

## Scripture Reading

### A Reading from the Second Letter of St Paul to the Corinthians (2 Corinthians 4:7-9)

Now we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this surpassingly great power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

### Reflection – God's grace is only for the present moment

**God tells us not to worry (cf. Matthew 6:25-31).** *Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his lifespan? (Matthew 6:27)*. Worries can arise from different causes. Some worries can arise from irresponsible actions and decisions. For example, a person indulging in an unhealthy diet has real worries about his/her health. However, worries can also arise when we have done our human best in a situation of which the outcome is outside our control. God is a personal God Who is involved in every aspect of our daily life. Anything that is outside our human control is in His good hands. Through steadfast faith, we learn to let God be God, and to accept as from His hands anything that happens to us. Trying our human best and leaving the rest to God is a sure way of proving our trust in Him. Entrusting all problems big and small to God invites His merciful intervention like that of a caring and concerned parent, and takes away our sleepless nights and fearful anxieties. Only in this way, can we live fully in the present moment, glorifying God. The present moment lived in God's will is the best gift we can give God now at this moment. To live in the unhappy past or in anxiety about the future is a temptation from the evil one.

**God tells us to let go of the unhappy past.** *Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past (Isaiah 43:18-19)*. So many people are trapped in the sad past. Mostly, it is through unforgiveness of self or of others. There is nothing we can do to change the past. However, no matter how deep the hurt is, through His grace, God gives us the power to forgive and forget. This grace is available but we have to want to use it. We have to make an active decision to forgive bearing in mind Christ's warning that those who do not forgive will not receive forgiveness for their own sins (cf. Matthew 6:15). Bondage to an unhappy past is manifest of a mistrust of the full forgiveness of God and His power to heal completely. *See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland (Isaiah 43:19)*. Yes, even if we are but a bag of dry, lifeless bones, God can transform us into a fighting-fit warrior for His Kingdom (cf. Ezekiel 37:1-10).

**God tells us that His grace is sufficient for us to deal with any temptation or trial that is confronting us now.** We may have a fallen nature, weak and susceptible to sin. Like St Paul, we may feel frustrated at times when out of weakness we did the things we did not want to do, and failed to do the things we really wanted to do. We may feel like a clay vessel, fragile and easily broken, yet the all-surpassing power of God's grace is within us. *Now we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this surpassingly great power is from God and not from us (2 Corinthians 4:7)*. In His infinite wisdom, God would never call us to do something for which He does not provide the corresponding grace. We are called to perfection (cf. Matthew 5:48) not through our own inherent goodness but through our active cooperation with God's grace through which anything is possible, God willing.

**God promises He will never abandon us.** *Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! (Isaiah 49:15)*. Our fears and anxieties can be overcome if we are more conscious of God's constant presence with us. Instead of being led by faith, oftentimes out of weakness, we allow ourselves to be led by our feelings which usually do not portray the true reality but accentuate the negatives. If we focus on the love and power of the Lord instead of the high winds and rough waves, we can be raised by the grace of God to walk on the stormy seas of our lives.

**Conversation with Jesus:** Precious Lord, teach me to put my trust in Your mercy. Help me to focus on Your love, Your power, Your providence. I surrender my heart and mind to You. Heal all woundedness in my heart and mind by flooding them with Your divine light and love. Through Your divine power, free me from all bondages to the unhappy past. Let all past sad memories be wiped clean from my mind. For Your sake and through the power of Your grace, I forgive myself and anyone who offended or hurt me in the past. I want to be free to live fully in the present moment to live in Your will. I consecrate my future to You. I do not know what it brings but I do know that everything is within Your capable hands. May my trust in You be deep so that I will always have peace and confidence to deal with any trial You may send me for my sanctification. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus. [www.twohearts.hk](http://www.twohearts.hk)