

# **FOUR RULES TO LIVE BY**

Part 15 of Foundations 260. 2 Corinthians 4:5-18.  
Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. May 4, 2025.

## **FOUNDATIONS 260**

**We're reading through the New Testament, a chapter a day.**

- Find the full reading schedule at [FamousGod.com](http://FamousGod.com).

## **OPPOSITION IN CORINTH**

**Paul's opponents thought he was weak and unqualified.**

- Paul lays out his philosophy of ministry to win them over.
- Paul's insights make a great philosophy of life for all of us.

## **2 CORINTHIANS 4:5-18**

For we are not proclaiming ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus's sake. 6 For God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

7 Now we have this treasure in clay jars, so that this extraordinary power may be from God and not from us. 8 We are afflicted in every way but not crushed; we are perplexed but not in despair; 9 we are persecuted but not abandoned; we are struck down but not destroyed. 10 We always carry the death of Jesus in our body, so that the life of Jesus may also be displayed in our body. 11 For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus's sake, so that Jesus's life may also be displayed in our mortal flesh. 12 So then, death is at work in us, but life in you.

13 And since we have the same spirit of faith in keeping with what is written, I believed, therefore I spoke, we also believe, and therefore speak. 14 For we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you. 15 Indeed, everything is for your benefit so that, as grace

extends through more and more people, it may cause thanksgiving to increase to the glory of God.

16 Therefore we do not give up. Even though our outer person is being destroyed, our inner person is being renewed day by day. 17 For our momentary light affliction is producing for us an absolutely incomparable eternal weight of glory. 18 So we do not focus on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

## **FOUR RULES TO LIVE BY**

### **Rule One: Represent the Genuine Jesus - verses 5-6.**

5 “For we are not proclaiming ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord.”

- Paul’s opponents wanted a positive, dynamic message.
- God chose to reveal himself on a cross, not on a throne.
- God shines through the cross - verse 6.
- The implication for our philosophy of life: Represent the humble, rejected, crucified Jesus; the only genuine Jesus.
- Give your life to service, generosity, and self-giving love.

### **Rule Two: Do Hard Things - verses 7-12.**

7 “so that this extraordinary power may be from God and not from us.”

- Paul expected success in his apostolic ministry because it did not depend on him but on God’s extraordinary power.
- When Paul preached about the death of Jesus, the life of Jesus was displayed.
- The implication for our philosophy of life is to go for it. Do hard things. Don’t limit God.

- We may feel like pots of clay - weak, fragile, nothing special - but God “is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works in us” (Ephesians 3:20, CSB).

### **Rule Three: Live for the Glory of God - verses 13-15.**

- Paul’s goal was God’s glory, so he preached the gospel.  
15 “... as grace extends through more and more people, it may cause thanksgiving to increase to the glory of God”
- Paul’s preaching was urgent because he believed in the final judgment when we will all be “presented” before the judge.
- God gets glory when we are presented: saved, forgiven, and grateful.
- The implication for our philosophy of life is to live with purpose: to get glory for - see Matthew 15:16 and Ephesians 3:21.

### **Rule Four: Never Give Up - verses 16-18.**

16 “Therefore, we do not give up.”

- Paul’s knew that his hardships were producing an “absolutely incomparable eternal weight of glory.”
- He believed he was being transformed and would one day be raised in an immortal body to share in Christ’s glory.
- Paul kept his eye on the prize and refused to quit: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith” 2 Timothy 4:7 (CSB).
- The implication for our philosophy of life is to be tough.
- Some things test our faith and we feel like walking away. Hang tough.
- Keep your eyes on the prize.

# SMALL GROUP GUIDE

## Review

- Review Peter's May 4<sup>th</sup> teaching and study guide.
- What were the highlights of Peter's teaching?
- What questions do you have about the passage or Peter's teaching?
- Use the S.P.E.C.K. method to reflect on and apply the teaching:
  - S: Sins to confess
  - P: Promises to claim
  - E: Examples to follow
  - C: Commands to obey or Christ to rest in
  - K: Knowledge or insights to consider

## Discuss

- Discuss ways to us use our personalities, skills, and relationships to represent the humility, generosity, and self-giving love of Jesus.
- When hard times roll, what helps you to do hard things for God? How does Psalm 42:5 help?
- What are some ways you can participate more fully or help build up your church so that it continues to display God's glory to the world?
- What are some ways to keep your eyes on the "prize" of eternity rather than being overwhelmed by present hardships? Share about a time when your faith was tested. What helped you to persevere?

## Prayer

- Pray for more grace to follow the four rules in your life.
- Pray Colossians 1:9-13 for the group and the Cornerstone.