



## Taking Some Time to Reconnect with God

May 25, 2020

### Prayer:

O Christ, You have indeed, been raised from the dead. Therefore, let us live as though death no longer holds us hostage, putting our hope in the One who goes before us, both in death and in eternal life, our Savior, Christ. Amen.

**Read:** 2 Corinthians 4:1-15

### **2 Corinthians 4:1-15** New International Version (NIV)

4 Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. <sup>2</sup> Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. <sup>3</sup> And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. <sup>4</sup> The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. <sup>5</sup> For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. <sup>6</sup> For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.

<sup>7</sup> But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. <sup>8</sup> We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; <sup>9</sup> persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. <sup>10</sup> We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. <sup>11</sup> For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. <sup>12</sup> So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

<sup>13</sup> It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." Since we have that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak, <sup>14</sup> because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you to himself. <sup>15</sup> All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.

### Reflect:

It's important to remember. That's what Memorial Day is about: remembering those who have gone before us. We remember those who were involved in the great events of history. And we remember those who, though not famous, were important to us—family, friends, mentors, examples. We remember those who shaped us and shaped the world in which we live. We remember them and their stories. To steal a line, it's history that deserves to be remembered.

Paul had been having it rough. He'd continued to face suffering and persecution as he and his colleagues shared the Gospel. His relationship with the Christians at Corinth had become strained. He'd had to call them out, to correct them. It was hard, and they hadn't taken it really well either. It was bad enough that he'd decided not to visit them, but to write to them instead.

And yet, as difficult as things were, Paul could celebrate with them that he wasn't crushed, wasn't in despair, not abandoned nor destroyed. He could say all that because he remembered the story of Jesus. He remembered Jesus' story and defined his experience in light of it. His suffering made sense because Jesus had suffered. Looming death only reminded him of Jesus'

death. He found his hope in the certainty that as Jesus had been raised from the dead, so would he—and so would his fractious, beloved, perplexing sisters and brothers in Corinth. When he asked, “Why?” he answered with, “Because of Jesus.” He saw himself as a fragile, cheap container for the priceless gift of the Gospel. And in that he saw the power of God at work in spite of his frailty.

Paul’s secret for peace in the midst of difficulty—life threatening difficulty—was to remember the story of Jesus, and to remember that he’d been claimed by God. As he continued to look at Jesus’ life, he was able to celebrate the hope that beyond the suffering, beyond death, there was glorious life. And he celebrated that that life was at work in him even now. He remembered. And the more he remembered, the more the life of Jesus was revealed in him.

What does what you remember reveal today?

**Be Blessed:**

May you find hope and peace that death has been swallowed up in victory.  
Amen.