

Family TableTalk

Conversation 19

Ordinary Vessels, Ordained Suffering, and Extraordinary Treasure

read

II Corinthians 4:7-10

think

In this text, Paul is referencing a common practice observed in many ancient households. Rather than placing their valuables in ornate containers, many people would put their possessions in ordinary clay pots to prevent them from being noticed and stolen by thieves. The only way to retrieve the valuables from inside their vessels would be to break the pot. The treasure Paul is referring to in verse 7 is the treasure of the gospel. God places His most precious treasure in His people, ordinary and broken vessels, to show “that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.” His power, his knowledge, his sovereignty is at work in us.

Paul says that believers will suffer. We will be afflicted, perplexed and persecuted. However, there is grace! When we are broken, the joy and harmony of our witness reveals the glory that lies within us. Just like the broken, ordinary pots reveal unexpected and valuable treasures, the ordained suffering of believers reveals the peace, satisfaction and joy that is only found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. What an unexpected and valuable treasure! When your life feels as if it is a shattered piece of pottery, remind yourself that your circumstances are not punishment from God (Romans 8:1). Though suffering is inevitable, we can rest knowing that the advancement of the Gospel and our own personal sanctification is inevitable too. Submit yourself to His providence, commit yourself to edification and persist in revealing the valuable treasure that is best seen when you are broken.

apply

- In what ways have you seen God use the pain and suffering during this pandemic to reveal the treasure of the Gospel?
- Why are we quick to forget that God is at work in our suffering?
- What Scriptures can you memorize to remind you that God is at work in your pain?

pray

Father, you are so good to us. Even in the midst of our suffering, you are still at work. In our darkest moments, you are our light. In the middle of our most severe hurts, you can still bring about good. You are a trustworthy, sovereign, loving father who has only good for his children. Father help us, by your Spirit, to remember that you are at work in our pain. You are sovereign over our suffering. In this life, we will encounter trouble. But praise be to Jesus that he has overcome this world. Father help us to be faithful to reveal the treasure of the Gospel to the world when we suffer. Help us to show Christ as glorious and all-satisfying, even in the midst of our pain. It's in Christ's precious and holy name we pray, Amen.

by Drew Turberville

Drew Turberville is the Student Pastor at Riveroaks Reformed Presbyterian Church in Germantown, Tennessee. To hear his sermons, visit riveroakspca.org/watch. Follow him on Instagram [@riveroakssm](https://www.instagram.com/riveroakssm).

cpyu.org  **CPYU**
CENTER FOR PARENT/YOUTH UNDERSTANDING

© 2020 Center For Parent/Youth Understanding