

Dear Heavenly Father,

### *Praise*

Paul said, “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come” (2 Cor 5:17). I praise you today as the God who is reconciling the world to yourself through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. He lived a sinless life and died a sinner’s death, so that in him I might become “the righteousness of God” (2 Cor 5:21). Instead of counting my sins against me, you made me an ambassador for Christ, entrusting to me the message of reconciliation. Praise the Lord!

### *Today in Your Word*

Today you told me the second part of Paul’s fourth letter to the church at Corinth (called 2 Corinthians). Having explained the changes he made to his original travel plans, Paul continued by denouncing those who peddled God’s word for profit (2 Cor 2:17). They relied on “letters of recommendation” to win over their followers, but Paul let the transformed lives of the Corinthians speak for him. They were a living testament to the glory of the new covenant through the ministry of the Spirit. The old covenant could not save the lost; it could only find them guilty as law-breakers and sentence them to death. In this way, it had a ministry of condemnation, for it was only when a sinner turned to Jesus that they could be set free (2 Cor 3:16–17). This teaches me that I share in the ministry of glory which the old covenant foreshadowed, for the gospel I preach has the power to free those held captive by the ministry of death. Since I have “such a hope,” I should proclaim it boldly (2 Cor 3:12). I should behold the glory of Jesus and yield to the Spirit who is transforming me into his image. Paul went on to say that he refused to “practice cunning or to tamper with God’s word.” Instead, he was open and truthful, and he did not proclaim himself, but Jesus Christ as Lord. He did his best to reflect the glory of Christ in his life, knowing that Satan “blinded the minds of unbelievers” and realizing that his physical afflictions showed that “the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us” (2 Cor 4:4, 7). This teaches me not to lose heart when I suffer for the gospel, for my “light momentary affliction” is preparing for me “an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison” (2 Cor 4:17). I should imitate the example of Paul and minister Christ to others just as he did. Paul continued by reminding the Corinthians that the things which are seen are transient, while the things that are unseen are eternal. He knew that if his body, his “earthly home,” was destroyed, there was a “house not made with hands” that you had prepared for him. This teaches me to be of good courage, for to be absent from the body is to be present with you. For now, I must walk by faith and not by sight. Paul concluded this part of the letter by urging the Corinthians not to receive your grace in vain, for “now is the day of salvation.” Their bodies were the temple of the living God and this meant they should never yoke themselves unequally with unbelievers. Rather, they were to cleanse themselves “from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God” (2 Cor 7:1). This teaches me the importance of purity and holiness in my daily life. I must never allow sin or evil to pollute the sanctuary of the Holy Spirit.

### *Reflection*

Paul said that he made it his aim to please you in all things, for he knew that he would one day stand before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:9–10). Is this the goal of my life? Do I purpose every day to do all things for your glory?

### *Request*

Father, help me to have a godly grief toward sin, a grief that drives me to repentance. Such sorrow will lead to a salvation without regret, and it will produce in me a fresh earnestness and zeal for the gospel.

### *Thanksgiving*

“Thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere” (2 Cor 2:14). Hallelujah!

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

*Suggested Hymn: “[Show Me Thy Face](#)” – Anonymous.*

*Meditation Verse: [2 Corinthians 3:18](#).*