

## 2 Corinthians: Jars of Clay

### [2 Corinthians 4:1-12](#)

In this passage, Paul unpacks the counter-intuitive nature of the gospel. Following Jesus does not promise ease and prosperity. Instead, we must be willing to empty ourselves and enter into Jesus' suffering in order for God's power to shine a light in the darkness of our hearts. And others will see God's glory because his strength is revealed in our weakness.

## Application

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1. One of the challenging facets of the gospel is the truth that our hearts are full of darkness without Jesus. What is your reaction to this idea? What does Scripture say about it?
2. It's very easy to be consumed by our culture and captured by ideas that appeal to us, so we must be cautious about whom and what we align ourselves with. What voices or organizations do you find appealing? Why do you think that is?
3. As believers, we all have a responsibility to share the gospel with those around us. When have you seen the gospel shared with credibility and power where God alone was glorified? How can you grow in this area?
4. Part of following Jesus is being willing to suffer with and for him. What have you ever risked or lost for the gospel? What kinds of sacrifices do you think God is calling you to make now in order to further his kingdom?

## Key Points

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- As Paul unpacks the gospel, he explains that it has nothing to do with charisma or talent. The gospel is powerful in and of itself.
- Many cannot receive the gospel because they are blinded by Satan. We must be mindful of Satan's influence and power in our culture.
- Instead of trying to align ourselves with a powerful leader or movement, we are free to be servants since our status is secure in Jesus.
- Our inherent weakness as vessels of the gospel only serves to amplify God's power. The very nature of the gospel is that God became weak in the form of a man to serve others.
- We all have a responsibility to share the gospel humbly and with sincerity.

- Part of our calling as believers is to enter into the sufferings of Christ. We must be willing to deplete and diminish ourselves for the sake of others—only then can God fill us with his glory.