

2 CORINTHIANS LESSON 6

Chapter 4: The Christian's Life of Service in Earthen Vessels

5 June 2023

Vs 1 “**Therefore...**” because Jesus Christ can be found throughout the Old Testament Scriptures by those who believe on Him (Chpt. 3) “...**seeing we have this ministry** (the ministry of proclaiming Jesus Christ and His righteousness from the holy scriptures.) “...**as we have received mercy**” (salvation) “...**we faint not.**” (We don’t quit. We continue telling others about Jesus because He is worth it.)

Vs 2 We have “**renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness.**”

- There are many dishonest men who are in the ministry, but they keep their dishonesty hidden.
- Other men use craftiness to trick people into coming to church or to receive Christ (gimmicks, empty promises, games, amusements, sporting events).

“**Nor handling the word of God deceitfully.**”

- A bible school proclaims to love and teach the King James bible to lure young people. Then, they proceed to correct the KJV and use lexicons and Greek texts to overrule the KJV.
- If you say you love and use the KJV, but don’t believe it is inerrant, you are deceiving people.
- Shame on preachers who mishandle the word of God, using it as a tool to convince people to give more money or to give more authority to the preacher than is proper or to push a false doctrine or a pagan/secular holiday, etc.

“...**but by manifestation of the truth...**” Always stick to the truth. Don’t embellish to make the story more exciting or to entertain people. If you preach the truth, you’ll attract people who love the truth. If you preach an interesting lie, you’ll attract people that you don’t want in your church.

Vs 3 “³ **But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.**” Only those that don’t have the Holy Spirit are blind to the gospel.

Vs 4 “⁴ **In whom the god of this world (Satan) hath blinded the minds of them which believe not...**”

- Notice that blindness is a RESULT of unbelief. It is not the CAUSE of unbelief.
 - Satan cannot blind the minds of those who believe in Christ.
 - God does not prevent a man or a woman from believing. Their unbelief makes it impossible for them to discern spiritual things (1 Cor. 2:14).
- Satan blinds peoples’ minds (he casts doubt) to prevent God’s gospel light from shining through. He wants people to remain in darkness.

5-6 Because God “**hath shined in our hearts,**” if we’ll believe (salvation), that light will increase so we can know the bible and live the Christian life.

- God’s glory is veiled by unbelief. When you believe, then that veil is removed.

Vs 7 “**But we have this treasure** (the knowledge of the glory of God, the light that shines) **in earthen vessels.**” (Your body contains and transports the glory of God). ...**that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.**”

- If God chose a great powerful being to carry His gospel, whenever somebody would be saved, the glory might go to that powerful being.
- By choosing to use frail men and women (earthen vessels), all the glory goes to God whenever any good thing is accomplished.

8-9 “*We are troubled on every side* (suffering, trouble, hardship from chapter 1), **yet not distressed.**”

“*We are perplexed* (we don’t know what to do), **but not in despair.**”

“*Persecuted* (wronged by others), **but not forsaken**” (God is always there).

“*Cast down* (depressed in our spirit or emotions), **but not destroyed**” (we don’t stay down).

10-11 “*Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus* (The savor of death unto death), **that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.** (The savor of life unto life, 2 Cor 2:16).

¹¹ *...we...are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake.*” God can use us and our failing bodies to save souls, instruct and edify believers, and change lives. That is evidence that the power of Jesus Christ is in us. He is clearly the One performing those mighty works.

12-15 “*...he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus...*” Even though we live in bodies that are failing, we don’t lose hope because God is going to raise us up like He did Jesus Christ.

We can give thanks for anything we accomplish through Christ, which results in God getting the glory (vs 15).

Vs 16 Knowing that we are going to die but God is going to raise us from the dead, “**we faint not.**”

- Our outward man is perishing, “**yet the inward man is renewed day by day.**”
 - **Titus 3:5**, we were made new (regenerated) by God when He saved us. After that, the Holy Spirit began to renew us day by day so that the inner man remains just as new as the day you were saved.
 - The inner man can’t die, can’t get sick, and can’t sin (1 John 3:9). This is eternal life.
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