



Sermon Extension

Our physical bodies, gifts and abilities are just a “container” to hold the great Treasure inside of us, but we are so often fixated on the limitations and imperfections of the vessel instead of the contents. What imperfection(s) do you feel is hindering you from letting God use you to serve Him?

On Sunday, Erwin explained that though we are like a simple and fragile jar of clay, God wants to use us to hold His great Treasure. We can be filled with this Treasure by doing three things. One of those things is to *empty the jar of clay of ourselves* by understanding that we are weak and confused, but that God’s strength and power is far greater and that He uses the state we are in to work in us and display Jesus’ life through us. Take a moment to think about the struggles and weaknesses in your life, and the imperfection(s) you listed from the first question. How can you be intentional in emptying these areas of yourself out of your jar this week?

The second way we can hold this great Treasure is by *allowing God to fill us with Himself to overflowing*. We do this by being willing to die to ourselves and surrendering to Him so that the Gospel of Jesus can take full root in our lives, and so that we may be completely filled with His presence. Take a moment to pray and surrender all of the weaknesses, struggles, imperfections, etc that you listed from the above two questions. Invite His presence into your life again and ask God that He fill you anew with His Treasure. How can you begin to shift your trust and focus to God, allowing Him to use these struggles to display Jesus’ life through you?

The last way we can continue to hold this great Treasure is by *sharing it with others*. What good is a full jar if not to be poured out and used? God doesn’t want us to be filled so that we can sit on a shelf, instead He wants to fill us to overflowing so that as we surrender our whole selves to Him, He fills us with His great Treasure, which in turn overflows out of us to others. How can we be active in seeking out those who need to be filled? How can we share our contents with others?



Scripture Exploration

*Read **2 Corinthians 4:7-12 (NLT)**: “We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure. This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves. We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed. We are perplexed, but not driven to despair. We are hunted down, but never abandoned by God. We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed. Through suffering, our bodies continue to share in the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be seen in our bodies. Yes, we live under constant danger of death because we serve Jesus, so that the life of Jesus will be evident in our dying bodies. So we live in the face of death, but this has resulted in eternal life for you.”*

Paul writes in verse 7 that we are like fragile jars of clay, and as we read further through verses 8-10, and so on, we know that that it is through our suffering and limitations that Jesus works in our lives. Has there ever been a time that you were at a physical or mental limit? How did Jesus’ power and strength carry you in this time?

According to verse 10 and 11, Jesus’ life becomes evident in us through our suffering and when we die to our own bodies. What does this mean? How can we die to our own bodies? What “bodily” limitations, life-tensions, or struggles can we submit to Him so that we may begin to share in the death of Jesus to be able to be filled with His life?

*Read **2 Kings 4: 1-7 (NLT)**: “One day the widow of a member of the group of prophets came to Elisha and cried out, “My husband who served you is dead, and you know how he feared the Lord. But now a creditor has come, threatening to take my two sons as slaves.” “What can I do to help you?” Elisha asked. “Tell me, what do you have in the house?” “Nothing at all, except a flask of olive oil,” she replied. And Elisha said, “Borrow as many empty jars as you can from your friends and neighbours. Then go into your house with your sons and shut the door behind you. Pour olive oil from your flask into the jars, setting each one aside when it is filled.” So she did as she was told. Her sons kept bringing jars to her, and she filled one after another. Soon every container was full to the brim! “Bring me another jar,” she said to one of her sons. “There aren’t any more!” he told her. And then the olive oil stopped flowing. When she told the man of God what had happened, he said to her, “Now sell the olive oil and pay your debts, and you and your sons can live on what is left over.”*

May 19, 2019
Great Treasure



In the account of the widow and jars, there was a search for empty vessels that would later be filled to the brim. In conjunction with the passage of how we are like fragile clay jars in 2 Corinthians 4:7-12, we understand that if we are to be filled with this great Treasure, then we are to be emptied of ourselves. Is there an area of your life that you need to empty to be filled by the Spirit?

The widow was able to empty her own small jar into many other empty jars and fill them to overflowing. Once we have been filled by His great Treasure, then we in turn can share this with others. Can you think of someone you know that needs to be filled with His life? How can you be intentional about seeking them out and sharing the Treasure inside of you?

Deeper Connection

Try out at least one (or more) of these activities to go deeper this week.

Pray: Ask the Holy Spirit to prompt you when an area of your life needs to be emptied from your jar to make room to be filled with Jesus' life. Then pray and invite Christ's presence into those areas, that He may fill you with His strength and power so that He can shine His life through you.

Memorization: Write down 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 on a small index card and keep it somewhere you can check daily (i.e. phone, bathroom mirror, wallet, car, purse, etc). Read and memorize it to remind yourself that though you may be pressed, perplexed, hunted or knocked down, that you are never crushed or abandoned by God, rather that it is through these trails and suffering that Jesus' life begins to shine through you.

Discipleship: Spend time with a friend, mentor, or someone you trust this week and ask them about a time when they felt physically or mentally limited. How were they able to persevere in these moments? How did they seek Christ's presence in these times? How did they feel filled anew after seeking His presence? How were they used through this limitation?