

Restoring a Weary Heart

▫ What is a weary heart & why does it need restoring?

*2 Corinthians 4:1-18. Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, **we do not lose heart.** ² Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways..... ⁵ For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶ For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ. ⁷ But we have this treasure in jars of clay **to show** that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. ⁸ We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. ¹⁰ We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, **so that** the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. ¹¹ For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, **so that** his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. ¹² **So then,** death is at work in us, but life is at work in you. ¹³ It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken. Since we have that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak, ¹⁴ because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you to himself. ¹⁵ All this is for your benefit, **so that** the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.*

16 Therefore we do not lose heart. *Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸ So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.*

1. Paul: An amazing Christian leader

- **Before his conversion: Educated, lawyer, zealot, heritage, passionate...self-righteous Jew...**
Philippians 3:3-7.
- **A powerful conversion – a dramatic encounter**
Acts 9:1-19.
- **An Apostolic ministry of signs & wonders**
Acts 9:40-43; 13:11-12; 14:3; 16:7-9, 26; 18:9; 19:11; 28:8-9, etc.

2. Paul: Battered by many forces...

*2 Corinthians 1:8-10. We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, **so that** we despaired of life itself. ⁹ Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. But this happened **that** we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. ¹⁰ He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us*

- **Much trouble – great pressure - V:8**

➤ Once stoned, 3 shipwrecks, 24 hours in open sea, danger in rivers, danger of bandits, hunger, thirst, cold, naked, danger of false brothers, riots, sleepless nights, homeless, brutally treated, dishonoured, bad report, called an imposter, slandered, called scum, struck down, persecuted, prison frequently, flogged severely, exposed to death many times, 5 x 39 lashes (195), 3 x times with rods, trouble, etc. 1 Corinthians 4:10-13; 2 Corinthians 4:1-18; 2 Corinthians 6:3-13; 2 Corinthians 11:16-29.

- **Far beyond our ability to endure - V:8**
- **We despaired of life itself - V:8**
- **We felt we had received the sentence of death - V:9**

A sentence pronounced by a judge to produce a specific result

- **That we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead - V:9**

3. Paul: The secret of restoring his heart...

- **He had a revelation of how God was working to deal with his self-reliance**

V:7. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us

Treasure in jars of clay

- **An amazing treasure of Christ in us**
- **The frailty & mortality of jars (vessels) of clay**

V:8-12. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. ¹⁰ We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. ¹¹ For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. ¹² So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you

- **So that the life of Jesus may be revealed**

- **Learning the secret of restoring a weary heart**

¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day

- **Inwardly – we are being renewed day by day**

4. Paul: Discovered his eternal perspective

V: 17-18. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸ So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

- **Where are our eyes fixed – temporal or eternal?**

If our eyes are fixed on the temporal – we will lose heart and become weary – if our eyes are fixed on the eternal glory - we will be refreshed, encouraged and enjoy a renewed and restored heart!

We are His - jar of clay - chosen vessel!

▫ The Chosen Vessel

The Master was searching for a vessel to use;
On the shelf there were many - which one would He choose?
*'Take me, cried the gold one, I'm shiny and bright,
I'm of great value and I do things just right.
My beauty and lustre will outshine the rest
And for someone like You, Master, gold would be best!'*

The Master passed on with no word at all;
He looked at a silver urn, narrow and tall;
*'I'll serve You, dear Master, I'll pour out Your wine
And I'll be at Your table whenever You dine,
My lines are so graceful, my carvings so true,
And my silver will always compliment You.'*

Unheeding the Master passed on to the brass,
It was widemouthed and shallow, and polished like glass.
*'Here! Here! cried the vessel, I know I will do,
Place me on Your table for all men to view.'*

'Look at me,' called the goblet of crystal so clear,
*'My transparency shows my contents so dear,
Though fragile am I, I will serve You with pride,
And I'm sure I'll be happy in Your house to abide.'*

The Master came next to a vessel of wood,
Polished and carved, it solidly stood.
'You may use me, dear Master,' the wooden bowl said,
'But I'd rather You used me for fruit, not for bread!'

Then the Master looked down and saw a vessel of clay.
Empty and broken it helplessly lay.
No hope had the vessel that the Master might choose,
To cleanse and make whole, to fill and to use.

*'Ah! This is the vessel I've been hoping to find,
I will mend and use it and make it all Mine.
I need not the vessel with pride of its self;
Nor the one who is narrow to sit on the shelf;
Nor the one who is bigmouthed and shallow and loud;
Nor one who displays his contents so proud;
Not the one who thinks he can do all things just right;
But this plain earthy vessel filled with My power and might.'*

Then gently He lifted the vessel of clay.
Mended and cleansed it and filled it that day.
Spoke to it kindly. *'There's work you must do,
Just pour out to others as I pour into you.'*

By Beulah V. Cornwall (1967)