

2 Corinthians 4:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

Analysis

For which cause we faint not (dio ouk enkakōmen, διὸ οὐκ ἐγκακοῦμεν)—Paul repeats v. 1's declaration, now grounded in resurrection hope (vv. 14-15). Dio (διό, 'therefore, for this reason') points back to all he's established: ministry flows from mercy, death produces life, resurrection is certain, all things serve God's glory. With such foundations, losing heart is impossible.

But though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day (all' ei kai ho exō hēmōn anthrōpos diaphtheireται, alla ho esō hēmōn anakainoutai hēmera kai hēmera, ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ ὁ ἔξω ἡμῶν ἀνθρωπος διαφθείρεται, ἀλλὰ ὁ ἔσω ἡμῶν ἀνακαινοῦται ἡμέρα καὶ ἡμέρᾳ)—diaphtheirō (διαφθείρω, 'to destroy, corrupt, waste away') is present passive: ongoing external decay. But anakainoō (ἀνακαινόω, 'to renew, make new again') is also present passive: ongoing internal renewal. Hēmera kai hēmera (ἡμέρα καὶ ἡμέρᾳ, 'day by day') emphasizes daily, continuous renewal. Aging bodies house regenerating souls.

Historical Context

The 'outward man'/'inward man' dichotomy isn't Greek dualism (soul good, body bad) but Hebrew holism recognizing physical decline concurrent with spiritual growth. Paul isn't denigrating the body (he affirms bodily resurrection!). He's acknowledging that mortal flesh wastes while the regenerate spirit strengthens—a reality every aging believer experiences.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How do you experience the tension between outward physical decline and inward spiritual renewal?
2. What practices facilitate 'day by day' renewal of the inner person in your life?
3. How does this verse comfort those facing chronic illness, aging, or physical limitations?

Interlinear Text

Διὸ	οὐκ	ἐκκακοῦμεν,	ἀλλ'	εἰ	καὶ	ό	ἔξω
For which cause	not	we faint	but	G1487	by	G3588	outward
G1352	G3756	G1573	G235		G2532		G1854
ἡμῶν	ἄνθρωπος	διαφθείρεται	ἀλλ'	ό	ἔσωθεν		
our	man	perish	but	G3588	the inward		
G2257	G444	G1311	G235		G2081		
ἀνακαινοῦται	ἡμέρᾳ	καὶ	ἡμέρᾳ				
man is renewed	day	by	day				
G341	G2250	G2532	G2250				

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 40:31 (Parallel theme): But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

Colossians 3:10 (Parallel theme): And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

Isaiah 40:29 (Parallel theme): He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.

Romans 12:2 (Parallel theme): And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Ephesians 3:16 (Parallel theme): That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

Romans 7:22 (Parallel theme): For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

Psalms 73:26 (Parallel theme): My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

2 Corinthians 4:1 (Parallel theme): Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;

Titus 3:5 (Parallel theme): Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

Psalms 27:13 (Parallel theme): I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.