

Dear Friend,

2Co 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

The “treasure” is “Christ in us,” which Paul declared to be the mystery of the gospel in Colossians 1:27. The “earthen vessels” are our physical bodies. One of the best illustrations of this truth is the time Jesus commanded his disciples to take Him to the other side of the sea. You can read the entire story in Mark 4:35-5:20.

Jesus is the treasure. In this case, they have Jesus in a wooden vessel, a boat. Their job is to take the vessel from one side of the sea to the other side of the sea. That’s all they know at this point in the story. They launched out to do what Jesus had commanded and, just like Jesus had taught them earlier in the day, Satan came immediately to stop them. A great storm arose making it look like they were all going to die. Notice how this storm completely diverted their attention from the original commandment to “go unto the other side.”

Mar 4:37-38 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. (38) And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

What is the focus of their attention on? Is it getting to the other side? No! They are focused on survival now. Jesus had taught them earlier that same day that the “cares of this world” come to choke the Word, so that that it becomes unfruitful. This storm is doing exactly that. The focus is no longer on the mission. The focus now is on the disciples and them surviving the storm.

Jesus was in the same boat with them. Jesus was in the same storm with them. Yet Jesus was in perfect peace, asleep on a pillow. Why? Because Jesus knows the power of the Word of God. When you have received a commandment from the Lord Jesus Christ, no power of the enemy can stop you IF YOU DO NOT GIVE UP!

You know the rest of the story. Jesus rebukes them for their lack of faith, then speaks to the wind and the waves, and there was a great calm. But let’s continue on to see the rest of the story.

From the disciple’s point of view, the mission had been accomplished once they reached the other side. They had brought “the treasure” in a wooden “vessel” to the other side of the sea. Now they were about to find out why. Make sure you remember this point ... the disciples had finished their work by bringing the treasure where it needed to be. But now they were about to witness the treasure do the work that no mere man can do.

Mar 5:1-3 And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. (2) And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, (3) Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains:

Why bring the treasure here? Because there was a lost sheep who needed deliverance. They had left the safety of the 99 and gone to rescue a man who was possessed with thousands of devils. This man was past the point of self-help in any way. You could not reason with him. Jesus didn’t even try to speak with him. Jesus spoke directly to the devils who possessed him. This man would either be delivered by the power and authority of the treasure, or he would simply die in his misery.

But the treasure was on the scene, and He was not about to leave the man the way He found him. In short order He cast out the devils and the man was soon clothed, seated, and in his right mind. Notice the disciples had

nothing to do with the man's deliverance. They had done their job. They had brought the treasure in a wooden vessel in order for the power of the treasure to do the work of God. What a perfect illustration of the verse we started with.

2Co 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

We all have bodies that are earthen vessels. As believers, we all have "Christ in us." He is the treasure and we have Him in our earthen vessels. What is our job? To follow the instruction we receive from God in order to bring the treasure to whatever situation needs to be handled. That is our job. Deliver the treasure. Then we watch the treasure do the work of God from within us. Remember what Jesus answered when the people asked Him how they could do the works of God?

Joh 6:28-29 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? (29) Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

More and more I understand why Paul wrote what he did in the following verses. It is the key to allowing the ministry of the treasure within us to be accomplished.

Rom 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. (2) **And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.**

Our bodies are the earthen vessels that transport the treasure of Christ within us wherever He needs to go. In Mark 4 they transported the treasure in a wooden vessel. But we transport the treasure in our earthen vessels. How simple. How wonderfully simple. The treasure within us has not lost His power to save, heal, and deliver. Our job is to yield these earthen vessels completely to Him.

Your fellow servant for Christ,

GARY