

All in Father's Design

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Father's purpose in us is to awaken and enlighten us to the truth that this world and life are not our reality. It is His way of reminding us of who we really are, and what we really are, in Christ as part of His grand design for the ages. He has a wondrous plan, purpose and place for us against which the things of this life pale in comparison, about which Paul said that all of this life is really nothing compared to the "*far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory ...*" (II Corinthians 4:15-18) which one day will be "*revealed in us*" (Romans 8:18).

Just think: One day Dad will use what the world sees as our pitiful imperfections – our brokenness, our divinely implanted flaws – as the display of His "*abundant grace*" (II Corinthians 4:15). Even in this life the outworking of death ("*the dying of the Lord Jesus,*" :10) in us has a glorious purpose: that the "*life of Jesus might be manifested in our mortal bodies*" which will eventually (and even now in some measure) "*through the thanksgiving of many super-abound to the glory of God*" (:15).

We read in :6 that God "*commanded the light to shine out of darkness,*" taking us back to Genesis, and in the same way God's light "*has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of His glory ...*" Imagine that! The same creative power of God that brought all of creation into existence is at work in us for the purpose of revealing "*the light of the knowledge*" of His Glory to the world around us, illuminating, as it were, "*the face of Jesus Christ*" to others!

When we read in :7 about “*treasure in earthen vessels*,” we are taken back to when God used just a very few of His people to defeat a huge army arrayed against Israel. These few had a light in earthen vessels, and then when the vessels were *broken* the light shone forth to reveal God’s awesome work. In the same way, God is working in His “*not many*” (I Corinthians 1:26) vessels of service; and it is in our brokenness that His light, “*the light of the glorious gospel of Christ*” (II Corinthians 4:4), shines forth to the world to reveal God’s awesome work!

This ministry spoken of in :1 is in the continuing context of chapter 3, and is a ministry of our being living, walking “*epistles*” (3:3), the purpose of which is to give “*life*” (:6). Our wonderful Father uses the troubles, perplexities, persecutions – all of the trials and tribulations of this life (4:8-9) – to deliver us to death, for the marvelous breaking of His vessels. Thus, while the world is busy attempting to show off their supposed superiority of supremacy, God ultimately reveals the futility of the “*darkness*” of their “*blinded minds*,” demonstrating the “*excellency*” of His power through us.

What a wonderful and glorious privilege and benefit it is for us that our Awesome Father has chosen us to use as weak, flawed, broken vessels in His service, so that ultimately the whole creation will see and understand the amazing knowledge and wisdom in all that He has done and said He will do.

*Oh! the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been His counselor? Or who has first given to Him, and it shall be repaid to him again? **For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to Whom be glory throughout the ages. Amen!*** (Romans 11:33-36).

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