

RCMI L-Path Teaching

August 1, 2021

TITLE: PERFECTLY IMPERFECT

TEXT: 2 Corinthians 4: 6-10

THEME: Perfecting The Imperfect

B.I.: A true believer is a powerful weakling and a conquering victim that allows the light of Christ's glory to shine through!

INTRO:

- Our August series is entitled: **Perfecting the Imperfect**. Big Idea: We are flawed human beings, but because of Jesus Christ we can receive forgiveness of sins, and with the power of the Holy Spirit, we can follow God's Word more and more each day.
- **The truth is not always obvious. Christianity is full of paradoxical beliefs.**
- A paradox is a seemingly contradictory statement that does not sound possible, but upon closer examination is proven to be true.
- The Bible is the ultimate sourcebook for the greatest paradoxes we know; even the law of Christian life is a paradox as all its teachings are contrary to the common opinions of man.
- In the midst of a dark and uncertain reality, the Lord wants you to see the light of His glory being revealed.
- Paul, despite all of the overwhelming challenges he had faced as a believer, remained faithful and committed to his calling. The reason for this fortitude was this understanding of the paradox of Christian life.

A True Believer Is A:

I. POWERFUL WEAKLING [v.7]

- Paul described the glorious Gospel he preached as the light of the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ [v.6].
- **"But we have this treasure in jars of clay."** The contrast this imagery draws is between the expensiveness of the treasure and the inexpensiveness of the container — the indispensable treasure and the dispensable container.
- Isn't that paradoxical? God would put something so powerful, so precious, and so valuable in a vessel that is weak and fragile.
- **Even if this sounds highly contradictory: we are powerful weaklings!** We are powerful because of the Gospel we preach yet weak because of our humanness.

- “...to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.” [v.7b]
- God has deliberately chosen something fragile and unimpressive because He wants to show that the power of His glory is from Him.
- God knows you’re a jar of clay. He knows that we are weaklings and yet He fills us up so that as we walk through the world, the glory of the light shining on the face of Jesus Christ oozes out and those who would never have known the truth about God get to see Him because God put inside of us a great treasure.

II. A True Believer Is A: CONQUERING VICTIM [vv.8-9]

- If you’re in a low place right now, please know that it’s an opportunity to display God’s glory and the life of Christ. On top of that, it will also benefit others:
- In telling a series of contrasts, Paul gives insights of his own self-evaluation. He gives an illustration to show how powerful the gospel is despite our weakness.
- With intention, Paul uses the conjunction ‘yet’ or ‘but’ to show what is and what is not happening. The word ‘But’ in Greek expresses the fact that while we are victims of circumstances, we are also conquerors.
- Thinking of the word “but” as middle ground, let’s look back at what Paul said: the left side shouts that we are victims of circumstances, but the right-side shouts back that we are more than conquerors. [VV. 8-9]
- On the left side, he said we are hard-pressed on every side **but** the right-side shouts back that we are not yet crushed. Pressure will not defeat us. [v.8a]
- On the left side, he said we are “perplexed” **but** the right-side shouts back that we are not in despair. Confusion will not discourage us. [v.8b]
- On the left side, he said we are persecuted **but** the right-side shouts back that we are not abandoned. Opposition will not deter us. [v.9a]
- On the left side, he said that we are struck down **but** the right-side shouts back that we are not destroyed. Hard hits will not destroy us. [v.9b]
- **And choosing which side to dwell on will determine whether you’ll make it or not.** Sometimes, Christians get stuck on the left and end up getting discouraged. I want to tell somebody today that you can survive whatever life throws at you if you learn to live on the right side of ‘but.’
- You have the faith that says no retreat, no surrender, for I am more than a conqueror. – *Romans 8: 35-37*
- **Christ offers victory through trouble not victory apart from trouble.**

APPLICATION:

- We are perfectly imperfect, we are beautifully broken, but because the Light of Jesus lives inside of us we can’t be completely destroyed. We aren’t done. We always have hope; because of Jesus who lives inside of us.

- Those scars and cracked lines mark an essential moment in our history. It's part of our story. It's part of our growth. It's part of our healing. It's part of what God has done in us

CHALLENGE:

Your ordinariness is not a liability; it is an asset, if you really want God to get the glory. - John Piper

- The believer's life that's broken and fractured is the life that allows more of Christ to shine through! You may be weak but you are powerful. You may have been a victim of circumstances but you're more than a conqueror through Him who loved us the Bible says.

DISCUSSION:

- God's Word is a rich sourcebook of paradoxical statements. First, for you to appreciate our sermon series this August we must accept that Christianity is founded on apparently contradictory but true beliefs. Give examples of paradoxical beliefs in the Bible: Examples:
 - Last is first. [Matt. 20:16]
 - Weak is strong. [2 Cor. 12:10]
 - Giving is receiving. [Acts 20:35]
 - Loss is gain. [Matt. 16: 24-26]
- What do you mean by 'powerful weakling'? We are powerful because of the Gospel we preach yet weak because of our humanness.
- Why would God choose to put His most precious treasure in broken vessels? God has deliberately chosen ordinary earthen vessels because He wants to show that the power of His glory is from Him.
- What do you mean by 'conquering victim'? The Gospel is powerful despite our weakness. The conjunction 'but' expresses the fact that while we are victims of circumstances, we are also more than conquerors through Him who loved us. [Ro. 8:37]
- Sharing time:
 - Name an area of weakness and find a verse that can transform that weakness into strength.
 - Share your present struggles and find a text that will help you conquer it.

You are perfectly imperfect. And it is through your imperfection that the light of Christ's perfect glory shines!