

# PAUL'S SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

LEARNING HOW TO BE A HEAVENLY CHURCH IN A CARNAL WORLD

## 2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 4:7-12

MEDIA REFERENCE NUMBER SMX798 MARCH 10, 2013

THE TITLE OF THE MESSAGE:

### HIS POWER FOR OUR PERSEVERANCE

*DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING THE RIGHT HEART FOR HIS MINISTRY*

SUBJECT TOPICALLY REFERENCED UNDER:

**Hope, Suffering, Perseverance, Life, Death**

**Introduction to the Text; 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 4:7-12**

#### 2 Cor. 4:7-12

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. **8** We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; **9** persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed— **10** always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. **11** For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. **12** So then death is working in us, but life in you.

What comes to mind when you think of the word "Power"?

#### Jude 24

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present *you* faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,

**Paul has been describing his ministry in terms of mortal-combat** with what he calls the "god of this age," the invisible being behind this darkness and corruption, the one who has, as he put it in the passage we saw last week, "**blinded the minds of the unbelievers,**"

### John 16:33

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have **overcome** the world.”

**Overcome** νικάω *nikao*, *nik-ah'-o*;  
to subdue, to conquer, to gain the victory over.

## HIS POWER FOR OUR PERSEVERANCE

### 1.) The Power of His grace

v. 7

## THE POWER OF HIS GRACE

### 1a.) Grace that tells us the truth

v. 7

But we have **this treasure** in earthen vessels,  
The divine side = **this treasure**  
The human side = **earthen vessels**,

**It speaks of the interface between God and His People**  
on display as it were in this world.

### Judges 6(7)8

And the calling and empowering of Gideon and the 300 warriors.

Earthen vessels, clay pots with lamps burning inside! Earthen vessels that are to be **smashed and broken** in order to let the inner light shine through! Perhaps this Old Testament story inspired the Apostle Paul to describe **Christians as mere vessels of clay designed to hold and contain the priceless treasure of the Gospel.**

## Our Mysterious Presence Here

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I must confess that I have always loved this verse. Here's why.  
Once I became a Christian and began to understand that the Bible teaches that this world / earth was no longer my home - - I am foreigner

## 2 Cor. 5:20

Now then, we are **ambassadors** for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

**ambassadors** πρεσβεύω **presbeuo**, *pres-byoo'-o*; a high ranking senior representative. one sent from one country to another country. Ambassador to a hostile nation.

## The Truth Is – We're Rescue Agents / A Recovery Team

We're walking around with something inside of us.

The words that can set people free. Give them hope. Change a heart.

The "Earthen Vessel" description is meant to define us as human beings - created to hold or house something of infinite worth.

## A Tiffany's Box or What's Inside ?

We make fun of the saying that "every person has a God shaped hole in their heart. But it's true. This is what explains our earthly and spiritual appetites for something to satisfy

## At the Sound of the Trumpet

Finally. In that moment when the Lord comes for His church there will be the great trumpet blast and "*Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." 55 "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"*

1 Corinthians 15:51-55

## THE POWER OF HIS GRACE

1b.) Grace that is **more than enough**

v. 7

That (*only after the breaking*) **the excellence** of the power may be of God

**I say this tenderly;  
Every true child of God will be, must be broken, broken down and  
stripped of self. Self-life. Self- ambition. Self-preservation. Self-  
Centeredness.**

**This is Discipleship 101 - Jesus Style.**

**Luke 14:33**

So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that  
he has cannot be My disciple.

**Matt. 10:37-38**

He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who  
loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. **38** And he who does  
not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.

**It's not until the vessel is broken that the light can shine forth.**

## **THE POWER OF HIS GRACE**

**1c.) Grace that is not of this world**

**v. 7**

and not of us

**2 Cor. 7:5**

When we arrived in Macedonia, there was no rest for us. We faced conflict from  
every direction, with battles on the outside and fear on the inside. **6** But God,  
who encourages those who are discouraged, encouraged us

**The Reward is Him**

**Philip. 3:10**

that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His  
sufferings, being conformed to His death,

## **HIS POWER FOR OUR PERSEVERANCE**

**2.) The Power of His Strength**

**v. 8-10**

## 2a.) Strength that holds us up

v. 8-9

:8 We are **hard-pressed** on every side, yet not **crushed**;  
// we are **perplexed**, but not in **despair**

:9 **persecuted**, but not **forsaken**; // **struck down**, but not **destroyed**.

The New Testament Christian Life  
Is a life of bloody victories and dangerous joys

**hard-pressed** **θλίβω thlibo**, *thlee'-bo*;

to be crowded or squeezed. afflict or made to be narrow as being pressed by a crowd.

**Crushed** ~~στενοχωρέω stenochoreo~~, *sten-okh-o-reh'-o*;

~~to hem in closely, i.e. (figuratively) cramp: — distress, in the strait's.~~

**perplexed** **ἀπορέω aporeo**, *ap-or-eh'-o*; have no way out, to be at a loss emotionally, mentally – to be in physical doubt.

**Despair** ~~ἐξαπορέομαι exaporeomai~~, *ex-ap-or-eh'-om-ah-ee*; ~~to be despond or to have lost hope.~~

There is So Much We Suffer From That is Not From God

### Isaiah 41:10

Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, **I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'**

### Uphold

Meaning not only to hold up but – “I will take you by the hand, I will grip your hand, I will not let go of your hand because My hand is righteous.

**Persecuted** **διώκω dioko**, *dee-o'-ko*; a to be hunted or pursued. by slander, rumor, violence.

**Forsaken** ~~ἐγκαταλείπω egkataleipo~~, *eng-kat-al-i'-po*; ~~to NEVER leave behind. to NEVER desert. NEVER leave alone.~~

this seems to connect us to Hebrews 11

the hall of faith // the lifestyles of the righteous and faith

### Heb. 11:32-38

And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: **33** who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, **34** quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.... **35** Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. **36** Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. **37** They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented— **38** of whom the world was not worthy of.

### 2 Tim. 2:3-4

You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. **4** No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of *this* life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.

### John 10:27-30

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. **28** And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. **29** My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of My Father's hand. **30** I and My Father are one."

## THE POWER OF HIS STRENGTH

**2b.) Strength that is never exhausted v. 10a**

**:10** always carrying about in the body **the dying** of the Lord Jesus,

***have you seen Christians that are in the fire and rather than being consumed by the flames they are refined and made brighter?***

### Job 23:10-11

But He knows the way that I take; *When* He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold. **11** My foot has held fast to His steps; I have kept His way and not turned aside.

## WE TRAVEL AN APPOINTED WAY. (Joys, Sorrows, Victories, Losses, Peace, Affliction )

### Isa. 40:31

But **those** who **wait** on the LORD **shall renew their** strength;  
**They** shall **mount up** with wings like eagles, **They shall run** and not be weary,  
**They shall walk** and not faint.

This “waiting” on the LORD purifies.

### 1Pet. 1:6-7

In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, **7** that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

## Like Clay in the Potter’s Hand

### 2Tim. 2:20-21

But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. **21** Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.

## THE POWER OF HIS STRENGTH

**2c.) Strength that keeps us near v. 10b**

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

### James 1:2

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, **3** knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. **4** But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

**Why be joyful? – because the life** of Jesus will be seen by others and that will honor Jesus AND lead them closer

to salvation....

### Phil. 1:12-13

But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, **13** so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ;

### 2 Cor. 12:7-9

And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. **8** Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. **9** And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

that the power of Christ may rest upon me - - **When a Christian goes thru difficult times, there is a powerful peace that comes upon them -**

## HIS POWER FOR OUR PERSEVERANCE

### 3.) The Power of His purposes

v. 11-12

**11** For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be **manifested** in our mortal flesh. **12** So then death is working in us, but life in you.

### WHAT DO WE MEAN BY HIS PURPOSES?

(( a manifested purpose ))

Intention, Design, Plan, Goal - teleonomy,

"Believing in the Supreme Being who created intelligent beings for some benevolent and glorious purpose, and so, how glorious and benevolent must be His purpose in the plan of redemption! - **Noah Webster 1828**

## THE POWER OF HIS PURPOSES

### 3a.) He's purposed us for life

v. 11

**11** For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake,



that the life of Jesus also may be **manifested** in our mortal flesh.

This Sounds a Little Bit Discouraging – But it's the opposite of discouraging if you are willing to hear this.

**It means that each day will hand us the opportunity to live less for ourselves and more for Him.**

**Matt. 16:24**

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

**We all want to be more like Jesus and that's a great thing.**

**Eph. 3:20**

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

Jesus Christ wants to live His example out thru us.

**THE POWER OF HIS PURPOSES**

**3b.) He's purposed us for eternity**

**v. 12**

**:12** So then death (the breaking of us) is working in us, but life in you.

**Romans 8:33-37**

Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? *It is* God who justifies. **34** Who is he who condemns? *It is* Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. **35** Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? **36** As it is written (Psa.44): "*For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*" **:37** Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

**How Can You Be Killed All Day Long, Everyday ?  
By Saying "No to Me & Yes to Him"**

**But What Does That Look Like?  
In heartfelt obedience to His purposes**

**Here's the Joy of It...**

**Romans 8:38-39**

For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, **39** nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Will You Today Respond To Christ's Offer?**

**>>>> The Cross, The Christ, The Call <<<<**

*Come Forward for Prayer*

*End of Study*

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