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Go and make disciples!

E-votional 92

Treasures in jars of clay

2 Corinthians 4:7-12 (ESV),

But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you.

If we were to take a chapter from the life of Paul. Or better yet, if we were to walk one mile in his sandals, we would soon realize that Paul's life was filled with trial, adversity, distraction, and constant danger. Yet even still Paul pens the words of this choice passage of Scripture. That is, of course, that we still, despite all of the troubles have this treasure in jars of clay.

What is this treasure he speaks of? And what about the jars of clay, what are they?

Well, the treasure is very simply the glory of Christ and the jars of clay are a reference to us as His dwelling place through the Holy Spirit. That is to say that we have the glory of Christ on the inside to show that no matter what we go through, His power and life will be manifested in and through us for His glory alone.

Honestly, this passage of Scripture became my life verse for a couple of reasons. The first reason was that I feel so inferior when it comes to my own ability to handle anything at all much less the adversities mentioned in this passage of Scripture.

For example, I never before Christ made good choices and was certainly not dealt a good share of opportunities to excel. In short, I had a lot working against

me. Even after Christ, I was still inferior and had to deal with all of those decisions from my past. However, in light of those past decisions and the consequences thereof, I learned through receiving Christ that I was a new man born from the Spirit of God. Now, after this took place, I was still inferior in heart, and soul and could claim nothing as coming from me. Yet, at the same time, this treasure that surpassed anything I could fathom was working on the inside of me despite the consequences that unfolded from my past decisions. I have to say, that even serving time on my third felony that the Lord took me and washed me and gave me the realization that it is He who was working in me and that I had no good apart from Him.

So whether I made all the right choices beforehand or stuck with the same past decisions, I was still nonetheless a stain of sin before God until the precious blood of Christ ransomed me from my evil ways.

This, for me, has opened my eyes to this great treasure and also the surpassing power of God, that although once dead in my sin, was made a new man in Christ and now the old man could no longer win for the greatness of the treasure on the inside is ever working in my favor. Praise God!

Now, I mentioned a couple of reasons. The second of which has to do with much of my new ransomed life. After conversion, when I fully realized that my sins were remembered no more by God through Jesus Christ I recall a great new level of difficulty that came from being a follower of Jesus Christ. This is directly related to those things mentioned in the passage of Scripture. In summary, tests, trials, and tribulations of sometimes great magnitude.

When following Christ, we can see clearly by Paul's example that we are not treated with a life free from trouble. Actually, it is quite the opposite. When we become true and devoted followers of Jesus Christ and fully proclaim His Gospel, that is that everyone is a sinner in need of saving from the wrath of God, it does not necessarily make us friends of the world and the system of it. We oftentimes become people detested by the world yet all the while being loved by God. Even further, we become those who live in such a different way that many cannot understand the hope that we have, that is if we are truly living in the faith of that hope laid up for us in heaven and have detached from the world below.

Along with this, we can understand that the path that the Lord has for each of us to walk has in itself its own level of great troubles and adversities along life's narrow way.

Take time to seriously reflect on the level of difficulty each disciple of Jesus in

the Bible went through and also how they went through it. Doesn't it seem like they seemed to have known something extra that maybe we have not known or experienced to have gone through even a fraction of what they went through and the way they seemed triumphant through it all?

Well, honestly I have and do reflect on it often to bring a level of scrutiny from it upon my own life. Yet, while I do this I see a glorious strength afforded to me in the Bible and have even often tasted of this treasure in jars of clay that have shown that the surpassing power belonged to God and not to me. I hope this is encouraging you to rely on and come in contact with that inexhaustible power of God that is living on the inside of you.

When we go through great levels of difficulty and keep the hope alive in the face of adversity of any kind for the sake of the Gospel we can be assured that the surpassing power of God will cause us to walk triumphantly all the while showing forth the very glory of God. In short, God gets great glory from His children who choose to follow Him through great difficulty and adversity all the while trusting in Him and the inexhaustible power He has placed within us.

For me personally, I have gone through great difficulty and even in the middle of the storms of this life, I have seen God get the glory and have felt His surpassing power do it. When I shared that this was my life verse, I shared that because I walk in weakness. I am inferior because I have nothing to offer but myself to God as an empty man. I realize day after day that it is only in my weakness that He is working mightily. Honestly, brothers and sisters, I would not trade my difficulties nor my weaknesses for any nobility or status or strength of any kind. God is more than enough for me, and I pray that He is more than enough for you as well. How about you?

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In Christ's Love,
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