

Jars of Perseverance

2 Corinthians 4:7-18

11/15/2020

The church in Corinth had a serious problem. They had it too easy!

“It will aid the understanding of this deeply moving testimony of Paul if we bear in mind one feature of the church of Corinth: it knew nothing of persecution. In this it was exceptional among the early Christian churches...Consequently this church’s experience and interpretation of the Christian life in the world were very different from those of Paul. There is evidence to suggest that the sufferings of their founder apostle were a perplexity to them, and even a cause of offense.” (The Broadman Bible Commentary, Volume 11, pages 29-30)

If everything in life was easy God would never get to help us persevere.

- I. Perseverance is a God thing (7)
 - A. We are very weak
 - B. God is very strong

“The remarkable thing and the place where we struggle is it takes both of those. It takes the weakness in order to have the strength. That is what we do not like. We all want to see the power of God in our lives, but we want it to come out of untroubled, peaceful, calm, circumstances. We want to move through life protected from all the dangers and all the difficulties.” (Pastor Ray C. Stedman)

- II. Perseverance is a necessary thing (8-12)
 - A. There will be times we feel completely crushed – *“hard pressed”*
 - B. There will be times we feel totally confused – “perplexed”*
 - C. There will be times we feel spiritually terrorized – *“persecuted”*
 - D. There will be times we feel pounded to a pulp – *“struck down”*
- III. Perseverance is a faith thing (13-15)
 - A. I believe the God who raised Jesus is my God (14)
 - B. I believe God has a broader plan than I see right now (15a)
 - C. I believe God can use my struggles to glorify Himself (15b)
- IV. Perseverance is a temporary thing (16-18)
 - A. *“We do not lose heart”* in this life as we persevere
 - B. We look to eternity when we won’t need to persevere

So What?

- ❖ We can focus on our situation or we can focus on our Savior
- ❖ We can focus on escaping or we can focus on soaring
- ❖ We can focus on today’s price or we can focus on tomorrow’s value