

Not What is Seen, but What is Unseen

II Corinthians 4:13-18

KEY VERSES

But just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture—"I believed, and so I spoke"—we also believe, and therefore we also speak, ¹⁴ because we know that the one who raised Jesus^[a] will also raise us with Jesus and will present us with you in his presence. ¹⁵ Indeed, everything is for your sake, so that grace, when it has extended to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God. ¹⁶ So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our slight, momentary affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, ¹⁸ because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen, for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

We pick back up this week in 2 Corinthians as Paul addresses the church in Corinth, reminding them to refocus their faith. This passage has been a strong reminder that scripture anchors our faith, as both Jesus and Paul so frequently point us back to the Old Testament each time they say, "it is written." Scripture is the lens through which we see and understand who God is, and our greatest tool for growing and anchoring our faith. **When you think about your own scripture fluency, where do you fall along this scale?**

- 1) *Unconsciously incompetent* - you don't know what you don't know
- 2) *Consciously incompetent* - you are aware of what you don't know
- 3) *Consciously competent* - you know it but you have to think about it
- 4) *Unconsciously competent* - it becomes like breathing

Scripture is meant to be active and should flow through every aspect of our life, changing how we live. It is easy sometimes to have "sideline faith," and not be as brave as we'd like when God says, "do you believe?" An active faith trusts God's sovereignty over every aspect of our lives, without knowing the details of how things will unfold. **What are the things you worry most about, where your faith needs to become more "active" so you can really trust God in those details?**

Reminding the Corinthians that faith is a long game and not a sprint, Paul advises them to lift their heads and focus on what is eternal. As we all know, this is easier said than done. Chinese pastor George Chen was interred in a Chinese labor camp where his primary job was to shovel would-be fertilizer from a cesspool. Alone in that cesspool, through reciting scripture and singing hymns, he transformed it into his own private garden with God. See an interview with

George [here](#). **What practices do you currently have, or would you like to try that can help scripture become more readily accessible to you?**