



Sermon Notes

US N°. 60

Date: May 27th, 2012

Title: Clay Jars

Text: 2 Cor. 4:5-12, *"For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed –always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 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. So then death is working in us, but life in you."*

1. The treasure of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ encased in earthen vessels, the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.
 - a. Adam. Gen. 2:7, *"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being."* A Hebrew word play for the word earth.
 - b. 1 Cor. 1:27, *"But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence."*
 - c. Our weaknesses show off His strengths, but this is not liberty to remain weak.
 - i. Rom. 6:1, *"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?"*
 - ii. Heb. 6:1, *"Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment."*
 - iii. Heb. 5:12, *"For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."*
 - d. These clay jars are worth more than all of creation. The Genesis narrative reveals the passionate love the Groom for His bride in preparing a perfect place for her to live in; the story ends in Revelations with the wedding supper of the Lamb.
 - i. We must assign value in correlation with the objects God loves; first men then nature. Pagans worship the inanimate object by inserting the god spirit within, rather the Biblical worldview sees God outside of creation and enjoying it. Our enjoyment of nature must be in relation to the purposes of God; e.g. enjoying creation to the exclusion of doing what God truly loves is sin. (cf. Rom. 1:25, *"...who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever."*)

- ii. The Jewish marriage custom enables us to understand the role of nature, God's purposes and intents, and the layout of God's Kingdom plan and timing.
- e. A vessel's worth is more about it has inside of it than what it looks like.
- 2. Clay jars are both fragile and leak. In pottery, clay can be fired, glazed and fired again to add strength and purpose to an otherwise weak vessel. The same can be true of us; we have a purpose within God's Kingdom strategy and must become the best vessel possible for His purpose and objectives. (i.e. *Teleos*) 1 Thess. 4:4, "...that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor..."
 - a. Filled – From Strong's #G4134; to make replete, that is, literally to cram, level up, or figuratively to furnish (or imbue, diffuse, influence), satisfy, execute an office, finish a period or task.
 - i. Eph. 3:19, "... to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."
 - ii. Eph. 5:18, "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit..."
 - iii. Col. 1:9, "For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding..."
 - iv. 2 Tim. 1:4, "...greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy..."
 - b. Fired – trial & tribulations as well as the all-consuming fire of YHWH.
 - i. Luke 4:1, "Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry."
 - ii. 1 Cor. 3:13, "...each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is."
 - iii. Heb. 12:29, "For our God is a consuming fire."
 - iv. 1 Pet. 4:12, "Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;"
 - c. This is a process and so the pottery image falls short in some ways of comparison.
 - d. Tangent – imagery of water and fire. Two ends of the world (Noah and the coming end) and the two ends of us (water baptism and Holy Spirit baptism.)
- 3. Practical suggestions. This is both a love affair and matter of submission. We should do this because we want to, because anything less would pain our soul, but we should do this because we are also commanded to.
 - a. Morning meditations:
 - i. Abraham (cf. Gen. 19:27, Gen. 21:14, Gen. 22:3);
 - ii. manna (cf. Ex. 16:21);
 - iii. incense in the Temple (cf. Ex. 30:7);
 - iv. Gideon (cf. Jdg. 6:38);
 - v. Ps. 5:3, "My voice You shall hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning I will direct it to You, and I will look up."
 - vi. Ps. 59:16, "But I will sing of Your power; yes, I will sing aloud of Your mercy in the morning; for You have been my defense and refuge in the day of my trouble."
 - vii. Ps. 119:147, "I rise before the dawning of the morning, and cry for help; I hope in Your word."
 - b. Constancy in the Word and of the Word in us.
 - i. Deut. 11:18-19, "Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall teach them to

your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up."

ii. Job 23:12, *"I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food."*

iii. Ps. 119:11, *"Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You."*

iv. Col. 3:16, *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."*

c. Worship in spirit and word

i. Jn. 4:23, *"But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him."*

d. Spiritual tongues. 1 Cor. 14:2-4, *"For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries. But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church." Edifies (oikodomeō) means "to be a house builder, that is, construct, confirm, build, edify, or embolden." Praying in tongues is a key component to building your inner structure.*

e. Actual and practical obedience in our lives.

f. Hunger and thirst (cf. Mt. 5:6, *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled."*)

g. Reevaluate our priorities. We're commanded by Jesus to *"Seek first the Kingdom of God..."*, what does this *"first"* mean to us in our lives?

4. Conclusion

a. Our frailty, His favor.

b. There is a secret atheism in the church today that denies God's break-out power; discouraged, disconnected, and disenfranchised. Just how big is your God?? Our expectations and vision must match up to Him.

c. Biblical Christianity makes people stop and gape. It also makes enemies among the religious and the pagans. (e.g. *Jeremiah, Jesus, and Paul*) What we call ordinary Christianity is watered down, diluted Biblical Christianity, read Watchman Nee's The Normal Christian Life.

d. Intentionality.