroyed?

2 Cor 4:8-9 \_\_\_\_\_

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Question: Paul may have been thinking of an experience in his own life—what happened then?

Acts 14:19-20 \_\_\_\_\_

Question: Jesus told us that His followers will suffer, as He did. But although we carry about His suffering, what else of His is “manifested” in us?

2 Cor 4:10 \_\_\_\_\_

Question: Paul restates the point in slightly different terms. In what way does verse 11 speak to the fragile nature of “clay pots” like us?

2 Cor 4:11-12 \_\_\_\_\_