

- **IE:** If You Had A Treasure Of Money - What Would You Do With It? Most - Put It In The Safest Place Possible! Save It - In The Bank! Invest It - To Make Something Off Of It! Client Once Told Me - Had Over \$100,000 In Tucked Away In The Walls Of Her House! Not The Wisest / Safest Place!

- But Look Where God Has Placed The Treasure Of His Gospel:

- "In Earthen Vessels!"

- In Clay Pots & Jars!

- We Might Think - Is That The Wisest & Safest Place To Put Something As Valuable & Precious As The Gospel?

- But The Truth Is - Paul Is Describing:

- You & Me! We Are These "Earthen Vessels!"

- Even As Isaiah Described Us In Isaiah 64:8 - "But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand!"

- But Like A Pot Or Vase Made Out Of Clay - We Are Frail & Fragile & Easily Broken!

- So - Why Would God Do This? God Gave Us His Treasure:

- Not Because He Needed Us:

- To Safeguard It - Like A Safe Made Out Of Iron!

- But Because We Needed It:

- To Safeguard Us - Because We Are:

- "Earthen Vessels!"

- "Jars Of Clay!"

- And - Why Did God Give Us This Treasure?

- The Treasure Of His Gospel & His Light?

- To **Change** Us!

- To Change *Us* - By His Power:

- And In The Best Way Possible!

3. Remember - Wealth Can Change People!

- Maybe Not Their Nature:

- But It Can Change Their Circumstances!

- But The Treasure Of The Gospel:

- Has Been Given To You - A Plain / Simple "Earthen Vessels" To Change You Entirely!

- From The Inside Out!

- And The Rest Of Our Passage Reveals:

- The Kind Of Change:

- That "This Treasure" Can Bring To You & Me!

- The Treasure Of The Gospel Will Change How You Will Approach Your Life & Even Your Death!

* First - The Treasure Of The Gospel Will:

1. **Change The Purpose Of Your Life!**

- See This In The Rest Of 4:7:

- "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us!"

- Why Did God Give You Such A Great Treasure?

- So That He Might Be Glorified:

- And Lifted Up - In Your Life & In The Lives Of Others!

- The "Power" That Is Mentioned Here:

- Seems To Refer To The Power & Influence That A Treasure & Wealth Can Bring!

- Money Can Open Doors That Normally Would Be Closed!

- **IE:** Politicians - Fund Raising Dinners - Sometimes Thousands Of Dollars - For A Chance To See & Speak With Them!

- But Its One Thing:

- When It Is Your Money!

- But If Someone Gave You The Money Or Made The Donation For You:

- It Does Not Reflect On You - But On Your Benefactor!

- And That's What The Power Of Our Treasure Does As Well!

- It Does Not Reflect:

- On Me & My Ability!
 - Because I'm Just A Jar Made Out Of Clay!
 - 1 Corinthians 1:26-29 - Paul Reminds Us - "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: / But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; / And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: / That no flesh should glory in his presence!"
 - We Are Simple "Earthen Vessels!"
- Instead - Any Power We Have From The Treasure Of The Gospel Reflects:
 - On The Lord!
 - His Grace To Us & His Glory In Us!
- And So - The Treasure Of The Gospel:
 - Will Change The Purpose Of Your Life!
 - To Glorify The Lord:
 - Because Of All That He Has Done For You & Has Given You!
 - 1 Peter 4:11 - "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen!"
- Is This Your Purpose?
 - The Purpose Of Your Life?
 - To "Glorify God In Your Body And In Your Spirit, Which Are God's!" (1 Corinthians 6:20)
 - This Is The Change That God's Treasure Will Bring!

* Second - The Treasure Of The Gospel Will:

2. *Change The Pattern Of Your Life!*

- See This In 4:8-9:
 - "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; / Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed!"
 - These Verses First Describe What Life Is Like:
 - As An "Earthen Vessel!"
 - When You Are A Christian, You Will Continue To Experience These Kinds Of Circumstances!
 - You Will Experience:
 - Pressure In Life! (4:8)
 - Because You Will Be "Troubled On Every Side!"
 - Physical Pressure / Mental / Social / Spiritual / In Every Way Imaginable!
 - You Will Experience:
 - Perplexities In Life! (4:8)
 - Doubt & Anxiety - About Decisions & Dilemmas!
 - You Will Experience:
 - Persecution In Life! (4:9)
 - To Persecute Here Means To Be Chased & Pursued - With The Intent To Harm You!
 - This Can Happen To All People, But Especially Christians!
 - You Will Experience:
 - Pain In Life! (4:9)
 - "Cast Down" Is Like The "Take Down" In A Wrestling Match! Can Be Painful!
 - This Is The Pattern Of Your Life:
 - If You Are A Christian!
 - After All - It Was The Pattern Of Jesus' Life!
 - A Pattern Of Suffering!
 - Pressures / Perplexities / Persecution / Pain!
 - Not Always Physical - But Spiritual!
 - 1 Peter 5:8 - "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour!" - He Is Always Pursuing! And When He Does:
 - He Will Bring Pressure!
 - Through Temptation & Trials!

- He Will Bring Perplexity!
 - To Create Doubt! Always Has / Will!
- He Will Seek To Bring Pain!
 - To “Devour!”
- With All This Going On - John Gill - “It Is Surprising That Earthen Vessels Should Bear And Suffer So Much, And Not Fall, Or Be Dashed To Pieces!”
- But - Because You Have “This Treasure” Of The Gospel:
 - And The Light Of:
 - God’s Wisdom / Wonder / Way!
 - It **Changes** The Pattern Of Your Life!
 - It **Breaks** The Pattern Of Your Life! How?
- Key Words In 4:8-9 – “Yet Not / But Not!”
 - Because Of The Power Of The Gospel:
 - And The Power Of Christ In Your Life:
 - You May Be:
 - “Troubled On Every Side, Yet Not Distressed!” (4:8)
 - Because Jesus Gives You Hope!
 - You May Be:
 - “Perplexed, But Not In Despair!” (4:8)
 - Because Jesus Gives You Wisdom & Understanding!
 - You May Be:
 - “Persecuted, But Not Forsaken!” (4:9)
 - Because Jesus Is With You! Hebrews 13:5 - “For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee!”
 - You May Be:
 - “Cast Down, But Not Destroyed!” (4:9)
 - Because Jesus Has Saved Your Soul, And You Are Forever Safe In The Arms Of Jesus! John 10:28-29 - “And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. / My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand!”
- This Is What Makes The Power Of God & His Gospel:
 - So Great & So Excellent!
 - He Gives You Hope & He Gives You Help!
 - No Matter What Kind Of Obstacle Or Opposition You Face In Your Life!
 - And So - When The Pattern Of Struggles:
 - And Suffering In Life:
 - Wears On You - And All Seems Dark & Dim - Reopen The Treasure Chest Of the Gospel!
 - And Look To The Gleaming Light Of The Treasure God Has Given You!
 - Because The Light Of His Wisdom / His Wonder / His Way:
 - Will Lead You Through The Darkness:
 - So That You Can Continue To Glorify Him!

* Third - The Treasure Of The Gospel Will:

3. Change The Perspective Of Your Life!

- See This In 4:10-11:
 - “Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. / For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh!”
 - In These Verses - Paul Describes For Us:
 - What Is Really Going On:
 - When You Experience The Pattern Of Life’s Pressures / Perplexities / Persecutions / Pain!
 - What Is Really Going On:
 - In The Life Of A Christian?
 - Through It All:
 - You Are Suffering With Jesus:
 - And You Are Serving Jesus!

- And This Will Completely Change Your Perspective When You Are Experiencing Suffering & Struggles As A Christian!

- Through It All:
- You Are A Participant:
 - In The Death Of Jesus!
 - 4:10 - Like Paul You Are - “Always Bearing About In The Body The Dying Of The Lord Jesus!”
 - And The Reason For This Paul Gives In 4:11 - “For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake!”
 - This Means That You Are Going Through The Process Of Death!
 - And Paul Knew Painfully Well What It Meant To Suffer For Jesus!
 - Galatians 6:17 - “I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus!”
 - And So - Like Paul & Like Jesus - You Are Going Through The Experience Of Suffering That Will Ultimately Lead To Death!
 - But A Christian Dies Differently:
 - Than A Non-Christian!
 - As You Die / When You Die / You Now Do So In Fellowship With The Sufferings Of Christ!
 - Wasn’t This Paul’s Desire In Philippians 3:10 - “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death!”
 - And The Treasure Of Christ & His Gospel Will Change Your Perspective:
 - On Suffering & Death! Also:
- You Are A Proof:
 - Of The Life Of Jesus!
 - 4:10-11 - “Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, *that* the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. / For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, *that* the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh!”
 - When You Are A Christian: The *Way* You Suffer & The *Way* You Struggle:
 - Will Be The Proof & Evidence That Jesus Himself Is Alive!
 - When You Suffer - When You Struggle - When You Sorrow:
 - You Have Hope In Jesus Christ!
 - John 14:19 - “Because I live, ye shall live also!”
 - And The Treasure Of Christ & His Gospel Will Change Your Perspective On Life!
 - Galatians 2:20 - “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me!”
- Do You Have This Kind Of Perspective?
 - About Your Own Death?
 - About Your Own Life?

Conclusion:

1. Remember:
 - The Treasure Of The Gospel Is Meant To Change How You Will Approach Your Life & Even Your Death!
 - And So - Paul Sums It All Up In:
 - 4:12 - “So then death worketh in us, but life in you!”
 - For Paul - The Treasure Of The Gospel:
 - Changed The Purpose Of His Life!
 - It Changed The Pattern Of His Life!
 - It Changed The Perspective Of His Life!
2. And So - Death Had Lost Its Sting For Paul!
 - And He Was Content To Go Through:
 - All The Suffering & All The Struggles:
 - That Accompany Death!
 - Because He Had “This Treasure – The Treasure Of Christ / The Treasure Of The Gospel – In His Earthen Vessel!”
 - But - He Was Also Content:
 - Because He Knew That God Was Using:
 - Him - As Frail & As Fragile As He Was:
 - To Bring Life To Others!

- Spiritual Life!
- Eternal Life!
- Christ's Life!
- Because The Treasure Of The Gospel:
 - Was Never Meant To Be Hoarded:
 - But Shared!
- 3. Do You Have This Treasure?
 - If Not - It Can Be Yours!
 - By Turning To & Trusting In:
 - The Source Of It All!
 - Jesus Christ - "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge!"
(Colossians 2:3)
 - He Is The Greatest Treasure Of All!
 - More Precious & Valuable Than:
 - Any Possession / Any Inheritance!
 - Do You Have This Treasure?
 - If So - Then Let It Change You!
 - Your Purpose! Your Pattern! Your Perspective!
 - Because He Has Put His Treasure In You!
 - A Simple, Fragile:
 - And So Often Frail:
 - Jar Of Clay!

***Grace Baptist Church
 Stephen Elmer, Pastor
 4245 North 200 West
 Greenfield, Indiana 46140
 317-326-2362
www.sermonaudio.com/wordofgrace
www.growatgrace.org
pastor-elmer@hotmail.com***