

**“WE DON’T LOSE HEART –
PART 2”**
2 Corinthians 4:7-18

INTRODUCTION

Paul, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit was giving us information on how to recognize a legit ministry. 1) We need read to the Bible for ourselves, so we can make good decisions and not be deceived, and 2) We need to access our own ministry. We need to handle God’s word in sincerity and let the chips fall where they may! Christianity is not only a personal relationship with God; it is the explanation of all reality. It is the way to process life!

THE TREASURE

The treasure is the gospel, the light of the knowledge of God, Jesus. That treasure is in us! The word used for earthen vessels or clay pots is the one for a generic vessel rather than a lamp. Roman coins were buried in clay jars, even up to 50,000. Our bodies are like clay pots with the Holy Spirit dwelling inside. They are vulnerable, however. Usually, the gift is better than the box it’s in, like Christmas, or your favorite food inside some Tupperware container!

THE TRIALS

God uses the foolish things to confound the wise. Paul got knocked down, but then got back up again. How do we process trouble, perplexity and persecution? The false teachers said that this shouldn’t really happen to God’s representatives. Some may even tell us that we can’t preach truth of God! The Lord said, however, that we would suffer persecution. We will need to take up our cross, deny ourselves and follow Him!

Cf. **2 Timothy 3:12; 1 Peter 4:12, 13; Matthew 5:11.**

Hebrews 11:32-38 gives us a reminder of believers who have gone before us, and the great trials that they faced! They suffered more than most of us will in our lifetime. Let’s not live a shallow faith where we complain about everything and stop worshipping because things don’t go our way. Unfortunately, some are overwhelmed by normal life in America, which doesn’t even compare to what others may go through elsewhere in the world!

SPEAK ABOUT JESUS!

Verse 13 quotes **Psalm 116**. This has been misused by some to propagate a positive confession concept to “speak” prosperity. The actual idea of this verse is to faithfully proclaim the treasure of Jesus in us, the clay pots! No matter what, we should persevere with this message even during buffeting!

CONSIDER

Despite the difficulties, there were 4 reasons why Paul kept going; 1) Remembering the resurrection. (Knowing that you will be raised from the dead has an effect on how you handle persecution!), 2) Doing it for others and for the glory of God! (Be willing to selflessly take the hit!), 3) Recognizing the difference between body and spirit. (We do have physical bodies to take care of, but we need spiritual renewal each day!), and 4) Keeping the proper perspective. (What we are going through now is just “light affliction” and is nothing compared to blessing of what we will experience in eternity!) The bottom line is, if you keep it all in perspective, you won’t lose heart! *Stay in the Word. Stay in prayer. Stay in fellowship!*

PRAY.....

- * Pray for members of our church body who are suffering various physical ailments.
- * That we would follow the Lord’s leading in the August outreach at Jefferson Park in Canandaigua.
- * That God’s Spirit would refresh the pastors at our East Coast Pastors’ conference in September.