

Never Give Up: 5-Day Individual Study Guide

Based on 2 Corinthians 4:6-18 and the sermon: https://youtube.com/live/rG_vSMyclQg using the notes and Claude.ai.

Day 1: Acknowledging Our Reality

Theme: The Truth About Troubles

Scripture Focus: 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 *"We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed."*

Paul doesn't sugarcoat life's difficulties. He acknowledges that believers face real struggles—we are pressed, perplexed, persecuted, and struck down. Yet notice the "but not" statements that follow each affliction. This isn't denial; it's honest hope.

Reflection Questions:

- What current struggle in your life feels overwhelming right now?
- How does Paul's honesty about suffering encourage rather than discourage you?
- Which of Paul's "but not" statements speaks most directly to your situation?

Supporting Scriptures:

- John 16:33 - "In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."
- Psalm 34:19 - "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all."
- Romans 8:35-37 - Nothing can separate us from God's love

Prayer: Ask God to help you see your current struggles through His perspective of hope rather than despair.

Day 2: Treasures in Clay Jars

Theme: God's Power in Our Weakness

Scripture Focus: 2 Corinthians 4:7 *"But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us."*

Clay jars were common, fragile, and easily broken in Paul's time. Yet they could hold precious treasures. God intentionally places His glory in fragile human vessels so that His strength—not ours—receives the credit.

Reflection Questions:

- In what areas of life do you feel most fragile or "clay-like"?
- How might God be displaying His power through your weaknesses?
- What "treasure" has God placed in you that others need to see?

Supporting Scriptures:

- 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 - God's grace is sufficient; power is perfected in weakness
- 1 Corinthians 1:27 - God chooses the weak to shame the strong
- Isaiah 64:8 - We are the clay, He is the potter

Prayer: Thank God for choosing to work through your weaknesses and ask Him to display His strength in your fragile areas.

Day 3: Daily Renewal

Theme: Grace for Today

Scripture Focus: 2 Corinthians 4:16 *"So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day."*

While our physical bodies age and weaken, God provides fresh spiritual strength each day. This isn't a one-time renewal but a daily process of God's grace meeting our needs.

Reflection Questions:

- Where do you most need God's renewal in your life right now?
- How have you experienced God's "new mercies" recently?
- What practices help you access God's daily renewal?

Supporting Scriptures:

- Lamentations 3:22-23 - His mercies are new every morning
- Isaiah 40:31 - Those who wait on the Lord will renew their strength
- Psalm 103:5 - He renews your youth like the eagle's

Prayer: Ask God to renew your inner self today and help you recognize His daily mercies.

Day 4: Eternal Perspective

Theme: Glory Beyond Comparison

Scripture Focus: 2 Corinthians 4:17 *"For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison."*

Paul calls suffering "light and momentary" not because it doesn't hurt, but because eternal glory far outweighs temporary pain. Our troubles are actually preparing us for something magnificent.

Reflection Questions:

- How does viewing your struggles as "momentary" change your perspective?
- What might God be preparing in you through your current difficulties?
- How does the promise of eternal glory give you hope today?

Supporting Scriptures:

- Romans 8:18 - Present sufferings not worth comparing to future glory
- Revelation 21:4 - God will wipe away every tear
- 1 Peter 5:10 - After suffering, God will restore, confirm, strengthen

Prayer: Ask God to help you see your trials from an eternal perspective and trust His purposes.

Day 5: Eyes Fixed Forward

Theme: Focus on the Unseen

Scripture Focus: 2 Corinthians 4:18 *"As we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal."*

What captures our attention often determines our emotional state. Fixing our eyes on temporary troubles breeds discouragement, but focusing on eternal realities brings hope and strength.

Reflection Questions:

- What "seen" things tend to discourage or worry you most?
- What "unseen" eternal realities can you focus on instead?

- How can you practically redirect your gaze from problems to promises?

Supporting Scriptures:

- Hebrews 12:2 - Looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith
- Colossians 3:1-2 - Set your minds on things above
- Philippians 4:8 - Think on whatever is true, noble, right, pure

Prayer: Ask God to help you keep your eyes fixed on Him and His eternal promises rather than temporary troubles.

Day 6: Moving Forward - Never Give Up

Theme: Applying the Message

Scripture Focus: 2 Corinthians 4:16 *"So we do not lose heart."*

This week, we've seen that Paul doesn't promise an easy life, but he does promise God's sustaining presence. Troubles are real but temporary. Grace is present every day. Glory is coming beyond all comparison. The key is keeping our eyes fixed on Christ, not the chaos.

Reflection Questions:

- Which day's lesson spoke most powerfully to your current situation?
- How has this study changed your perspective on your struggles?
- What specific step will you take this week to "never give up"?

Moving Forward:

- **Remember:** Your troubles don't have the last word—God's glory does
- **Rely:** On daily renewal rather than trying to store up strength for tomorrow
- **Refocus:** Your gaze from temporary problems to eternal promises
- **Rejoice:** That God's power is perfected in your weakness

Closing Prayer: Thank God for His faithfulness through every struggle, ask for strength to persevere, and commit to keeping your eyes fixed on Him in the days ahead.