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Treasure in Clay Jars

Definitions in **bold** letters are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 Edition
or Roget's Thesaurus – **August 17, 2014**

2 Corinthians 4:2-15

Introduction: This chapter is intimately connected with the preceding; and is, indeed, merely a statement of the consequences or results of the doctrine advanced there. In that chapter, Paul had stated the clearness and plainness of the gospel as contrasted with the institutions of Moses, and particularly that the Christian ministry was a ministration more **glorious** than that of Moses. It was more clear, it was a ministration of **justification**, (2 Corinthians 3:9,) and of the **Spirit**, (2 Corinthians 3:8,) and was a ministration where they were permitted to look upon the unveiled and unclouded glories of God, 2 Corinthians 3:18. In this chapter he states some of the consequences, or **results**, of their being called to **this ministry**: and the design is, to magnify the office of the ministry; to show the sustaining power of the truths which they preached; the interest which the Corinthian Christians and all other Christians had in the ministry, and thus to conciliate their favour; and to show what there was to **comfort them** in the various **trials** to which as ministers they were exposed...

(Source: Barnes' Notes on the New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bnn/)

2 Corinthians 4:1-2, Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received **mercy**, we **FAINT** (lose courage, weaken) not; But have **renounced** the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God **deceitfully**; but by manifestation of the **truth** commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

NOTE: **We have renounced** ... This does not refer to any recent renunciation on Paul's part, but to the fundamental renunciation of all the works of the devil at the time of his conversion to Christ. As Farrar put it: "We renounced them once and forever at our baptism." **Hidden things ... craftiness ... deceitfully** ... Rather than viewing this as Paul's defense of himself from criticism imputing such devices to him by his enemies, it is preferable, as Keley did, to see this as Paul's allusion "to such underhanded methods of certain **false teachers** at Corinth." This, therefore, is not Paul's defense of himself, as widely supposed, but his **charges against them!** Allo supported this view thus: Plainly Paul has someone in view - and in such a manner that he will not fail later on to disclose who it is. It is in 2 Cor. 10 to 2 Cor. 13 that this will be done. These rumblings of polemic (one who writes in support of one opinion, doctrine, or system, in opposition to another), still vague and muffled, certainly have the air of preparing the way for a decisive explanation rather than of recalling one which has already been given.

The fashionable explanation of much of the Corinthian letters as Paul's attempts to defend himself against slanders is lacking in both discernment and logic. Paul simply was not the kind of a man who was always on the **defensive**. Before he has finished this letter, **he will take** the **offensive** in such a manner as to demonstrate the

fundamentally **offensive** and **aggressive nature** of his life and preaching. (Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

2 Timothy 3:16-17, 4:1-2, All SCRIPTURE is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for **reproof (conviction: evidence)**, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be **perfect (fresh** [untainted; invaluable, useful]), thoroughly furnished unto ALL good works. I **charge** thee therefore (for this reason) before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the WORD; be **INSTANT** in **season**, out of **season**; **reprove (convince, tell a fault)**, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

Instant defined 2186, be present; assault [AGGRESSIVE, attacking (teachings and thinking; not people) by words or arguments with a view to shake, impair or overthrow].

2 Corinthians 4:3, But if our **gospel** be **hid** (veil), it is **hid** (veil) to them that are **lost**:

NOTE: When the Gospel is called **ours**, the meaning is, not that ministers are the authors or subject of it; but it is so styled, because they are entrusted with it; it is preached by them; and is in opposition to another Gospel, the Gospel of the false apostles. Here an objection is obviated, which the apostle saw would be made against the **clearness** and **perspicuity** (easiness to be understood) of the Gospel, asserted by him in the foregoing chapter; taken from some persons, who though they sat under the ministry of the word, were **not enlightened** by it, **saw no glory** nor excellency in it, nor were their minds in the least affected with it: to which he replies, saying, "if our Gospel **be hid**"... (Source: biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/)

2 Corinthians 4:4, In whom the **god** (being conceived of as possessing supernatural power, 1913 Webs.) of this world hath **blinded** the **MINDS** of them which **believe not**, lest the **light** of the glorious **gospel** of Christ, who is the image of God, should **shine** unto them.

NOTE: The god of this world. There can be no doubt that **Satan** is here designated by this appellation (name); though some of the Fathers supposed that it means the true Gods and *Clarke* inclines to this opinion. In John 12:31, he is called "the prince of this world." In Ephesians 2:2, he is called "the prince of the power of the air." And in Eph. 6:1,2, the same bad influence is referred to under the names of "principalities and powers," "the rulers of the darkness of this world," and "spiritual wickedness in high places." The name "**god**" is here given to him, not because he has any divine attributes, but because he actually has the homage of the men of **this world** as their **god**, as the being who is really **worshipped**, or who has the affections of their hearts (MINDS) in the same way as it is given to idols. By "this world" is meant the wicked world; or the mass of men. He has **dominion** (power of governing and controlling) over the world. **They obey his will**; they execute his plans; they further his purposes, and they are his obedient subjects. He had subdued the world to himself, and was really adored in the place of the true God. See Barnes "1 Corinthians 10:20". "They sacrificed to **devils** and not to God." (Source: Barnes' Notes on the New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bnn/)

Acts 26:16-18, But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness... ..To open their eyes, and to turn them from **darkness** to light, and from the **power (authority)** of **Satan** unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are **sanctified (make holy [pure])** by **faith** that is in me.

Colossians 1:12-13, Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in **light**: Who hath delivered us from the **power (authority) of darkness**, and hath translated us into the **kingdom** of his dear Son...

2 Corinthians 4:5, For we **preach** not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves YOUR servants for Jesus' sake.

NOTE: We neither proclaim our own wisdom nor *power*; we have nothing but what we have received; we do not wish to establish our **own authority**, nor to procure our own *emolument*. **But Christ Jesus the Lord** We proclaim the author of this glorious Gospel as CHRIST, the same as *hammashiach*, the MESSIAH, the *Anointed One*; him of whom the prophets wrote; and who is the expectation, as he is the glory, of Israel. We proclaim him as **JESUS Yehoshua**, the *Saviour* and *Deliverer*, who saves men from their sins. See Matthew 1:21. And we proclaim *Jesus of Nazareth* to be the long-expected *Messiah*; and that there will be none other.... **And ourselves your servants** Labouring as fervently and as **faithfully** for your *eternal* interests as your most trusty *slaves* can do for your *secular* welfare. And we do this for *Christ's sake*; for although we by our labour show ourselves to be your **servants**, yea, your **slaves**, yet it is a **voluntary service**...

(Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary* classic.studylight.org/com/acc/)

2 Corinthians 4:6, For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the **light** of the KNOWLEDGE of the **glory** of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

NOTE: And the light of this **Sun of righteousness** is more glorious than that light which God commanded to shine out of darkness. It is a pleasant thing for the eye to behold the sun in the firmament; but it is more pleasant and profitable when the gospel shines in the heart. Note, As light was the first-born of the **first creation**, so it is in the **new creation**: the **illumination** of the Spirit is his first work upon the soul. The grace of God created such a light in the soul that those who WERE sometimes darkness are **made light** in the Lord, Eph. 5:8. (Source: *The Matthew Henry Commentary on the whole Bible* classic.studylight.org/com/mhc)

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

NOTE: The figure is possibly drawn from the "**small pottery lamps**, cheap and fragile, that could be bought in the shops of Corinth"; or from the custom observed in Roman triumphs, in which the silver or other precious metals looted from conquered peoples was **melted down** and poured into **clay pots** to be carried in the procession. "Herodotus tells us that Darius melted his gold into **earthen pots**, which could be broken when it was wanted." Tiffany's in New York City once displayed a fantastically large and beautiful diamond on a small piece of driftwood. As Reid said, "A frail vessel of earth, a little **clay lamp**, was often used to **hold the light**." (Source: *Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament* classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

NOTE: That the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us: Why does God put such a great treasure in such weak vessels? So that the greatness of the power may be of God and not of us. So that it would be evident to anyone who had eyes to see that the **work** was being done by the **power of God**, not the **power** of the **vessel**. Why did God choose risky, earthen vessels instead of safe, heavenly ones? Because "perfect" vessels are safe, but bring glory to themselves. Earthen vessels are risky,

but can bring profound (deep, humble) **glory** to God. (Source: David Guzik's Commentaries on the Bible classic.studydrive.org/com/guz)

John 3:1-2, There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, **we know** that thou art a teacher come **from God:** for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, EXCEPT **God** be **with him.**

Mark 16:20, And they went forth, and **preached** every where, the Lord **working WITH them**, and **confirming** the word with SIGNS following.

1 Corinthians 2:1-5, And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was NOT with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in **demonstration** of the **Spirit** and of **POWER:** That your **faith** should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

2 Corinthians 4:8-10, We are troubled on every side, yet not **distressed**; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the **dying** of the Lord Jesus, that the **LIFE** also of Jesus might be made **manifest** in our body.

NOTE: Plumptre believed that "The imagery here belongs to the **soldier** on active service." It is perhaps best to forget about any special analogy that Paul might have had in mind and to consider these clauses merely as "the great paradoxes (proposition contrary to received opinion, or seemingly absurd, yet true in fact) of the Christian life." His own experiences during his apostolic ministry were the true background of all that is said here. **Pressed but not straitened ...** Moffatt translated this "**harried**, but not hemmed in." On Paul's first missionary tour, his enemies had chased him everywhere, but were never able to hem him in. **Perplexed, yet not unto despair ...** The disorders at **Corinth** were certainly perplexing (troublesome, irksome) to Paul, but there is no evidence that he ever despaired (be without hope). **Pursued, yet not forsaken ...** Forty men pursued Paul with a view to killing him, but he was not forsaken of the Lord (Acts 23:12ff). Both Lenski and Carver state that "The metaphor here is that of a mortal chase and flight." **Smitten down, yet not destroyed ...** As Bruce paraphrased this, "Knocked down, but not out!" Paul was literally STONED and left for dead (Acts 14:19); and that is surely an example of his being knocked down but not knocked out! (Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studydrive.org/com/bcc/)

NOTE: *Always bearing about in the body.* The expression here used is designed to show the great perils to which Paul was exposed. And the idea is, that he had on his **body** the **marks**, the stripes and marks of punishment and persecution, which showed that he was exposed to the same violent death which the Lord Jesus himself endured. Comp. Galatians 6:17: "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." It is a strong energetic mode of expression, to denote the severity of the trials to which he was exposed; The expression is parallel to what he says in 1 Corinthians 15:31, "**I die daily**;" and in 2 Cor. 11:23, where he says, "**in deaths oft.**" This did not occur once only, or at distant intervals, but it occurred constantly; and wherever he was... (Source: Barnes' Notes on the New Testament classic.studydrive.org/com/bnn/)

NOTE: **the life also of Jesus might be made manifest..** That in our preservation, the success of our ministry, and the miracles we work, we might be able to give the fullest **demonstration** that Jesus *is risen again* from the dead; and that we are

strengthened by him to do all these mighty works. (Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary* classic.studylight.org/com/acc/)

2 Corinthians 4:11-12, For we which live are always delivered unto **death** for Jesus' SAKE, that the LIFE also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then **death** worketh in us, but **life** in you.

NOTE: The preaching of the gospel exposes us to trials which may be regarded as death working in us. ...This is a strong and emphatic mode of saying that they were always exposed to death.

But life in you. You live as the effect of our being constantly exposed to death. You reap the advantage of all our exposure to trials, and of all **our sufferings**. You are comparatively safe; are freed from this exposure to death; and will receive eternal life as the **fruit** of our **toils** and **exposures**. (Source: *Barnes' Notes on the New Testament* classic.studylight.org/com/bnn/)

2 Corinthians 4:13, We having the same **spirit** of **faith**, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore (FOR THIS REASON) have I spoken; **WE** also **BELIEVE**, and therefore (for this reason) **SPEAK**...

NOTE: The same spirit that is expressed in the quotation which he is about to make; the same FAITH which the psalmist had. We have the Very spirit of faith which is expressed by David. The sense is, We have the same spirit of faith which he had who said, "**I believed**," etc. The phrase "spirit of faith" means substantially the same as faith itself-- a believing sense or impression of the truth.

According as it is written. This passage is found in Psalms 116:10. When the psalmist uttered the words, he was greatly **afflicted**. See 2 Corinthians 4:3, 6-8. In these circumstances he prayed to God, and expressed confidence in him, and placed all his reliance on him. In his affliction he spoke to God; he spoke of his confidence in him; he proclaimed his reliance on him; and his **having spoken** in this manner was the **RESULT** of **his belief**, or of his putting confidence IN God. Paul, in quoting this, does not mean to say that the psalmist had any reference to the preaching of the gospel; nor does he mean to say that his circumstances were, in all respects, like those of the psalmist. (Source: *Barnes' Notes on the New Testament* classic.studylight.org/com/bnn/)

2 Corinthians 4:14, **KNOWING** that **he** which raised up the Lord Jesus shall **raise up us** also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.

NOTE: It was the **assured hope** of the resurrection which sustained them in all their trials. This expression denotes the full and unwavering belief in the **minds** of the apostles, that the doctrines which they preached were true. They knew that they were revealed from heaven, and that all the **promises** of God would be fulfilled.

Shall raise up us also. All Christians. In the hope of the resurrection they were ready to meet trials, and even to die. Sustained by this assurance, the apostles went forth amidst **persecutions** and **opposition**, for they knew that their trials would soon end, and that they would be raised up, in the morning of the resurrection, to a world of eternal glory.

By Jesus. By the power or the agency of Jesus. Christ will raise up the dead from their graves, John 5:25-29. *And shall present us with you.* Will present us before the throne of glory with exceeding joy and honour. (Source: *Barnes' Notes on the New Testament* classic.studylight.org/com/bnn/)

Hebrews 12:1-2, Wherefore **SEEING** we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us **lay aside** every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us RUN with **patience (cheerful or hopeful) endurance** the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our

FAITH; who for the **JOY** that was SET before him endured the cross, **despising (disesteem (disregard [to neglect to observe]) the shame,** and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

John 5:25-29, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the **Son of God:** and they that hear shall live. For as the Father **hath life** in himself; so hath he **given** to the Son to have **life** in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which **ALL** that are in the **graves** shall **hear his voice,** And shall come forth; they that have done GOOD, unto the resurrection of LIFE; and they that have done EVIL, unto the resurrection of **damnation.**

John 3:14-18, And **AS** (just like) Moses lifted up the **serpent** in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever **believeth IN him** should **not perish,** but have **eternal life.** For God **so loved** the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have **everlasting life.** For God sent not his Son into the world to **condemn** the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is **condemned already, because** he hath **not believed** in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

2 Corinthians 4:15, For **ALL things** are for **your SAKES,** that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

Thought 1. Many Christians believe. "It's ALL about God, it's not about US." But this verse, along with John 3:16, and many other verses say differently. As it is, before God made the foundation of the world, he'd planned LIFE for US by faith IN Jesus.

NOTE: This is a very large and comprehensive expression, and reaches to all the things of Christ, as well as of his ministers. The incarnation, obedience, death, and resurrection of Christ, are all for the sake of **God's elect;** and so the ministry of his apostles and servants, their gifts, graces, comforts, and experiences; and so likewise all their reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions; see (2 Cor. 1:6). These were **endured** for **their sakes,** and tended to their establishment in the faith; were for the furtherance of the Gospel, and of the faith and joy of saints; and this gave no small **pleasure** and **relief** to them under their sufferings, that they were of such use to others. Moreover, all their deliverances, when in any imminent danger; were for the SAKE of the churches: **that the abundant grace;** held forth in their ministrations, manifestly to be seen in supporting them under their troubles, and delivering them out of them: **might through the thanksgiving of many; redound to the glory of God...** (Source: biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/)

2 Corinthians 4:16-18, For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our **light affliction,** which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of GLORY; While we **look not at the things which are SEEN,** but at the things which are **not SEEN:** for the things which are seen are **temporal;** but the things which are not seen are **eternal.**

NOTE: We MIND NOT the things **seen,** whether affliction or refreshment come, so as to be seduced by the latter, or deterred by the former [CHRYSOSTOM]. **things . . . not seen**--not "the invisible things" of Ro 1:20, **but** the things which, though not seen now, SHALL BE so hereafter. **temporal**--rather, "for a time"; in contrast to eternal. *English Version* uses "temporal" for *temporary*. The *Greek* is rightly translated in the similar passage, **"the pleasures of sin for a season."** (Source: Jamieson, Fausset, Brown Commentary classic.studylight.org/com/jfb)