



The Senior Scene

Love people. Know Jesus. Live Transformed.

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Jars of Clay

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. 2 Corinthians 4:7

In the 1st century, clay jars were commonplace – every household had many of them for various uses. And they were made of basic material – clay! Baked dirt. There was nothing extraordinary or particularly beautiful about them. They had defects and imperfections, and they were breakable. And in this verse, Paul describes us as jars of clay.

Paul was not disparaging human life. Rather, he was drawing attention to the greater purpose for which we were made. In the verses prior to this one he speaks of the profound glory of Jesus and the light of the gospel which *God* made to shine in our hearts. It's not we who shine, but it is He who shines...out of a jar of clay. Paul was pointing out the startling paradox of the indescribable glory of the gospel shining within the "ordinariness" of the vessels that contain it. Paul is shifting the focus away from the perishable "jar" and on to the contents of that jar – the power of God within us.

What does it mean for us to be a jar of clay? First, it means God can use the ordinary and commonplace. Not many of us are superstars and neither should we aspire to be. In God's eyes, we don't need to be. He simply wants a jar of clay to carry His glory and not our own. Secondly, we are fragile and perishable and powerless on our own. But what we carry is priceless -- an immeasurably precious treasure that will never break or fail — God's *all-surpassing and sovereign power*. The resurrection power of Jesus dwells within the frailty of our human body.

But we have this treasure... within us! God has entrusted us as a home for the eternal treasure of His empowering Spirit.

It seems counterintuitive that God put His greatest treasure in vessels that are so fragile. And yet the great story of the gospel is that He does! What an extraordinary privilege! We are imperfect, but the treasure within us is perfect and glorious. If we were beautiful and polished vessels, then others would see us rather than the treasure within us.

The plainness of the vessel makes His character more visible to others.

The light and glory of the gospel does not depend on human strength or wisdom or beauty. Paul tells us that the meager and broken vessels of our lives reveal God's power even more—His perfection in contrast to our imperfections. God inhabits those imperfect and broken places of our lives.

The brightness of His glory shines more brightly in our frailty and brokenness. Just as Jesus revealed Himself in His earthly life to humble fisherman, He still uses common jars of clay to reflect the light of the gospel. His power finds full effect in human weakness (2 Cor 12:9). The treasure is not hidden; it shines forth... onto others. The all-surpassing power within us gives us boldness in shining for Him.

Yes, we are humble vessels, but we also note that clay jars are handmade. The prophet Jeremiah (18:6) reminds us that we are the clay and God Almighty is the Potter. We are created in God's image, and then He shapes us each uniquely - exactly how He wants us to be for the purpose for which He has created us.

Paul tells Timothy (2:20-21) that in a house there are many kinds of vessels, each used for its own purpose. And he urges Timothy to be the kind of vessel God can use for every good work to be a blessing to others.

We live as vessels of the full glory of Jesus. He has purposefully chosen us to carry His light precisely because we are jars of clay. He does not want any to put their trust in what we can do but rather to see the power and work of God within us. He does not want people to notice us, but to notice the Savior within us!

Even as "clay jars," we are beloved, and the treasure within us makes us beautiful in His eyes – His masterpiece (Eph 2:10). Not because we are more than clay, but because He inhabits us and calls us to share the treasure of His glory. May we never forget Who it is that lives within us.



Call Upon Jesus

Back when I was a Berkeley Hills fireman, I saw quite a lot. I've been in fires where the ceiling has collapsed on me; I nearly fell through a roof that was about to collapse below me; and I nearly got zapped by an outside power line that had melted off a telephone pole and was down on a lawn at night.

But one fire call stands out in my mind. It was a fire in a real estate agency on Perry Highway. Normally, we have two people on a hose line, but we were short-staffed on this call, so I went into the fire by myself.

Suddenly, there was a wall of fire all around me – front, back, right, and left. In addition to fighting the fire, I needed to spray water on the hose to keep it from burning and bursting. But every time I tried to do it, a wall of fire would suddenly spring up on all sides of me. As soon as I would get one wall of fire almost knocked down, another one was upon me to fight.

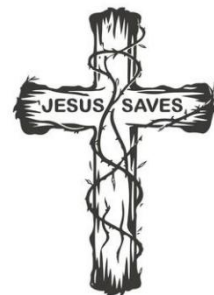


The fire hose, my lifeline, should have burst any second as I was too busy fighting walls of fire all around me. I heard in my head the Johnny Cash song, "I fell into a burning ring of fire... and the flames rose higher, higher, higher... and it burned, burned, burned, this ring of fire..."

And then in the midst of the fire, I saw a very dark figure of someone that I sensed was very evil. Then I thought that this must be what it is like to die and not go to heaven. Fire all around with no way out.

But it didn't touch me. Someone else was with me in the fire. I finally knocked down the fire and got out. I examined the hose, thinking it had to be hanging by a thread. But I couldn't find *any* damage to this hose that had been in the flames for so long! None! Not only that, but it should have been covered with mud and lots of soot, but it was clean. I couldn't find a speck of soot on the section of the hose that had been in the fire. None! No doubt God gave me a lifeline, or I'd have burned.

Jesus saved me from burning up that day, but even more, Jesus has also rescued me from another fire, one that is eternal. I thought I was in a hopeless situation that day as I was fighting the flames, but Jesus saved me. Likewise, I was rescued from eternal fire by Jesus Christ when my soul was in a hopeless situation without Him. If you're not already rescued from that eternal fire, only one person can save you – Jesus. Call upon Jesus!



--Bill Schmitt

Little Things

One day, taking a break from creating galaxies, planets, mountains, oceans, and all of the big things that are [a strain] to create, God fashioned a very small flower and worked out a design for the first tiny snowflake. And He was very pleased with the little things and lingered with uncommon care... as much for the buttercup as for the milky way. Scientists tell us God is still designing snowflakes, making each one different, having a bit of fun perhaps. I don't know about that, but I am pretty sure God isn't hung up on bigness. In fact, He must be quite free of our provincialism.



That's why Christ was rather impressed with a widow who gave two little coins and a boy who offered his sack lunch. That's why the one lost lamb mattered to the shepherd. So, I know the things you and I can do, though they seem pretty small to us, seem pretty big to God, who has a better way of keeping score.



--Norman Shockley

News Updates

Fall Bible Study



**James: Do Your
Monday Actions
Reflect Your
Sunday Worship?**

**Thursdays— September 11 thru November 6
at 10AM
in the Huston Room.**

The Scoop on 2nd Thursday

Several of you have been asking about the future of the 2nd Thursday luncheon. And to be honest, that question is a bit open ended at this time. Since Westminster Hall is still in use as our temporary sanctuary, the lunches will **not** be restarting in September as we usually do following our summer hiatus. Additionally, we are considering a different format to this event, and again, quite honestly, we don't yet know what that will be. We are praying about how to go forward and are discussing different options. So, the one I can say for sure is to "stay tuned." When and if this event comes back, we will be excited to share that news with you!



Canceled Stamps for Ministry



Just a reminder that MPC collects cancelled stamps. The stamps are sent to the Alliance Stamp Ministry where they are used to raise funds to support the spread of the Gospel in Spanish by radio and by printed material. I know personal paper mail is becoming more rare, but as you receive items in the mail that have a stamp on them, don't toss the envelope until you have cut off the cancelled stamp – please leave at least ¼-inch border around the stamp if possible. You can drop off your stamps in the church office.

Pittsburgh Senior News

Pittsburgh Senior News is a quarterly publication especially for today's older adults in Allegheny County. For 30 years, it has been a respected news resource of information about activities, events, issues, health and wellness, financial questions, and available resources for older adults.

There are over 700 distribution sites for this publication including supermarkets, stores, banks, senior centers, AARP chapters, senior apartment complexes, hospitals, shopping centers, senior expos, libraries, and pharmacies. Or access their website at <https://pittsburghseniornews.com>.

Church Picnic Time!

Mark your calendar for the annual MPC All Church Picnic. On Sunday August 24, 2025, we will have one worship service at 9AM followed by a brief congregational meeting. Then we will kick off the picnic activities around 10:30 AM. The church will be providing burgers and hotdogs, and each family can bring a side dish or appetizer or salad or dessert. There will be games and prizes and fun and fellowship. Look for more details in the weekly announcements. Hope to see you there!



Find the Books of the Bible

I once made a remark about hidden books of the Bible. It was a lulu, kept people looking so hard for facts and for others, it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the names of the books were not capitalized, but the truth finally struck home to numbers of readers. To others it was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. Yes, there will be some really easy ones to spot. Others might require a few judges to help them. We will quickly admit it usually takes a minister to find one of them, and there will be loud lamentations when it's found. A little lady says she brews a cup of tea so she can really concentrate better. See how well you can compete. Relax now, for there really are fifteen names of the books of the Bible in this little story.



Picnic Season... the leftover letters reveal a Scripture message.



T	R	U	S	E	I	N	W	O	R	B	S	P	U	H	C	T	E	K	C
S	T	E	I	G	A	M	E	S	N	T	I	H	E	R	E	L	O	O	C
E	F	D	E	L	O	H	T	O	L	C	E	L	B	A	T	O	R	R	R
R	R	A	D	L	W	D	W	I	K	T	H	A	A	L	L	N	O	A	L
O	I	N	M	Y	O	A	T	L	O	S	G	W	U	R	O	Q	E	A	H
M	S	O	E	I	L	H	E	O	N	A	R	N	R	N	U	T	U	N	E
S	B	M	T	S	L	B	N	A	H	D	A	C	T	E	D	G	O	M	K
P	E	E	E	A	A	Y	E	R	A	N	P	H	T	E	H	L	A	U	A
I	E	L	D	L	R	B	L	L	O	E	E	A	C	T	E	E	S	S	C
H	O	A	L	E	D	N	A	N	O	C	S	I	E	M	R	T	W	T	T
C	T	O	T	E	C	S	Y	D	O	O	U	R	R	C	S	R	I	A	R
O	O	A	K	R	O	O	T	B	E	E	R	E	E	W	U	N	M	R	O
T	W	A	U	T	O	R	A	I	N	V	T	C	U	N	M	H	M	D	H
A	B	D	A	E	K	R	V	S	T	A	I	A	N	Q	M	A	I	D	S
T	I	T	N	G	I	I	O	N	W	A	L	L	P	L	E	M	N	Y	Y
O	O	O	U	R	E	W	L	A	Y	S	S	O	E	F	R	B	G	U	R
P	A	S	T	A	S	A	L	A	D	B	P	M	R	D	I	U	R	T	R
F	R	U	I	T	T	N	Y	O	H	S	I	I	N	M	E	R	S	A	E
G	A	N	N	D	A	T	B	H	I	E	E	E	W	T	I	G	I	L	B
R	L	S	M	P	A	S	A	C	K	N	K	G	A	B	N	E	G	E	W
I	Y	H	K	A	O	U	L	R	D	C	R	L	S	I	P	R	A	S	A
L	T	I	H	R	S	E	L	S	I	A	P	S	W	T	R	S	A	I	R
L	N	N	G	K	S	H	T	H	S	E	O	H	S	E	S	R	O	H	T
S	X	E	M	U	S	I	C	S	B	A	D	M	I	N	T	O	N	X	S

ANTS

BADMINTON

BAKED BEANS

BARBEQUE

BROWNIES

CHICKEN

COLESLAW

COOKIES

COOLER

CORN HOLE

CORN ON THE COB

CROQUET

DEVILED EGGS

FAMILY

FRIENDS

FRISBEE

FRUIT

GAMES

GRAPES

GRASS

GRILL

HAMBURGERS

HORSESHOES

HOTDOGS

ICE CREAM

ICED TEA

KETCHUP



LAUGHTER

LAWN CHAIR

LEMONADE

MUSIC

MUSTARD

NAPKINS

PARK

PASTA SALAD

PICKLEBALL

PLATE

POPSICLES

POTATO CHIPS

POTATO SALAD

RAIN

RIBS

ROOTBEER

SMORES

STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE

SUMMER

SUNSHINE

SWIMMING

TABLECLOTH

VOLLEYBALL

WATER

WATERMELON

WINGS

