

Let's Visit

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Clay Pots

When Paul writes the Second Corinthian letter, we find these words in chapter 4 and verse 7, *"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."* He is of course, speaking of the gospel. He says we have this treasure in earthenware vessels. More literally, this treasure is in clay pots. That is, jars of mud, earthenware vessels.

In the biblical world, treasures were kept and hidden and preserved in common, earthenware, ceramic, fragile containers. Historians tell us that in the ancient world, it was common practice to keep expensive, valuable treasures in worthless, valueless, commonplace unattractive clay jars.

Well, Paul has just finished telling us of the glory of the "light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." It is the truth Paul declared and the gospel he preached. It is the mystery that Paul unfolded. The promise of free pardon for sin. A new law and power for life. This was then, and still is now the wealth of the world. It is that which enriches the heart of man. Paul says it is in clay pots.

Just as eastern kings stored their gold, silver and jewels in earthen jars, so a plain casket may hold a costly jewel. Miry soil may yield an abundant crop. A battered ship may carry a precious cargo. A tattered book may contain noble thoughts. It is therefore no objection against the gospel that those who preach it are in many ways unworthy of an office so dignified.

Jesus was apparently a peasant, a carpenter's son. He was also the Son of God most high. The apostles were fishermen, toll-takers and tent makers. They were also the heralds of salvation to mankind. The upper room was not comparable to a heathen temple. Yet, it was the scene of Divine communion.

There were not many great men in those early church services. At least, not by the world's

standard of greatness. They were not noblemen or aristocrats. They were however, inheritors of the kingdom of God. Paul was very aware of defects and weaknesses. He had a frail body and fallible judgment. His character was imperfect. This all contrasted with the perfectness of the gospel. The gospel that the apostle held in his heart.

There is a reason for putting a treasure like the gospel in this container. Jewelers don't display the value of diamonds by putting them on display against a backdrop of other diamonds. They display the value of diamonds by putting them against a comparatively worthless black cloth. Against the backdrop of that worthless black cloth, the beauty, luster and the value of the diamond are seen.

How does God display His power? Does he display his power using people who are inherently strong? Using people strong in and of themselves? Does God delight to display his power in those who have a commanding presence? No, God delights to display his power in those who are inconspicuous and who because of their weakness and frailty, become a backdrop that when everyone sees them they can say, "that's not him" or "that's not her", that is the power of God working in their life.

Take a look at the story of Abraham and Sarah. Abraham is 100 years old and Sarah is 90. It seems impossible that they would have a child. Then Isaac is born so that everyone would say that Jehovah is great.

(Continued on page 2)

In Search Of The Lord's Way



Tune in to this Television Ministry
KSLA 12 – Shreveport -7:30 a.m. Sunday
DISH channel 239-6:00 a.m. Sunday
DIRECT TV channel 307 -6:00 a.m. Sunday

Gathered Here and There



Today's Sermon

"I Want To Go To Heaven"

We saw last Lord's Day that we don't want to go to hell. Today, we will explore why we want to go to heaven!

For The Pantry. . .
July 30 – Oatmeal (Regular or Instant)

Clay Pots – continued from page 1

When God called Moses to lead His people out of Egypt, Moses was an 80 year old tongue tied shepherd with a wooden stick and God used him to pull off an exodus.

It doesn't matter who it is. It can be Elijah with his cloak or David with his slingshot. It might be the lad with the loaves and fishes. God delights to take that which is inherently inconspicuous, weak and fragile and so act in it with power that everyone will say, "That reveals the power of God". That is what the gospel is, God's power to change lives.

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Getting Something From Worship

A person complained about getting nothing from worship. The listener remarked: "Did you take a sack?" The implication was we must expect something and be prepared with a container.

The tragedy is millions miss something tremendous on Sunday. It isn't that they do not go to worship, but they do not get anything from it. So many awake Sunday morning very laze, decide if or not they will go, then hustle to make it, coming in frenzied and then fidget until it's over, then rush away. It is little wonder they get little or nothing.

People get little out because they put little in. Worship is participation not spectation. You watch a play or opera but YOU worship. The preacher, teacher, songleader, etc. may lead the service but YOU worship. One can inspire another to loftier worship, but YOU still worship.

Worship is GIVING – not necessarily the contribution. You give your time. You plan to come; you reserve a time for worship. You expect something; you come for something. Worship then is action. Having come with a definite purpose and intention, then you can sing from the heart, pray and commit from the heart. Each aspect of worship is you expressing yourself to God.

Have you ever worshipped? Really tried to gain the most from simple worship? Do you leave inspired, forgiven and directed? Do you want to return? Worship to God transcends all other human experience. When you come to worship, bring a container

-Just A Moment

On The Lighter Side. . .



Miscellaneous



Those To Remember In Prayer

We extend our sympathy to the family of **Bruce Ligon** (faithful gospel preacher and friend of Tim and Norma Perkins) who passed away on Tuesday of this past week.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Leon Aldridge, Roxie Bostick, Gene Bradshaw, Martha Bradshaw, Martha Jean Golden, Geneva Graves, Alice Hall, Thelma Hinton, Louise Johnson, Mike O'Brien, Debra Pate, Jerry Pate, Wayne Sims, Betty Willis

"EXTENDED FAMILY" AND FRIENDS

Cody Anthony (LaResa Livingston's nephew)
Mitchell Anthony (LaResa Livingston's brother),
Minion Bean-(Mike O'Brien's mother) recovering from a fall and hip surgery), **Aleshia Bradshaw** (Gene & Martha Bradshaw's granddaughter in law)
Brenda Bradshaw (Gene Bradshaw's sister in law) recovering from knee surgery; **Curtis Bradshaw** (Gene Bradshaw's brother) recovering from pneumonia; **Ron Cone** (Laura Miller's dad), **Celina Danley** (Sister of Joyce Danley) multiple health issues, **Hugh and Pat Fletcher** (Sarah Fletcher's brother and sister-in-law dealing with multiple health issues) **Gail Foster** (Cancer) **Sa Mary Ann Gillis** (friend of Tim and Norma Perkins) **Bobbie Gray** (Jerry Pate's Aunt) **Geneva Harrison** (Mike Bostick's mother) **John Henry Holloway** (Martha Jean Golden's son) **Suzanne Ihlo** (Martha Jean Golden's sister recovering from a stroke) **Debbie Lynn** (Abbey Perkins' mother dealing with memory issues) **Lamar McCormick** (friend of Sarah Fletcher, multiple health issues) **Reba Miley** (friend of Debra Pate) **Vervan Pate** (Jerry Pate's brother) is being treated for stomach cancer. **Al Reick** (Robbie Holt's brother-in-law) pancreatic cancer. **Stephanie Richard** (Friend of Norma Perkins) cancer; **Calvin Smith** (Debra Pate's uncle) heart and blood pressure issues; **Michael Smith** (Debra Pate's cousin) is being treated for lung cancer in Green Acres; **Suellen Swank** (friend of Norma Perkins) **J. C. and Pat Tate** (Jana O'Brien's mother and father) **Wes Wiesemer** (Gene Bradshaw's nephew) recovering from a stroke and also suffering with cancer: **Clark Paul Williams** (LaResa Livingston's cousin)

THOSE IN THE MILITARY AND FOREIGN SERVICE

Cole Barbee, Adam Bradshaw, Leland Bradshaw, Michele Bradshaw Rosie Tate and Lucas Tate

If you want someone added to the prayer list, please fill out a card and place it in the offering plate.



Save The Date!
September 10, 2023

**Plan to be here and
bring a guest (or 2)**

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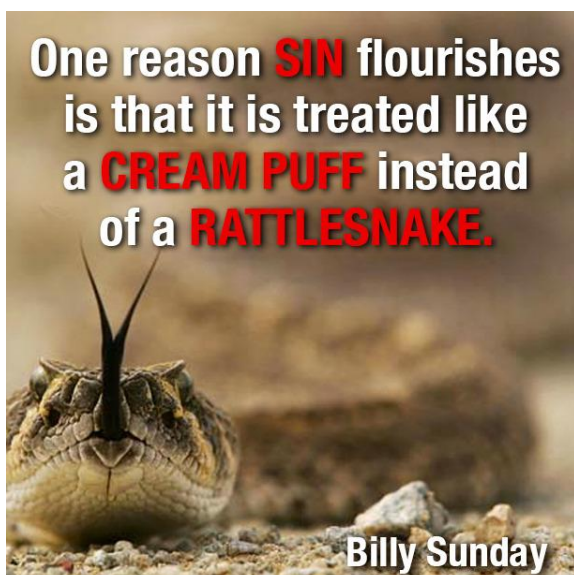
Hospitality Group 1 will be in charge of this luncheon. The Members of that group are: Marsha Bounds, LaResa Livingston, Betty Miller, Lisa Miller and Melonie Molloy.

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MEN'S BUSINESS MEETING – Sunday, August 13th immediately following morning worship in the office. All men of the congregation are encouraged to attend.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT MEAL – Our next Wednesday night meal will be **August 30, 2023**. Make your plans to come and join us at 6:00 p.m. for fellowship before our service.

Make your plans to be in Bible Class
9:45 Sunday Morning
7:00 Wednesday Evening





Across The Preacher's Desk

The Hebrew writer quotes a passage from Jeremiah chapter 31 in Hebrews 6:10. He writes, "I will put my laws into their mind and write them in their hearts". God is telling us there will come a day when his law will not be written on tablets of stone, but will be a law written in the heart.

God is talking about the spirit of His laws taking hold of our hearts. In the Old Testament, we often see people keeping the law of God without the law of God taking hold of their hearts. Jesus quotes Isaiah in Matthew 15:8 when he says, "This people honoreth me with their lips but their heart is far from me?"

Is there a parallel or application for our day and time? Why do we obey God's commandments? Do we live God's kind of life out of a fear of going to hell? Do we live God's kind of life because that is "what we are supposed to do"? Or, are we living God's kind of life out of our love for God? Are we living God's kind of life because of the love God showed for us in sending Jesus and we want to return that love?

Where is God's law written for us today? Is God's law written on our heart so that we live for God because we love Him? It should be.

it's something to think about.....tlp

**The Lord's Plan
For Evangelism –
Each one Bring one!
53 in '23!**