

2 Corinthians

Clay Vessels

Interpreting the Text:

1. Chapter 4 features several images of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ, like letting light shine out of darkness and hiding treasure in clay vessels. How does this draw on Jesus' language in the Gospels? What do these images make you think of?
2. Is it clear how Paul makes the connections between basic elements of his gospel, his own self-defense and his appeal for genuine renewed fellowship with the Corinthians? What are some verses that support these three aspects of his ministry in chapter 4?
3. Is the strategy of emphasizing shared beliefs to lay a foundation for reconciliation that Paul uses in this chapter effective? What does this effort tell us about Paul's relationship with the church in Corinth?

Applying the Text:

1. Paul grounds all of his work and relationships in the hope of being with Jesus again soon. Millenia later, how do you hear this today? Does the 'eschaton' or the notion that we will be reunited with Christ at any moment affect your daily life?
2. Paul is encouraging the Corinthians to outwardly show the light of Christ despite their hardships. What might this outward display look like for you today? How do you overcome trials to still show Christ's love in the world?