

Small Group / Personal reflection material

FILLED TO FLOW

(7 March 2021)



1. Read 1 Corinthians 4:1-16. What is meaningful for you in this passage and why?

Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. ²Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. ³And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,'^(a) 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.

⁷But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. ⁸We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. 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. ¹² So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

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

¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸ So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

2. What do you think it means to have the “treasure of God” in us as jars of clay? Why do you think that image of being a clay jar is significant (verse 7)?
3. Even though we are made of clay, which is not a very strong material, Paul goes on to say that we are virtually indestructible. How do we hold this paradox or tension here?
4. In the sermon, we spoke about how we often see our struggles, pain and failures (like holes in our jars) as things that disqualify us from serving God or accomplishing His purposes, but how do you think you could allow God to use your brokenness instead of pretending you've got it all together?
5. Read verse 13-15 again and reflect on the power of God's Spirit is available to and at work in us. How do you think you can invite more of the Spirit's work in your day to day life?
6. What is the biggest barrier for you in terms of experiencing the outpouring of God's Spirit in your life? How can you overcome that barrier?