

1. Opening Prayer

2. Intro: Tribulation List in Paul's letters

(Robert Hodgson, "Paul the Apostle and First Century Tribulation Lists")

a. Simple Lists

Romans 8:35-39, 2 Cor. 6:4-5, 11:23-29, and 12:10

b. Antithetical Lists

1 Cor. 4:10-13, 2 Cor. 4:8-9, 6:8-10, and Phil. 4:12

For what do you think Paul listed his tribulations in his letters?

3. Structure of 2 Cor. 4

- vv. 1-6. We do not lose heart in tribulations.
- vv. 7-11. Importance of tribulations in preaching the Gospel.
- vv. 12-15. It is all for you!
- vv. 16-18. Therefore, we will not lose heart in tribulations caused by preaching the Gospel.

4. Read 2 Cor. 4

5. Questions

- a. How do you understand Paul's statement, "We do not lose heart" in verse 1?
- b. What is your own ministry? And how do you understand it? Do you think the phrase "through God's mercy" gives us a different understanding about our ministry?
- c. What is "the god of this age" that blinds the minds of people in these days? Can you compare it with "the rulers of this age" in 1 Cor. 2:6? If yes, how?

- d. Why do you think Paul preached not only about Jesus the Lord of Paul himself but also about Paul himself the servant of all in verse 5?
- e. Reading verses 8-12, how do you understand Paul's ministry?
- f. How shall we understand the word "always" in verses 10 and 11?
- g. How do you think Paul would understand his tribulation?
- h. Regarding "I believed, therefore, I have spoken" in verse 13, read Psalm 116:10 or the whole chapter. What do you think Paul believed?
- i. How shall we understand "the outwardly" and "the inwardly" in verse 16?

## 6. Closing Prayer