

# 2 Corinthians 4:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;

## Analysis

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**Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not**—Paul grounds his apostolic perseverance in divine mercy (eleēthēmen, ἡλεήθημεν, 'we were shown mercy'), not human ability. The diakonia (διακονία, 'ministry') refers specifically to the new covenant ministry of the Spirit outlined in chapter 3. Ouk enkakōmen (οὐκ ἐγκακοῦμεν, 'we do not lose heart') is a defiant declaration against despair.

Paul's ministry flows from received mercy, not earned privilege—he who once persecuted the church (1 Cor 15:9) now serves it by grace. This grounds all faithful ministry: we serve because we have been served, forgive because we have been forgiven, show mercy because we have received mercy. The therefore connects to 3:18's transformation by the Spirit—beholding Christ's glory empowers endurance.

## Historical Context

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Written around 55-56 AD from Macedonia during Paul's third missionary journey, this letter addressed opposition to his apostolic authority in Corinth. Some questioned whether his sufferings proved divine disapproval rather than approval. Paul inverts this logic: his weakness demonstrates that ministry's power comes from God, not the minister.

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## Study Questions

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1. How does remembering God's mercy to you personally fuel perseverance in your calling or ministry?
2. Where are you tempted to 'faint' or lose heart, and how does Paul's example of grounding ministry in received mercy speak to that?
3. In what ways might you be relying on your own strength rather than God's mercy as the foundation for serving others?

## Interlinear Text

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Διὰ	τοῦτο	ἔχοντες	τὴν	διακονίαν	ταύτην	καθὼς
<b>Therefore seeing</b>	G5124	<b>we have</b>	G3588	<b>ministry</b>	G3778	<b>as</b>
G1223		G2192		G1248		G2531
ἡλεήθημεν	οὐκ	ἐκκακοῦμεν·				
<b>we have received mercy</b>	<b>not</b>	<b>we faint</b>				
G1653	G3756	G1573				

## Additional Cross-References

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**2 Thessalonians 3:13** (Parallel theme): But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.

**Galatians 6:9** (Parallel theme): And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

**Ephesians 3:13** (Parallel theme): Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

**2 Corinthians 4:16** (Parallel theme): For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

**Philippians 4:13** (Parallel theme): I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

**Revelation 2:3** (Parallel theme): And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

**2 Corinthians 3:6** (Parallel theme): Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

**Hebrews 12:3** (Parallel theme): For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

**Isaiah 40:30** (Parallel theme): Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

**1 Corinthians 7:25** (Grace): Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.