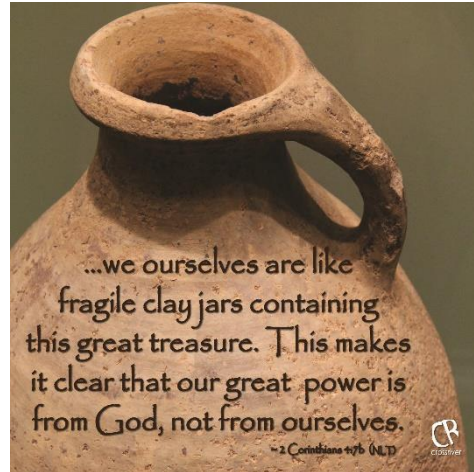


# Experiencing the Spiritual Struggle

## 2 Corinthians Chapter 4



*Ephesians 6:12 NIV For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*

The Greek word for struggle can be translated as "wrestle". A rather physical idea for a spiritual condition.

This chapter deals with the very real experience of opposition within and without as we aim to live for the glory of God. We ought to understand that the "battle in the heavenlies" can spill over into this world. The victory is not in question, but we can be either conquerors or casualties of this wrestling match!

*1 John 5:4 NIV for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.*

### PERSONAL STRUGGLES

Our Saviour, the apostles, Paul, all lived under Roman Occupation. Roman Garrisons, Roman Soldiers everywhere. It was Roman power that put Christ on the Cross. Yet Jesus spoke with a Centurion with respect. A Centurion and his household were among the first to receive God's Holy Spirit.

Paul wrote to the Corinthians about the spiritual struggle against false beliefs and religious opposition. He describes his daily experience in graphic terms.

### LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

Paul found the hardness of heart and blindness of soul of some Jewish people hard to bear. However, he kept to the light of Christ. He did not dilute the message. Note that he affirms the Deity of Jesus Christ here.

### TREASURE IN CLAY POTS

We are the work of a Master Potter. Whatever the use He puts us to we can be sure that He is happy to fill us to the brim with His Spirit, with the character and power of Jesus.

### CONFLICT

There was all kinds of conflict going on. Paul focuses on the experiences that affected the apostolic team. He describes a battle. He often asks for prayer that he and his colleagues should not become casualties of this war. He understood that his physical experience would not overwhelm him.

### RESURRECTION

The key to victory is in Christ's victory over death and how this should influence our thinking.

### PERSONAL ENCOURAGEMENT

The physical tends to be neglected as we engage in spiritual activity. We recognise that the body is a temporary tent. We are encouraged when believers keep on keeping on and do not give in to worldly and carnal ways.