

CHRIST IN US, VISIBLE TO MEN

(2 Corinthians 4:7-12)

I. I must have a proper view of the message.

- a. Paul referred to it as a treasure.
- b. Notice verse 6 – the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of, or person of, Jesus Christ is a reference to the gospel message.
 - i. Knowing God and Christ is eternal life (John 17:3).
 - ii. The gospel allows us to know the Godhead, so that has to be the treasure of verse 7.
- c. How do you view the gospel?
- d. Jesus spoke some parables talking about the kingdom being like a pearl of great price or a treasure hid in a field.
- e. Is the gospel something we are ashamed of or something we live out in our lives?
- f. It has to be all of the gospel, not just the parts that are easy to live.
- g. We have to view the gospel as something so valuable we are willing to give up all that we have for it, even our lives as Paul mentions.

II. I must have a proper view of myself.

- a. Paul called himself an earthen vessel.
- b. One translation has jars of clay.
 - i. Some of you may listen to contemporary Christian music.
 - ii. I don't, but I do know there is a band called Jars of Clay.
 - iii. This is the passage from which they got their name.
- c. Archaeologists have been digging in Rome and Greece for a long time.
 - i. In every site, there are tons of shattered clay pots.
 - ii. They were a dime a dozen in that day in time.
 - iii. They were like our disposable Tupperware.
- d. This is how the greatest man on earth besides Jesus viewed himself.
 - i. Something disposable.
 - ii. He could be replaced.
 - iii. The message he told was far more important than the one doing the telling.
- e. If I were to die tonight, the world won't stop because of it.
- f. If you were to die tonight, the world won't stop because of it.
- g. If the message we teach stopped being taught, the world might as well stop because men would have no hope.
- h. Paul had such a humble view of himself despite his greatness.
 - i. I don't believe it was always this way.
 - ii. I believe he was quite cocky when he was persecuting the church.

- iii. The Lord then knocked him to his knees and he learned his value.
- iv. Look at 1 Peter 5:5 – clothed is from the apron the slaves wore.
- v. Isn't it interesting that Paul always referred to himself as a slave of Jesus Christ?
- vi. How much was a slave worth in those days?
- i. You and I are slaves with a message not our own and we have to view ourselves that way.

III. I must have a proper view of the Master.

- a. Paul said that he was a jar of clay and anything he was able to do was by the power of God.
- b. Paul could say that the gospel had been preached everywhere.
 - i. Think of all the places to which Paul went.
 - ii. Think of all the people to whom Paul preached.
 - iii. Paul tells us that it was all done by God's power, not his.
- c. Any good thing you and I do is because of the power given us by God to accomplish it.
 - i. It isn't because I'm so great.
 - ii. It is only through Christ and His strength what we can do all things, not our own.
- d. If I were to preach a sermon that caused everyone one of you to respond, it wasn't because of me but the message that I preached.
- e. We preachers are nothing but jars of clay.
- f. West Walker will go on without me just like it was making it before I got there.
- g. The same is true for every one of and the congregations we attend.
- h. The reason is that the power is of God, not us.
- i. Never has been, never will be.
- j. It's all about God, His will, and bringing people to Him.

IV. With the right view I will have the proper motive.

- a. Paul talks about the trials he has and was facing.
- b. Listen to the words that he used:
 - i. Troubled – literally means pressed as grapes.
 - ii. But not distressed – means compressed and some translations have “but not crushed”.
 - iii. Perplexed – means not knowing what to decide or do.
 - iv. But not in despair – not being without hope.
 - v. Persecuted – harassed.
 - vi. Not forsaken – not abandoned.
 - vii. Cast down – thrown to the ground in hand to hand combat.
 - viii. Not destroyed – killed.

- c. Paul was pressed like a grape but not crushed.
- d. He was at a loss of what to do at times but never without hope.
- e. He was harassed unmercifully but never abandoned.
- f. He was thrown down on the ground by his enemies but never killed.
- g. All that is because of the power of God.
- h. The gospel was his treasure, he was just a messenger, and God was all-powerful to him.
- i. Because he had the proper view, he allowed himself to be in those situations for one motive: that the life of Jesus may be known to others in him.
- j. Verse 12 says "I'm willing to die so that you can live".
- k. That is the goal each of us is to be striving for in this life.