

# ***The Spirit Is Our Power for Faithful Presence***

*2 Corinthians 4:7-15*

**Introduction:** The concept of faithful presence is a deeply spiritual concept. We have absolutely no power *in ourselves* to reflect the goodness of God or draw people to Christ. For this to happen, we need to be in a daily relationship with the Holy Spirit who produces His life in us. This passage reveals how that happens. We begin in the middle of verse 12.

## **1. THE GOAL – Our goal as Christ-followers is to be a source of life to people around us. *2 Corinthians 4:12***

- A. The verse: “So death is at work in us but life in you.”
- B. Meaning: This side of heaven life works a certain way.
  - 1. If you’re highly successful, it may be a blessing to you but not necessarily to others.
  - 2. But, if you suffer and grow through it, it’s a blessing to others who endure the same.
  - 3. Afflictions produce death to the old self. We manifest our new self in relationships.
- C. Examples:
  - 1. The ultimate example is Jesus.
  - 2. Examples of this principle in families, with careers, with physical illnesses.
- D. Bottom line: When afflictions come, they can be used to manifest His faithful presence. *Here’s why.*

## **2. THE PROCESS – To move us to a place of life-giving ministry, God releases His Spirit through us. *2 Corinthians 4:7-11***

- A. God has deposited His Spirit inside you in a surprising way. 4:7
  - 1. You are like a jar of clay. 4:7b
  - 2. You possess a wonderful treasure inside. 4:7a
  - 3. God has a very specific purpose: replace your power with His. 4:7
- B. God releases His Spirit in an equally surprising way. 4:8-10a
  - 1. None of us wants pain. All of us instinctively protect ourselves from it.
  - 2. But, God allows the pressures of life to bear down on us. Paul mentions four. 4:8-9
  - 3. Notice that pain will be constantly with us: “*always & constantly*”.
  - 4. Notice God’s grace in the pain: “*handed over*” & “*but not*”.
- C. The result *in us* is that we’re able to experience life. *In affliction we do three things....* 4:10a, 11a
  - 1. We embrace the dying of Jesus.
  - 2. We reflect the life of Jesus.
  - 3. We experience the ongoing resurrection life of Jesus in the present. Romans 6:1-4

## **3. THE RESULT – Grace spreads to people around us. *2 Corinthians 4:13-15***

- A. *Wise words of encouragement* – We speak wisely to others based on our experience. 4:13
  - 1. This verse quotes Psalm 116:10.
  - 2. Paul has convictions about the character of God. He can speak these to friends in pain.
- B. *New basis for significance* – We have power to inspire people with an eternal perspective. 4:14
  - 1. Much of the anxiety we experience is anxiety over our personal significance.
  - 2. We live with a reflected sense of self.
  - 3. Resurrection fundamentally changes the source of our significance.
- C. *New eyes for seeing God’s work* – We have confidence that our influence is spreading. 4:15
  - 1. Through our pain, God’s grace extends to many.
  - 2. Through their thanks, God’s glory abounds.