

2 Corinthians 4 Treasure in jars of clay. (18 verses)

1) Secret sins vs the open truth of the Gospel.

v. 1 Therefore, since **through God's mercy we have this ministry**, we do not lose heart.
2 Rather, **we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God.** On the contrary, by **setting forth the truth plainly** we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.

2) Christ is the image of God, and that truth is satanically opposed.

v. 3 **The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel** that displays the glory of **Christ, who is the image of God.** 5 For what **we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord**, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of **God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.**

3) We have the eternal treasure of Jesus in our mortal bodies. (Jeremiah 18)

v. 7 But we have this **treasure in jars of clay** to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.

Romans 9:20 But who are you, a human being, to talk back to God? "Shall what is formed say to the one who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?'" 21 Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same **lump of clay** some pottery for special purposes and some for common use?

4) There is sometimes a cost to follow Jesus, but eternity with Him is worth it.

v. 8 **We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.** 10 We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, **so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.** 11 For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. 12 So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

v. 8 **We are hedged in (pressed) on every side** [*troubled and oppressed in every way*], **but not cramped or crushed; we suffer embarrassments and are perplexed and unable to find a way out, but not driven to despair;** 9 We are pursued (persecuted and hard driven), but **not deserted** [*to stand alone*]; **we are struck down to the ground, but never struck out and destroyed;** 10 Always carrying about in the body the liability *and* exposure to the same putting to death that *the Lord* Jesus suffered, so that the [*resurrection*] life of Jesus also may be shown forth by *and* in our bodies. 11 **For we who live are constantly** [*experiencing*] **being handed over to death for Jesus' sake, that the** [*resurrection*] **life of Jesus also may be evidenced through our flesh** which is liable to death. 12 **Thus death is actively at work in us, but** [*it is in order that our*] **life** [*may be actively at work*] in you. AMPC

5) **The Spirit of faith compels us to speak.**

v. 13 It is written: "**I believed; therefore I have spoken.**" Since we have that same **spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak**, 14 because **we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus** and present us with you to himself. 15 **All this is for your benefit**, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.

6) **Don't give in and don't give up.**

v. 16 **Therefore we do not lose heart.** Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet **inwardly we are being renewed day by day.** 17 **For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory** that far outweighs them all.

7) **This life is short-lived, but the Unseen-Realm is eternal.**

v. 17 **For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.** 18 **So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen**, since what is seen is temporary, but **what is unseen is eternal.**

2 Corinthians 5 Our mortality is contained within time. (21 verses)

Note: After death, we are no longer bound within time. Therefore, whatever events must take place on earth, while it's still bound within time, won't constrain us in Christ. For Christians, our life is defined by a continuous, unbroken relationship with Jesus.

1) **Our Heavenly dwelling verses our tents of flesh.**

v. 1 For we know that if **the earthly tent we live in** is destroyed, we have a building from God, an **eternal house in heaven**, not built by human hands. 2 Meanwhile we groan, longing to be **clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling**, 3 because **when we are clothed**, we will not be found naked. 4 For **while we are in this tent**, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be **clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling**, so that **what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.**

Stories: "Days of our flesh" and "Remember the Dash." 11/05/55 - date?

2) **The deposit of the Spirit.**

v. 5 Now the one who has fashioned us for this very purpose is God, who has given us **the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.**

v. 5 And this is no empty hope, for God himself is the one who has prepared us for this wonderful destiny. And to confirm this promise, **he has given us the Holy Spirit, like an engagement ring, as a guarantee.** TPT

1 Cor 1:22 *He knows we are his* since he has also stamped his seal of love over our hearts and has given us the Holy Spirit like an engagement ring is given to a bride—a down payment of the blessings to come! TPT

3) While we are in our bodies we are away from the Lord.

v. 6 Therefore we are always confident and know that **as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord.**

v. 6 So then, we are always full of good *and* hopeful *and* confident courage; **we know that while we are at home in the body, we are abroad from the home with the Lord** [*that is promised us*]. AMPC+

4) We live by our faith in God, not by what we see.

v. 7 **For we live by faith, not by sight.**

v. 7 **For we walk by faith** [*we regulate our lives and conduct ourselves by our conviction or belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, with trust and holy fervor; thus we walk*] **not by sight or appearance.** AMPC

5) To be away from the body is to be present with the Lord.

v. 8 We are confident, I say, and **would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.** 9 So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.

v. 8 We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather **to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.** KJV

Philippians 1:21 For to me, **to live is Christ and to die is gain.** 22 If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! 23 I am torn between the two: **I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far;** 24 but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body.

6) The judgement seat of Christ.

v. 10 **For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ,** so that each of us may receive what is due us **for the things done while in the body,** whether good or bad.

7) The love of God and fear of God compels us to live more and more like Jesus.

v. 11 Since, then, **we know what it is to fear the Lord,** we try to persuade others. **What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience.** 12 We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are **giving you an opportunity to take pride in us,** so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. 13 If we are "out of our mind," as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. 14 **For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.** 15 **And he died for all, that**

those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

8) What does it mean to say that we are new creations in Christ?

v. 16 So from now on **we regard no one from a worldly point of view.** Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. 17 Therefore, **if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!**

Story: Joshua Blahyi, aka General Butt Naked

8) We must be reconciled to God through Jesus Christ.

v. 18 All this is from **God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ** and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that **God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them.** And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 **We are therefore Christ's ambassadors,** as though God were making his appeal through us. **We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.**

9) A verse about Jesus that is one of the keys for the entire New Testament.

v. 21 **God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.**

2 Corinthians 6 Always put your faith in Jesus like Paul did. (18 verses)

1) Today, the opportunity for salvation is still open, but this will not always be so.

v. 1 As God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. 2 For he says, **"In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you."** I tell you, **now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.**

2) Paul's defense of his ministry and some of his qualifications as an apostle.

v. 3 We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, **so that our ministry will not be discredited.** 4 Rather, **as servants of God we commend ourselves** in every way: 5 in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; 6 in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; 7 in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; 8 through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; 9 known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; 10 sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

v. 4b. by great endurance, by afflictions,
by hardship, by difficulties,
5 by beatings, by imprisonments,
by riots, by labors,
by sleepless nights, by times of hunger,
6 by purity, by knowledge,
by patience, by kindness,
by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love,
7 by the message of truth, by the power of God;
through weapons of righteousness on the right hand and the left,
8 through glory and dishonor,
through slander and good report;
as deceivers yet true;
9 as unknown yet recognized;
as dying and look — we live;
as being disciplined yet not killed;
10 as grieving yet always rejoicing;
as poor yet enriching many;
as having nothing yet possessing everything. HCSB

v. 10b “We seem to have nothing, yet in reality we possess all things.” TPT

3) Paul’s transparency and open heart to his spiritual children.

v. 11 We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians, and **opened wide our hearts to you**. 12 **We are not withholding our affection from you**, but you are withholding yours from us. 13 As a fair exchange—I speak as to my children—**open wide your hearts also**.

4) Don’t be joined closely or yoked with unbelievers.

v. 14 **Do not be yoked together with unbelievers**. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? 15 What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or **what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?**

1 Cor 7:39 A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, **she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord**.

5) The Holy Spirit is housed in us and He commits us to holiness.

v. 16 What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? **For we are the temple of the living God**. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." 17 **Therefore, "Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord**. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you." 18 And, **"I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."**

2 Corinthians 7 Some expectations for spiritual holiness. (16 verses)

1) Growing in holiness should be part of our lifestyle.

v. 1 Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

2) Paul explains his actions in ways that should be applicable to all ministers.

v. 2 Make room for us in your hearts. **We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have exploited no one.** (*NIV and TPT are worded identically*)

TPT *Footnote:* These are the three goals every minister should set for his calling:

- 1) to do no wrong to another nor to “hate” anyone,**
- 2) to not corrupt or lead anyone astray, and**
- 3) to never use his or her authority to take advantage of anyone for personal gain.**

3) Titus brought a good report that comforted Paul.

v. 4 I have spoken to you with great frankness; I take great pride in you. **I am greatly encouraged;** in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds. **5 For when we came into Macedonia, we had no rest, but we were harassed at every turn—conflicts on the outside, fears within.** **6 But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us** by the coming of **Titus,** **7** and not only by his coming but also by the comfort you had given him. **He told us about your longing for me, your deep sorrow, your ardent concern for me, so that my joy was greater than ever.**

4) Godly sorrow versus worldly sorrow.

v. 8 **Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it.** Though I did regret it—I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while **9** yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because **your sorrow led you to repentance.** For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. **10 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.** **11 See what this godly sorrow has produced in you:** what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter.

5) Paul's wrote previously to strengthen their commitment to his leadership.

v. 12 So even though **I wrote to you, it was neither on account of the one who did the wrong nor on account of the injured party, but rather that before God you could see for yourselves how devoted to us you are.** **13** By all this we are encouraged. In addition to our own encouragement, we were especially delighted to see how happy Titus was, because his spirit has been refreshed by all of you. **14** I had boasted to him about you, and you have not embarrassed me. But just as everything we said to you was true, so our boasting about you to Titus has proved to be true as well. **15** And his

affection for you is all the greater when he remembers that you were all obedient, receiving him with fear and trembling. 16 **I am glad I can have complete confidence in you.**

2 Corinthians 8 Paul explains and teaches about offerings. (24 verses)

1) Generosity is expected of us in times of trouble and in good times.

v. 1 And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the **Macedonian** churches. 2 In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. 3 For I testify that **they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability.** Entirely on their own, 4 **they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people.**

1 Cor 16:1 Now **about the collection for the Lord's people:** Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. 2 On the first day of every week, **each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income,** saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

Romans 15:25 Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the Lord's people there. 26 For Macedonia and Achaia were **pleased to make a contribution for the poor** among the Lord's people in Jerusalem.

Gal 2:9 James, Cephas and John, those esteemed as pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised. 10 **All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I had been eager to do all along.**

2) We should excel in our Godly giving.

v. 5 And **they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord,** and then by the will of God also to us. 6 **So we urged Titus, just as he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part.** 7 But **since you excel in everything**—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—**see that you also excel in this grace of giving.** 8 I am not commanding you, but **I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others.**

3) We should be generous because Jesus was generous to us.

v. 9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though **he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor,** so that you through his poverty might become rich.

4) **Paul gives them a further exhortation to give as they are able.**

v. 10 And here is my judgment about what is best for you in this matter. **Last year you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so.** 11 **Now finish the work**, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, **according to your means.**

2 Cor 9:6 Remember this: **Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.** 7 **Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.**

5) **Rich or poor, it's your heart that matters in giving.**

v. 12 For **if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have.** 13 Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. 14 **At the present time your plenty will supply what they need**, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. The goal is equality, 15 as it is written: "The one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little." 16 Thanks be to God, who put into the heart of Titus the same concern I have for you.

6) **Commendation for Titus, Paul's disciple.**

v. 17 For **Titus not only welcomed our appeal, but he is coming to you with much enthusiasm and on his own initiative.** 18 And we are sending along with him the brother who is praised by all the churches for his service to the gospel. 19 What is more, **he was chosen by the churches** to accompany us as **we carry the offering**, which we administer in order to honor the Lord himself and to show our eagerness to help. 20 We want to avoid any criticism of the way we administer this liberal gift. 21 For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of man. 22 In addition, we are sending with them our brother who has often proved to us in many ways that he is zealous, and now even more so because of his great confidence in you. 23 **As for Titus**, he is **my partner and co-worker** among you; as for our brothers, they are representatives of the churches and an honor to Christ. 24 Therefore show these men the proof of your love and the reason for our pride in you, so that the churches can see it.

“He (Titus) was likely a convert of Paul’s ministry during his visit to Cyprus. **Legend has it that Titus was a poet and a student of Greek philosophy when he had a prophetic dream that led him to study the Word of God and to become a Christ-follower.** As God’s faithful servant he traveled with Paul on his third missionary journey.” TPT *Notes*