

Clay Pots Hold God's Treasure

II Corinthians 4:7-18

“But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.” --II Corinthians 4:7

- I. God's safeguards His most valued treasure in human vessels of clay
 - A. What is "this treasure"? God's glory
--2 Corinthians 4:6 Exodus 34:5-7
 - B. Coming to terms with our humanity: the clay.
 - C. Our clay best demonstrates the "all-surpassing power of God"
--4:8-12
 - D. God is the "Father of Compassion" who cares for the weak - 1:3

- II. Clay pots don't sit on the shelf, but pour out the life of Christ - 4:8-12
 - A. God wants to use His clay pots.
 - B. With every difficulty comes the evidence of God's power
 - C. I can embrace the process if I anticipate the power
 - D. Jesus is our example - Isaiah 53:2-3
 - E. We now carry the life and death of Christ- 4:10
 - F. We contain Jesus so we can pour Him out to others - 4:11-12

- III. Clay pots are strengthened under heat - 4:13-15
 - A. We are only as strong as our faith - 4:13
 - B. Believing God in the fire means embracing the resurrection
- 2 Corinthians 4:14; Psalm 116

- C. Our goal: To stand with others in God's presence - 4:14
 - D. We are strengthened for other's benefit - 4:15a
 - E. God gets all the credit - 4:15c
- IV. Our clay pots will be weighed on the scales of eternity - 4:16-17
- A. "Therefore, we do not lose heart" - 4:16a
 - B. Suffering increases my ability to contain God's treasure
- V. The Clay Pot's Perspective: Look at the unseen reality - 4:18
- A. I must learn to see what is unseen, physically.
 - B. What does it mean to "fix our eyes" on the eternal?
 - C. Faith imagines our life beyond the clay!