

Pitiful Perishable Pots

Intro:

Deut 7:6-8; 9:6

In the same way that God did not save Israel because they were the best brightest or biggest nation...

1 cor 1:26-31

He didn't save us because we are noble or humble or wise...just the opposite

Jn 9:1-3

God did not choose you despite your sins -

He chose you precisely because of your sins, because of your weaknesses and failings...to display the glory of The Gospel, the glory of His Son

Problem:

2 cor 3:1-3 you are Christ's epistle to a fallen world

3:4-6 an epistle of grace

7-18 an epistle of glorious transformation

4:1-6 an epistle of new life

But you don't declare it how we think...

Main Idea:

God uses pitiful pots to display His power

God uses perishable pots to display His presence

Implication:

we are a present tense display of overcoming - His power overcoming our pitifulness, His presence overcoming our perishableness ...in other words the cracks and chips are important.

Application:

Stop wasting your life trying to avoid a wounded life

You will still be afflicted, perplexed, persecuted, and struck down...you will be chipped and cracked like a cheap clay pot...which is the point

It is through the cracks that the gospel shines through

Articles/sermons for further study:

<https://www.gotquestions.org/treasures-in-jars-of-clay.html>

<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/broken-but-remade/>

<http://www.barabbas.com/sermons-book/?>

[sapurl=Lys00TViL2xiL21pLyt3ZzU4azdtP2JyYW5kaW5nPXRYdWUmZW1iZWQ9dHJ1ZQ==](http://www.barabbas.com/sermons-book/?sapurl=Lys00TViL2xiL21pLyt3ZzU4azdtP2JyYW5kaW5nPXRYdWUmZW1iZWQ9dHJ1ZQ==)

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Text:

God uses pitiful pots to display His power

2Corinthians 4:7 ¶ **But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.**

2Corinthians 4:8 We are **afflicted** in every way, but not crushed; **perplexed**, but not driven to despair;

2Corinthians 4:9 **persecuted**, but not forsaken; **struck down**, but not destroyed;

Isaiah 48:1-12 (whose glory story are you telling?)

Matt 23:5-7, 25-28 (merit based religion is focused on the pot)

Col 2:16-23 (merit based religion is focused on appearance - it is the shining of a valueless pot)

1 cor 4:1-16 (this "hardship catalogue" demonstrates, not his virtuous character or his buoyant self-sufficiency or his steadfast courage amid adversity (as in the case, for example, of the Stoic sage), but his utter dependence as a frail human being on the superlative excellence of the God who is there)

1 cor 10:12-13 (jars of clay are easily broken brittle - cannot stand on our own - but we don't have to?)

heb 4:14-16 (we are not crushed because of Him)

2 cor 1:1-7 (Paul was a beggar telling other beggars where he found Bread - so are we)

1 pet 1:3-9; 3:14-15 (we do not display His power through the mitigation of hardship but through our faith in it...we get chipped and cracked but we show His surpassing power...)

God uses perishable pots to display His presence

2Corinthians 4:10 **always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.**

2Corinthians 4:11 For we who live are **always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.**

2Corinthians 4:12 So death is at work in us, but life in you.

Phil 2:1-11 (the Corinthians and every prosperity preacher gets this wrong today - do we really want honor and riches from the world that crucified our Lord? honor comes through humility, life comes through death, the crown comes through the cross)

Col 1:24-29 (Paul makes the extraordinary claim that in principle we share the same weakness with Christ and suffer the same affliction. It becomes the basis for an even more extraordinary claim that through this weakness and affliction we manifests the life of Jesus in our mortal flesh - suffering and fragility are not just human pain caused by opposition and persecution. No, the dying of Jesus himself is present in it, visible in our bodies...but that is not all we also tell at the same time the story of life...)

jn 3:15-16, 36; 4:14, 36; 5:24, 39; 6:27-29, 40, 47, 54; 17:3 (eternal life is on display in our dying bodies right now because it is our present tense reality - our dying bodies are not a display of "life" after "death" or even life through death, but of life in the midst of death...this is His present tense invitation to a dying world)

Jn 16:33 (we are a present tense display of overcoming - His power overcoming our pitifulness, His presence overcoming our perishableness ...in other words the cracks and chips are important.