

“Now we have this treasure in clay jars.” 2 Corinthians chapter 4 verse 7

What is the treasure that Paul is talking about here? It is the life of God. What are the clay jars? They are us.

It would be easy to fall into the trap of thinking that Christians are supposed to consider themselves pathetic, miserable worms grovelling in dust and ashes before the glory of a perfect God.

As usual, this is a caricature of what the bible really wants us to understand. It frequently presents us with a contrast between ourselves and God, and it's pretty alarming. “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,” is the best known example. God is infinitely great and good, and the best of us is not. The gulf between us and God is vast and beyond our ability to bridge using our human abilities, however impressive they may seem.

But we must not run away with the idea that the bible credits us with no value. It presents human beings as God's valued and loved creation, demonstrated by the fact that he did not hold back the life of his own son Jesus to redeem us. And the psalmist David describes human beings like this; “What is a human being that you remember him, a son of man that you look after him? You made him a little less than God and crowned him with glory and honour. You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet.”

If we believe in Jesus Christ, then God lives within us by the presence and power of his Holy Spirit. Now, if we want to present something to the world, how do we want to present ourselves? Can we take credit for the things God does in and through us? Can we offer people the hope of eternal life in ourselves? Of course we can't. We could never live up to it. That's why we don't promote ourselves, but God, who can do these things. So Paul calls us jars of clay which contain a great treasure, so that it will be seen that the power within us is not our own but God's.

We are just humble, unremarkable vessels by comparison with the majesty of God who lives within us.

Prayer.

Father, I come before you in humility, not in self-degradation. I know that you love me because I am your creation and because I have come to faith in you. But please help me to make more of you in my life and less of me, so that people will be drawn to you because my life reveals yours. In Jesus' name, amen.

*All these devotionals can be found on our website [inghamitechurch.org](http://inghamitechurch.org) on the 'Resources' page. Click on the link to go there.*