

Josh Owens / General

Reaching Forward With Motivation / Omnipotence; Power / 2 Corinthians 4:7-18

Reaching Forward With God's Power

Text: 2 Corinthians 4:7-18

Introduction

There is always a temptation to operate solely within our physical abilities. We sometimes conclude, "If I don't cause it or create it, it will never come about."

Grace is like a treasure box without a bottom and presents a quality of treasure that enables you to face anything in this life in a powerful way. Power as such that gifts you with

1 Corinthians 2:5 "5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

1) You Have Received A Powerful Treasure

A. A planned vessel for a powerful treasure

VERSE 7

- “this treasure” — Typically, treasure is considered accumulated wealth in the form of money, jewels, or other valuables. NOT SO HERE!!!
 - Paul says “**this** treasure!” A treasure of TRUTH that reveals to you and me the darkness within by the light of the gospel. It pierces our conscience with the truth the devil has for so long blinded us from.
- “in earthen vessels”
 - “earthen” — ref. clay material
 - 2 Timothy 2:20 “20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.”
 - 2 Corinthians 5:1 “1 For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”
 - “vessels” — **vessel** n. — an object used as a container; especially for carrying or storing liquids.
 - The important thing is that you keep your vessel clean and available!!!
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:4 “4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;”

- Luke 8:16 “16 No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.”
- God made you the way you are so he can do a work through you of eternal value!
 - Psalm 139:13–14 “13 For thou hast possessed my reins: Thou hast covered me in my mother’s womb. 14 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: Marvellous are thy works; And that my soul knoweth right well.”
- “excellency” — **extraordinary overabundance** n. — the state of having extremely (even superlatively) more than is necessary.
 - Q — Have you ever said, “I’ve got more _____ than what I know to do with?”
 - LISTEN...you can take all the troubles, trials, burdens, regrets, anxieties, and stresses of this life that every man, women, boy, or girl go through throughout their entire life span, and it NEVER EXHAUST the power of God!!!
 - This is why Paul said, “Don’t think for a second that your own self will, determination, and grit, will be enough to shine as lights in this dark world.

- **Quote:** (Missionary J. Hudson Taylor) “All God’s giants have been weak men who did great things for God because they reckoned on Him being with them.”

B. Purposed trials reveal your powerful treasure

VERSES 8-9

- Paul spells out the kinds of situations and emotions humanity experiences.
- We are: surrounded by trouble; perplexed; persecuted; cast down. (that is not all Paul said...that is exactly how the devil would present this verse)
 - “troubled” — **to be caused to be distressed** v. — to be brought into difficulties or distress or suffering.
 - “perplexed” — **to be perplexed** v. — to be or become filled with confusion resulting from failure to understand.
 - “persecuted” — **to be persecuted** v. — to be or become subject to systematic harassment and attack due to one’s religious beliefs.
 - “cast down” — **to be felled** v. — to be or become fallen by or as if by receiving a blow.
- **Quote:** (Warren Wiersbe) “Sometimes God permits our vessels to be jarred so that some of the treasure will spill out and enrich others.”

- Notice what Paul actually says!
 - “troubled...yet not distressed!”
 - Psalm 129:2 “2 Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: Yet they have not prevailed against me.”
 - “perplexed...not in despair!”
 - Romans 2:9 “9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;”
 - “persecuted...but not forsaken!”
 - 1 Corinthians 4:12 “12 And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it:”
 - “cast down...but not destroyed!”
 - Psalm 37:24 “24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: For the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.”

VERSES 10-12

- People all around you are suffering from this thought: “The temptation is too great, the guilt is too great, the regret is too great, my future is too bleak...”
- Q — Have you ever noticed how nothing can influence someone who has died?

- Over 49,000 Americans die by suicide annually, making it the 11th leading cause of death overall. **Approximately 46% to 90% of those who die by suicide have an underlying mental health condition**, with major depression being the most significant psychiatric diagnosis associated with suicide risk. That translates to about 1 death every 11 minutes. Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among teens and young adults (ages 10–34)
- While I understand that among these statistics there are chemical imbalances and some who truly need medical attention. However, a large part of the problem has to do with people not knowing what the power of God can do for them through Jesus Christ.
- “Always bearing about ‘in the body’ the dying of the Lord Jesus”
- Here is what spiritually happens when you receive Jesus as Savior: Spiritually, you receive His death and His resurrection!
 - 2 Timothy 2:11 “11 It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:”
 - His death was a death that took the power of sin and CRUSHED IT!
 - His resurrection was a moment of “new life” that empowers anyone to experience daily victory over sin’s power.

- LISTEN...(v12) Dying to sin every day is to be your life's focused work to the glory of God and to work life into those we are to minister to.
- **Quote:** (Dr. John Henry Jowett) "Ministry that costs nothing, accomplishes nothing."
- **Quote:** (A.W. Tozer) "How completely satisfying to turn from our limitations to a God who has none."

2) You Have Received A Powerful Attitude Of Faith

A. Your faith attitude must be controlled by God's Word

VERSES 13-15

- "according to what is written"
- **Quote:** Psalm 116:10 "10 I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted:" (Read verses 8-10)
- Here is a fact: If you truly believe what God has revealed to you, your faith will open your mouth!
- Paul is saying, "As David's level of deep trust based on God's power in his life, I too, because of God's power speak with the same depth of trust in God."

- Faith had given him victory over every trial and trouble.
- Paul declares confidence in ultimate victory!
 - (v14) Here is what Paul deeply believed: Yes, while God's power gifts us resurrection power to rise above the power of sin, God has also gifted us a future hope by His same power that, us along with you, will be ushered into the very presence of Jesus Christ.
 - DON'T give the thermostat of your attitude to the current trial, but rather give it to Christ, Who is carrying you through it and will one day carry you out of it's reach!
- (v15) You might ask the great question, "How is God glorified in my trials?"
 - Paul gives the answer! The treasure of grace (when focused on) will create a response of thanksgiving that has the power to turn hearts to Jesus.
 - Quote: (Warren Wiersbe) "Whatever begins with grace, leads to glory"
 - 1 Peter 5:10 "10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you."

B. Your faith attitude must look beyond the physical

VERSES 16-18

a) This requires a daily renewal

- (v16) “For which cause we faint not...”
- Your trials are NEVER against you!!!
- It is no surprise for an unbeliever to be overcome and controlled by despair when their physical experiences (“outward man”) presents a fading away.
- However, the believer has a superior option to turn their hearts too!
 - Romans 12:2 “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.”
 - Romans 8:18 “18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”
 - 1 Peter 5:10 “10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.”
- “renewed day by day”
 - I don’t care how much money or power you have, you can only live one day at a time.

- God has treasured in you more than enough grace to live out each day!
- LISTEN...you don't need to try and borrow or store up grace. God GIVES IT TO YOU!
 - Hebrews 4:16 “16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”
 - To live this way tells the Lord, “Lord, I have the fullest confidence in your ability to care for me and my family.”

b) It requires you to focus upon the real world

- This world seems so real because it heavily influences all our senses. However, it is destined to pass away!
- Now, a sure way to make the “material” world spiritual, is to submit to God in our use of it. God then performs His transforming work to make it a part of our eternal treasure.
- Quote: (A.W. Tozer) “The only real world is the Bible world”
- This can only be done by FAITH!

- Hebrews 11:13 “13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”

Conclusion

Believer — Because of the POWER OF GOD within you who are believers, there is a hope that will never die! You and I are able to take the focus of our hearts off the “temporal” and lift them up to the “eternal.” Because of God’s power, Satan can remove every temporal/tangible possession you have and never dim the eternal hope Jesus has given you through His death, burial, and resurrection.

Unbeliever — You my friend have a fragile hope and happiness. All you have right now is what is here right now. All of it could be gone tomorrow. Jesus has paid the price for your sin that you might give you life to a future hope that no man or demon can take from you.

Romans 10:9–10 “9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

John 3:16 “16 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.”

