Treasure In Earthen Vessels

Tony Mauck · 2 Corinthians 4:1–18

INTRODUCTION

- But we have this treasure in earthen vessels. That the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves.
- Vessels in biblical times were very commonplace and fragile. They were not expensive. And they were easily broken.
- This treasure in earthen vessels speaks to what God has accomplished in his people and wants to accomplish still in his people today.

1 What Have You Renounced?

2 Corinthians 4:2; Colossians 3:1–5; 1 Thessalonians 1:9–10

- The sincerity and genuineness of Paul's ministry was based upon some things that he had renounced in his life. And to be treasures in earthen vessels, we must do the same.
- We cannot walk hand in hand with Jesus while we walk hand in hand with the world simultaneously.
- Is there something in your life that you would like to keep hidden from others? If so, that's likely something that needs to be renounced, forsaken, and abandoned.
- Sin brings shame to our lives, and thus it needs to be jettisoned from our lives.

2 Who Do You Preach?

2 Corinthians 4:5

- It is not about at all self-promotion. It is absolutely not about self-advancement. It is always about God and exalting Him and advancing others ahead of ourselves.
- Whatever we have done, and for however long we have done it is only what we should have done.
- We must never get distorted in our view of ourselves that somehow causes us to think that we're really important. Because the spotlight ought always to be on him.
- The power is in him and his word, and not in the one speaking it, certainly not in me.

3 Whose Face Do You Seek?

2 Corinthians 4:6

- But new covenant, greater glory, is associated with the human face of Christ.
- Unless we see Christ clearly and His teaching clearly, the result will be a distorted image of the nature of the gospel.
- The most challenging thing is displaying his attributes. Even when others don't.

- We must continually ask the question: what does the example of Christ dictate that I do in this circumstance, in this relationship, in this time?

4 Where Is the Supply of Your Power?

2 Corinthians 4:7; Matthew 10:42; Ephesians 3:20

- Vessels, that's all we are. We're vessels. Made useful and valuable by our Lord.
- If the power convicts and brings about the change that God desires, then it is his power that is doing it.
- One wonderful thing about the gospel is that it's not reserved for just the immensely talented people. It's for everybody.
- Whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.

5 What Are You Always About?

2 Corinthians 4:8–12; Romans 12:1–2

- We are afflicted in every way. But not crushed, perplexed, but not despairing. Persecuted, but not forsaken, struck down, but not destroyed.
- Always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our body.
- We're not about the dying of Jesus if what I want is always elevated above everything else.

6 What Do You Look At?

2 Corinthians 4:16–18; 1 Timothy 1:17; 1 Corinthians 9:25

- Though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.
- For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.
- Focus on the only things that do not undergo corruption and decay.
- You know what produces zeal and zest for worship? It's looking at the unseen. You've got to lift your eyes above the horizon.

THE CHALLENGE

Can I persuade you to renounce the hidden things of shame, to turn from vain things, to serve a living and true God, and to seek the face of Christ, and let the power be of God in your life and not of yourself.

MY NOTES