

**TREASURE IN EARTHEN VESSELS:
OVERCOMING BARRIERS IN MINISTRY**

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2 Corinthians 4:1, 5-15 NIV

¹ Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart...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.

2 Corinthians 4:10-15 NIV

¹⁰We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. ¹¹For 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. ¹²So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

¹³It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." Since we have that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak, ¹⁴because 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. ¹⁵All 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.

I. TRANSFORM FROM THE INSIDE OUT

God calls us to leave those old ways and become transformed into a new way of loving, living, and relating so that we look more like Jesus to the world.

Ephesians 4:22-23 (NIV)

You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires;²³ to be made new in the attitude of your minds;²⁴ and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

John 4:13-14 (NIV)

¹³ Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

2. BECOME AN APPRENTICE OF JESUS

We must belong more to Jesus than this world.

Luke 10:41-42 (NIV)

⁴¹ “Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, ⁴² but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”

“Who you are deep on the inside is more important than what you do for God. Your doing for God must always flow out of your being with God. You cannot give what you do not possess.”

- Peter Scazzero, Emotionally Healthy Leader

3. EMBRACE PARTNERSHIP

We join in mutual submission, joining hands together as we carry this message of Jesus.

Romans 16:1-2 (NIV)

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchreae. ² I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of his people and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been the benefactor of many people, including me.

Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

With Jesus barriers become blessings.

With Jesus barriers become opportunity.

With Jesus barriers become transformation.

With Jesus barriers become part of the greater purpose.