

GLIMPSES OF GLORY
Loosening Your Grip IX
2 Corinthians 4:6-5:4

INTRODUCTION

- A. Think back to first experience in futility.
 - 1. Finishing a job, only to find out it must be done again.
 - 2. Wedding day – packed for honeymoon, car won't start.
 - 3. Minor car problem turns major.
- B. Not limited to those who struggle giving God control.
 - 1. Life is filled with futility.
 - a. Disappointments set in.
 - b. We lose hope.
 - c. Ready to give up.
 - d. [School] we finish one paper only to have to start another.
 - e. We pay off one loan, only to have to take out another.
 - f. Job doesn't satisfy life long goals.
 - g. The list of things we can't do, longer than list of things we still want to do.
 - 2. But with God in charge, He turns our futilities in life to glory.

I. THE STRUGGLES OF PAUL.

- A. The first 7 chapters, defense of his work.
 - 1. "If you are chosen by God to preach Christ..."
 - a. Why have you been taken to public squares and flogged?
 - b. Why has God not protected you?
 - c. Why did God allow you to suffer humiliation and defeat in Ephesus?
 - 2. Why does it seem that God is not meeting the needs of His people?
 - 3. Misunderstand Rom. 8:28, "...*God causes all things*..."
- B. Paul discusses control and hardship.
 - 1. 1:9 – circumstances force "rely on God."
 - 2. 1:8 – burdens force giving up control.
 - 3. 5:20 – God gains controls, ambassadors.
 - 4. 2:14 – in spite of struggles, God [always] leads.
- C. God in control does not remove futility.
 - 1. 2 Cor. 4:8-9
 - 2. Righteous living involves futility.

II. FUTILITY VS. PROMISE.

- A. Clay pots versus heavenly vessels, 4:7.
 - 1. Now we crack, break, and leak.
 - 2. We anticipate the heavenly vessels.
- B. Earthly tents versus heavenly houses, 5:1.
 - 1. Coleman like tents which rot and mold.
 - 2. We expect heavenly home, no mortgage.
- C. Nakedness versus heavenly clothes, 5:2-4.
 - 1. Wardrobes wear out, little protection.
 - 2. We look to wardrobes that protect from danger and disease.

III. HOPE, 2 Cor. 4:14.

- A. God has raised Jesus from the dead.
 - 1. 2 Cor. 4:8-9, Paul adds, “but not.”
 - 2. Mortality loses with the resurrection.
- B. God who raised Jesus will raise us, too!
 - 1. God will write the final chapter.
 - 2. No sequel to the final resurrection.
- C. God will bring us into His presence.
 - 1. Rev. 19:9 – “*Then he said to me, “Write, ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’”*”.
 - 2. Rev. 22:4 – “*...they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.*”

CLOSING

- A. Futility is Swallowed Up.
 - 1. 2 Cor. 5:4 – mortality swallowed up.
 - 2. 1 Cor. 15:54-57 – where is victory?
 - 3. Isa. 25:6-8 – God to swallow up death for all time.