

**Clay Jars 3: Keep on Keeping On**  
**Brady Sparks (October 13, 2019)**

**1. EYES UP!**

1. As living broken vessels, chalices, we **"look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."** 2 Cor. 4:18.
2. We are **"not sufficient in ourselves,"** 3:5, we **"faint not,"** 4:16. We glory in our weakness, 10:17, 11:23, and live through the power of God. 12:9.
3. His life is **manifested** in and through our suffering: **"For we who are live are always being delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested also in our mortal flesh."** 2 Cor. 4:10-11.
4. We are **"led and displayed by Him to the world . . . every day and everywhere. From justification until glorification, the redeemed sinner is on exhibition as a trophy of divine grace. . . (Hughes, *Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, p.78.)**
5. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an **eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.** So we are always of good courage (2 Cor. 5:6, 8). Remember the comparison.
6. **"Despite afflictions, perplexities, and catastrophes, the Christian's gaze is concentrated on the glory within and beyond; his treasure is not on earth, but in heaven, and there accordingly his heart is also."** (Hughes, 159.) Avoid Christian teaching to the contrary.
7. For we **must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil** (2 Cor. 5:10). The picture is a **"trial by fire. . . The Christian whose works abides after the test will receive a reward, whereas he whose work is consumed will suffer loss — 'but he himself shall be saved' (1 Cor. 3:10-15)."** (Hughes, 182). **"If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire."** (1 Cor. 3:14-15. Take heed to those words; be sober-minded.

**2. MAKE EVERY EFFORT!**

1. If you stumble, reclaim and maintain your **passion** – especially for the Word for Christ. The Word of God is **"living"** (Heb. 4:12). As the Navigators say, **read, hear, study, memorize, meditate.** God promises that the Word **"shall not return to me empty [void]."** (Isa. 55:11).
2. The Word is a **person.** Christ is the Word and the One by whom **all things** were made. (Jn. 1:1, ff.) Christ, who made the world, is the Word, and He **lives** in the Word. If you haven't done so, here are some starters: Ps.1, Jn. 1, Heb. 4:12, Jn. 15, Rom. 8, Eph. 1, Mt. 5-7, **II Pet. 1:3-11.**
3. **"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teach and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts toward God."** Col. 3:16

4. 2 Pet. 1:3-11: **"3 His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. 4 Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. 5 For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; 6 and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; 7 and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. 8 For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But whoever does not have them has become near-sighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins. 10 Therefore, my brothers and sisters,[a] make every effort [be all the more eager] to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, 11 and you will receive a RICH WELCOME into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."**
5. Meditate on your reward in heaven. Heb. 12:1-3: **"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and the sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or faint-hearted."**
6. Work to develop wisdom. **"Pull up, pull up, pull up...."**
7. Other concepts to meditate on: Abide, courage ("fear not"), self-denial, self-discipline, forgiveness, generosity, dealing with besetting sin ("Be killing sin, or it will be killing you." John Owen).
8. To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands. 2 I know your **deeds, your hard work and your perseverance**. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. 3 You have **persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary**. 4 Yet I hold this against you: you have **forsaken the love you had at first**. 5 Consider how far you have fallen! **Repent and do the things you did at first**. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your **lampstand** from its place. 6 But you have this in your favour: you hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 7 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is **victorious**, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.
9. "How to" scriptures abound: Think it not strange (1 Pet. 1:6, 4:12); count it all joy (Jas. 1:2); be sober, prepare your mind for action, be holy (1 Pet. 1:13, ff.); conduct your lives with Godly fear, remembering God judges all men impartially (16-17); keep your conduct honorable (2:11); be subject to every ordinance of men (2:13); endure if called to suffer (2:20); continue trusting him (2:23); remember that if you're called to suffer for righteousness sake you will be blessed (3:14); have no fear and don't be troubled (3:14-15, 17); work with your hands so you win the respect of outsiders, not being dependent on anyone (1 Thess. 4:11); widows should manage their households well (5:14). In short, keep on keeping on, and the God of grace and peace will be with you, and will reward you with a "rich welcome" into the eternal kingdom of our Lord.