

2 Corinthians 4:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

Analysis

For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake (aei gar hēmeis hoi zōntes eis thanaton paradidometha dia Iēsoun, ἀεὶ γὰρ ἡμεῖς οἱ ζῶντες εἰς θάνατον παραδίδομεθα διὰ Ἰησοῦν)—aei (ἀεί, 'always, continually') intensifies pantote ('always') from v. 10. Paradidōmi (παραδίδωμι, 'to hand over, deliver up, betray') is the verb used of Christ's betrayal and of God 'giving up' His Son (Rom 8:32). Paul frames apostolic suffering as participatory death with Christ.

That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh (hina kai hē zōē tou Iēsou phanerōthē en tē thnētē sarki hēmōn, ἵνα καὶ ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ φανερωθῇ ἐν τῇ θνητῇ σαρκὶ ἡμῶν)—thnētē sarki (θνητῇ σαρκί, 'mortal flesh') emphasizes bodily frailty. Resurrection life shines through dying bodies, not glorified ones. The gospel's power is proven in weakness, not strength—a complete inversion of worldly expectations.

Historical Context

Paul's theology of suffering as participation in Christ's death countered both Jewish expectations of Messianic triumph and Greek concepts of divine impassibility. His opponents likely saw his sufferings as proof of divine disfavor. Paul turns this inside out: suffering proves Christ-likeness, and endurance through suffering proves resurrection power at work.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does Paul's description of being 'delivered unto death for Jesus' sake' challenge comfortable Christianity that avoids suffering?
2. In what ways have you seen Christ's life manifested specifically in 'mortal flesh'—in weakness, sickness, or limitation?
3. What's the difference between suffering for Jesus' sake versus suffering due to foolishness or sin?

Interlinear Text

ἀεὶ γὰρ ἡμεῖς τῇ ζῶντες εἰς θάνατον παραδιδόμεθα
alway G1063 For we which live unto death are
G104 G2249 G3588 G2198 G1519 G2288 G3860

διὰ Ἰησοῦ ἵνα καὶ τῇ ζωῇ τῇ Ἰησοῦ
for Jesus that also which the life which Jesus
G1223 G2424 G2443 G2532 G3588 G2222 G3588 G2424

φανερωθῇ ἐν τῇ θνητῇ σαρκὶ ἡμῶν
might be made manifest in which mortal flesh our
G5319 G1722 G3588 G2349 G4561 G2257

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 15:49 (Parallel theme): And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

Psalms 44:22 (Parallel theme): Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.

Romans 8:36 (Parallel theme): As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

1 Corinthians 15:31 (References Jesus): I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.

2 Corinthians 5:4 (Parallel theme): For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

Romans 8:11 (References Jesus): But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

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