

Infinite Treasure in Jars of Clay

2 Corinthians 4:7-10 ESV

*[7] But we have this **treasure in jars of clay**, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. [8] We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; [9] persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; [10] always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.*

Definition

Infinite treasure can be defined as treasure of extremely or immeasurably great value that is limitless and inexhaustible.

The apostle Paul was comparing our lives with the clay pots commonly used in his day. The contents of the earthen vessels, not the containers themselves, were of great value.

I'm thankful this image because it reminds us that we hold the the most valuable treasure in all the world in ordinary cracked vessels.

Knowing God and having Him reside within you is treasure of infinite value. Jesus likened this value to that of a perfect pearl. The merchant would readily sell everything he had in order to possess this one matchless pearl. (*Matthew 13:45-46 NKJV*[45] *“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, [46] who, when he had found one pearl of*

great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.)

When Jesus dwells in your life, everything available to Christ dwells within you.

(Ephesians 3:19 NLT May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.)

The treasures of God's wisdom and knowledge are available to you through Christ. *(Colossians 2:3 NLT In him lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.)*

The supremely valuable message of salvation in Jesus Christ has been entrusted by God to frail and fallible human beings. Paul's focus, however, is

not on the perishable container but on its priceless contents—God’s power dwelling in us. Though we are “fragile clay jars,” God uses us to spread his Good News, and He gives us power to do His work. He gives us power to bring the reality of His kingdom to our world. He gives ordinary Jars of Clay like us the power to do exploits. (*Daniel 11:32 ASV And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he [a] pervert by flatteries; but the people that know their God shall be strong, and do exploits*)

The Paradox

Sometimes being a Christian can feel like a paradox.

1. On the one hand, there is the Almighty, Infinite, All powerful God of all creation

who commands the entire universe with His infinite power and wisdom.

2. On the other hand, there is us: finite, fragile jars of clay. We are not strong like God, we are not wise like God. Without God's help, we are fragile weak human beings, shaped from the dust of the ground. We are prone to make mistakes.

However, the bible says that after we repent of our sins, God places His Spirit in us. This is the infinite treasure that we carry.

That's the paradox – the Spirit of the Almighty God placed in our fragile human frames. The infinite dwelling inside the finite, The powerful, dwelling inside the weak. This is the paradox the apostle Paul wrote about in 2 Corinthians 4:7

Afflicted but not crushed

As jars of clay, we often find ourselves in circumstances, situations or seasons that ought to shutter us. During the course of this life we will likely find ourselves in the kind of life that Paul described to the Corinthians. (Afflicted, perplexed, persecuted, struck down)

2 Corinthians 4:8-9 ESV

[8] We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; [9] persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed;

The story of Gideon in Judges 7 describes a man that felt oppressed, perplexed and persecuted, yet God saw what such a man, who didn't think very highly about himself, would eventually accomplish when the

Spirit of the Lord was upon Him.

With an army of only 300 men and each man holding a ram's horn and a clay jar with a torch in it, they were able to defeat the Midianites army that far outnumbered them.

Judges 7:7 NLT

The LORD told Gideon, "With these 300 men I will rescue you and give you victory over the Midianites. Send all the others home."

We are not just jars of clay. We are jars of clay designed to be filled with treasure that is more valuable, more resilient, more powerful and more precious than anything in this life.

The scriptures tell us that our bodies are

the temple of the Holy Spirit (*1 Corinthians 6:19 NIV Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;*)

As followers of Christ, we are carriers of infinite treasure. When people focus on us, they may see a frail, imperfect, and deteriorating vessel. They will notice that, although you have normal struggles and challenges, there is something appealing about how you handle them. They will be able to tell that you rely on another power source, and they will want to know more.

Relying on God's power, not our own, will keep us from pride and motivate us to stay close to him, our power source. If you do this, many will see God's Spirit shining in you and be drawn to Him.

We recently celebrated Easter. We celebrate resurrection power, that Jesus conquered death. He rose from the dead giving us hope beyond life in this world.

This future hope that one day we will rise with Jesus, that we will have life beyond the grave, is a present reality for us as believers. We now have His presence dwelling in us. God chooses to place this treasure in ordinary Jars of Clay like you and I.

These jars of clay experience wear and tear from everyday use. We as believers still experience the wear and tear of everyday life. we don't claim that our experience of the painful realities of this world are any different from anyone else. We experience similar challenges.

We live in a period with the reality that death is conquered but the fact is that death still exists in our society. We feel the brokenness of the world around us when we lose loved ones. We still experience hurt. We still experience pain and disease, we still experience broken relationships.

(*Matthew 5:45 NLT*

In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike.)

Yet despite the brokenness in this world, what we do claim is that we hold a treasure in Jars of Clay. We are all ordinary vessels but we have a treasure. We have hope, we have the treasure of Hope in

Jesus. We have the power of the resurrection living within us.

Ephesians 2:4-6 says; ...

[4] But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, [5] made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. [6] And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,

We are seated with Christ in heavenly places. Joint-seating with Christ is “far above” all principalities and powers of darkness.

Our seating and reigning with Christ is a position of authority, honor, and triumph—not failure, depression, and defeat!

God wants to show, in the midst of our brokenness and the wear and tear that we experience this world, We draw our strength, our hope, joy and peace from Him. That power doesn't belong to us. It comes from Him. He is the source the strength we need to overcome every challenge.

2 Corinthians 4:7

We have this treasure from God, but we are only like clay jars that hold the treasure. This is to show that the amazing power we have is from God, not from us

I would like to encourage you that whatever you're walking through today, whatever pain or wear and tear, whatever anxiety, or or exhaustion you may be going through, those things simply remind you that you are a jar of clay.

If you have put your hope in Jesus, you carry in that jar of clay, a treasure that far outweighs any bitter experience in this world.

Make a deliberate decision to anchor your faith in the character and promises of our Heavenly Father and not life's circumstances. Our identity is not based on our circumstance. Our identity comes from Jesus Christ.

As you carry that treasure, you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you. (*Philippians 4:13 ESV I can do all things through him who strengthens me.*)

God's grace is sufficient and His strength is made perfect in our weakness. (*2 Corinthians 12:9 NLT Each time he said,*

"My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me.)

Because of this treasure that we carry, because of the Spirit of God dwelling in us, when we are afflicted, we are not crushed, when we are perplexed, we are not driven to despair, when we are persecuted, we are not forsaken and when we are struck down we are not destroyed.

God's Spirit gives us strength we need and He orchestrates every moment for your ultimate good.

Share The Treasure

We are meant to share the treasure within us with others around us. Your family,

friends, neighbours and work mates need that treasure that God has placed within you. That's why the bible call us the light of the world.

Matthew 5:14-16 NLT

"You are the light of the world-like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. [15] No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. [16] In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

God wants us to live lives that shine His light, that brings His compassion, love, grace, mercy and forgiveness to others. It's a message that brings hope into lives of despair.

In fact, every chip and crack on the jar of clay is just another way for the light to spread. Paul and his traveling companions were physically tortured, but the light is spilling out all around them to prisoners, jail guards, governors, Jews, and Gentiles.

As you carry that treasure, may you be reminded today, that the treasure you carry is the same power that rose Jesus from the dead. That power lives in you because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.

1 John 4:4 KJV

*Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because **greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.***

Reflection

How does this revelation and knowledge of being a vessel that carries infinite treasure impact your life as a believer?

Prayer

1. Let us begin by thanking God for entrusting us to be carriers of the light of His presence.
2. Let us repent of the times we have underestimated the value of the light we carry as jars of clay. Perhaps you need to repent for not sharing the treasure within you.
3. Let us ask God to help us to walk in the revelation that as jars of clay, we are carriers of God's presence. May we come to know more of Him. May this revelation

cause us to overcome any obstacles we face and my we learn to depend on the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. He is our infinite treasure, our source of strength, joy and peace. He is also our source of wisdom who helps us navigate through any challenging seasons and He enables us to do exploits.

