

**Series "Strength In Weakness"**  
**"Treasure In Earthenware"**  
**2 Corinthians 4:7-18**  
**Study-6**

**Paul is speaking about the glory of the ministry. He now changes the focus to the weakness of the vessel that the glory resides in.**

**2 Corinthians 1-5 Paul's Explanation Of His Ministry:** We transition from the **Ministry to the Minister** – From the **Message to The Messenger!**  
From the **Glory of the New Covenant** to the **Weakness of the Minister of the Covenant!**

**Thought Of Our Passage:** "God's Glory Resides In These Frail Temporal Bodies That Are Being Transformed For God's Glory."

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|------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>1. Verses 7-9</b>   | <b>Power Over Weakness</b> |
| <b>2. Verses 10-12</b> | <b>Life Over Death</b>     |
| <b>3. Verses 13-18</b> | <b>Faith Over Sight</b>    |

**1. Verses 7-9 Power Over Weakness**

**2 Corinthians 4:7 But**

**(Context)** Paul has just spoken about not losing heart or giving up in the ministry. Paul gave three reasons why he could not give up!

**Determination:** God saved Paul; gave him ministry to do.

**Honesty:** Paul was handling the Word of God; he did not have to add.

**Humility:** it was not about Paul; only God could save us.

**we have this treasure in earthen vessels (Clay Pots),**

in Paul's day, it was a common practice to take valuables such as jewelry, money, or important documents and secure them in clay jars. A safety deposit jar; They were then placed in a pantry or closet. **Matthew 6:6**

**we have this treasure** - What treasure is Paul referring to?

The knowledge and glory of God through Jesus Christ.

(Message of the grace of God, relationship) **2 Corinthians 4:6**

**earthen vessels** - That is what we are. **Genesis 2:7**

**so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not ourselves;** This is a theme running through the entire Bible.

**Hebrews 11:32-34**

In every case, God received the glory! It was not man or some group, but it was all God working through clay vessels.

## **2 Timothy 2:20-21**

### **The Clay Pots That God Uses:**

- 1. Clean**
- 2. Empty**
- 3. Available**

## **Gideon in Judges 7**

### **Verses 8-9 Description of Our Weakness:**

**2 Corinthians 4:8 we are afflicted** - the word **afflicted** - *"to press (as grapes), press hard upon a compressed way."* Trouble, to choke. Humans are always hurting.

**in every way,** - It can come in the form of an illness, a disease, relational, financial.

**but not crushed;"** *to straighten, compress, cramp, to be sorely straitened in spirit."*

**perplexed,** *"to be embarrassed, to be in doubt, not to know which way to turn, not knowing how to decide or what to do."*

**but not despairing;** *"to renounce all hope, give up."*

**2 Corinthians 4:9 persecuted,** *"to drive away, harass, trouble, to be mistreated, to pursue."*

**but not forsaken;** *metaphor; "to devote or give over to eternal misery in hell, put an end to ruin."*

## **Matthew 10:28**

**struck down,** *"to throw down to the ground."*

**but not destroyed;** *"to be a total loss, to perish."* (Knocked down but not knocked out!) **Acts 14:19-20** Paul was stoned.

## **2 Corinthians 12:10**

## **Romans 8:35-39**

**Weapons of the enemy become tools by which God builds character!**

## **2. Verses 10-12 Life Over Death**

**2 Corinthians 4:10 always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus,** - every day a child of God is in the process of denying the flesh (Old nature) **Matthew 16:24-25**

**so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.**

It's all about Jesus being able to shine through us that we might glorify Him.

**Difficulties of life; it is then that Jesus can be seen.**

**2 Corinthians 4:11** Notice that Paul says **constantly being delivered over to death** - Afflictions are opportunities to shine for Jesus!  
**Matthew 5:16**

**2 Corinthians 4:12 So death works in us, but life in you.** What Paul is saying is that in this process of dying to self means life to the Corinthians!

### **3. Verses 13-18 Faith Over Sight**

**2 Corinthians 4:13 But having the same spirit of faith,**  
Paul is referring to an attitude of faith. He is speaking about an outlook.  
**(Ministry, Mercy but now Faith)**

**according to what is written,**  
Notice that Paul's faith is based upon the written Word.

**"I BELIEVED, THEREFORE I SPOKE," we also believe, therefore we also speak,**

**Psalms 116:10 I believed when I said, "I am greatly afflicted."**  
The psalmist was at the point of death, but in his state, he had faith in the Lord that would deliver.

**Regardless of circumstances, he was going to remain faithful.  
We should keep sharing!**

**Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11:1, 6**

**2 Corinthians 4:14 knowing that He**  
Paul is speaking about the assurance he had in Jesus Christ!

**Paul gives three reasons why faith is better than sight:**

**1. Faith Brings Assurance Of Victory: who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, (Faith in Facts)  
will raise us also with Jesus** Paul believed in the resurrection himself and for the church.

**and will present us with you.** Paul assures them that he will be with Jesus and them!

**2 Corinthians 4:15 For all things are for your sakes,** - Paul is referring to all the sufferings and afflictions that he has been going through.

**2. Faith That God Would Receive Glory Through Our Suffering: so that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God.**

Our witness is our life! We are being watched and examined every day. That our lives as Paul said: **2 Corinthians 3:3**

**2 Corinthians 4:16 Therefore** - What? That his suffering had a great purpose! It was an encouragement to others; it was the witness that God was in Paul.

**3. Faith That Our Suffering Is Working For Us: we do not lose heart,** that is why we can't throw in the towel. God is at work.

**but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.**

That should be the focus of our lives, the inner man! **1 Peter 3:3-4**

**2 Corinthians 4:17 For momentary, light affliction**

Paul is referring to the adversities of life!

**is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, Romans 8:18**

**2 Corinthians 4:18 What are we looking at? while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen;**

**Application:**

1. Am I A Vessel: Clean, Empty Available That God Can Use?
2. Do I Glory In My Weakness So Others Can See Christ In Me?
3. Do I Live For Comfort Or For Character?
4. Do I See The Hardships Of Life Through The Eternal Eyes Of Faith?  
**2 Corinthians 4:17**