

# FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE

Devotion | Week 2 Day 3

## In the Cards

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing 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. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. – 2 Corinthians 4:7-10

Like many kids, I used to collect baseball cards. My collection is not the largest ever assembled, nor is it the most valuable, but to me it is a special part of my life. I will always remember the time I spent with my father cataloging my cards. I loved sitting down with him to record the names of the players on the cards in notebooks. We spent hours talking about the teams and players. We also created lists of the cards we needed to complete different sets for each year. These are special memories that give the cards more value to me than any collector possibly could.

Of course, this isn't to say that my cards are worthless either. Of the thousands of cards that I have, I do own several rookie cards and older cards of Hall of Fame players that according to the various pricing guides are worth several hundred dollars. Because of this, I have resorted to storing the cards in a safe place in my house. Most of the cards are in specially designed boxes. Some of the most valuable cards are stored in plastic sheets designed to offer greater protection for the card in maintaining its condition and likewise the value. All of this extra security is warranted; I don't want anything to happen to my cards. But there is also a negative side to this as well. The increased emphasis I've placed on keeping the cards safe has prevented me from actually looking at and enjoying my cards. Come to think of it – I don't think I've ever shared my collection with my own children. By not wanting anything to happen to my cards, I have ensured that nothing can ever happen with my cards.

How great the gifts of God are in our lives. We receive from Him amazing blessings that are designed to uplift and sustain us. But what a great image Paul provides us in how we receive this gift. Clay jars are fragile and not exactly the first place you'd store a treasure. But once again we see that the lack of worldly wisdom only goes to further show the greatness of God in giving us the gift. The absurdity of storing treasure in clay jars shows how great the gift and the giver of the gift truly are. It's not about us – it's all about Him.

And this is good for us! We could never match the gift God gives us. He gives us His strength to persevere through the most difficult of times. The world can challenge, tempt, and damage us, but our victory is assured through Him. Our lives are not void of struggle, but our struggles are never in vain. God guides us through every situation without fear or worry about the end result. Christ's empty tomb has assured us of our victory.

May you know the fullness of the strength of the Lord in everything you do. I pray that when you begin to feel the crush of the world around you, you will turn to the Lord and find comfort, peace and joy. After all, it's in the cards.