



## Today's Message

Date: December 30, 2018  
Speaker: Pastor Steven Thomas  
Title: *Treasure in Jars of Clay*

Text: 2 Corinthians 4:7–12 (ESV)

<sup>7</sup> But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. <sup>8</sup> We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; <sup>9</sup> persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; <sup>10</sup> always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. <sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> So death is at work in us, but life in you.

Introduction: In today's sermon text, Paul begins to explain the nature of his ministry. False teachers presented themselves as celebrity ministers, but Paul's ministry was marked by weakness, persecution, and suffering. This was not an anomaly, but rather the design of God who enhances his glory and the glory of the gospel message by propagating it through frail vessels; it is "treasure in jars of clay."

**Today's take-home truth: God uses the most unlikely messengers so that His glory will be seen in their message.**

- I. **The weakness of the messenger magnifies the glory of our message. 7a**

- A. The glorious message of the New Covenant has been entrusted to us . . .
- B. *because* we are but jars of clay –
  - 1. of little value,
  - 2. notoriously fragile,
  - 3. easily expendable,
  - 4. but highly useful.

**II. The perseverance of the messenger displays the power of our message. 7b-9**

- A. Under pressure, but unwilling to quit. 8a
- B. Beyond answers, but never beyond hope. 8b
- C. Persecuted by men, but never abandoned by God. 9a
- D. Knocked down, but never “knocked out.” 9b

**III. The devotion of the messenger manifests the value of our message. 10-12**

- A. We must love Christ . . . 10-11
- B. more than life itself . . . 10-11
- C. so that others may behold “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (cf. 4:5-6). 12