THURSDAY *November 5*

- **Divine Message and Human Imperfections**
- Why did God entrust His perfect truth /to imperfect human beings?
- Bible not written by sinless angels = written thru shepherds / kings / fishermen / prophets / physicians / former persecutors
- Individuals = different backgrounds / different personalities
    - expressed themselves in different ways
    - Called / inspired by God = yet / remained human

2 Corinthians 4:7 "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us."

- Treasure = God's divine message
- Earthen vessels = humans thru whom / message was communicated
- This truth gives us three outstanding lessons.

Lesson One: The Treasure is perfect, even though the vessel is fragile

- Paul intentionally contrasts = value of treasure
    - w/ weakness of container
- In ancient times = earthen vessels = common clay jars
    - Inexpensive / ordinary / easily broken
    - Yet valuable objects were sometimes placed inside them
- Likewise, God placed priceless treasure of His truth
    - into hands of ordinary human beings
- **Numbers 20:7–12** Moses / called by God = struggled w/ anger
    - Once acted presumptuously by striking /rock
- **1 Kings 19:4** Elijah courageously confronted / prophets of Baal
    - afterward became discouraged / asked God to take his life
- **Jonah 4:1–3** Jonah preached God's message to Nineveh = struggled w/ prejudice / resentment / anger when God showed people mercy (
- **Matthew 26:69–75** Peter boldly confessed that Jesus was the Christ, yet later denied three times that he even knew Him
- These men / not perfect = but God who called them was perfect

- Their weaknesses did not diminish the truth of God's message.
    - Instead = demonstrated / power belonged to God
- **2 Corinthians 12:9** "My strength is made perfect in weakness"
- God could have spoken thru sinless angels = but people might have focused on = magnificence of / messenger
- By using human beings, God made it clear
    - Glory / wisdom / transforming power = came from Him
- Vessel may be fragile = but treasure remains divine

Lesson 2: God communicates Divine Truth thru human language

- Jesus was fully divine = yet He entered humanity
- In similar way = message of Scripture = divine
- Yet comes to us thru human words / personalities / experiences
    - and styles of expression

2 Peter 1:21 "Holy men of God spoke /were moved by the Holy Spirit"

- Holy Spirit guided /writers = but He did not erase their individuality
- **David** wrote poetry and songs
- **Solomon** used proverbs and practical wisdom
- **Luke** carefully investigated historical events before writing
- **Paul** wrote logical / carefully reasoned letters
- **John** often used simple /yet deeply spiritual / language
- Bible writers = not merely taking dictation as though they were lifeless pens
- God revealed truth to them = and under Holy Spirit's guidance
    - they communicated that truth/ thru their own vocabulary
- When we encounter passages that seem difficult to harmonize
    - Ask ourselves if we fully understand
    - writer's words / culture / purpose / historical setting

2 Timothy 2:15 "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God…rightly dividing the word of truth"

- Difficult passages should lead us into deeper /more prayerful study

Lesson Three: We can trust God's Message even when we do not understand every detail

- Every honest Bible student eventually encounters
    - passage that is difficult to explain
- Some apparent discrepancies may come from minor copying errors made as manuscripts were transmitted thru / centuries
- Others may result from inspired writers using different historical records / arranging events according to different purposes / or describing same occurrence from different perspectives
- Yet none of these difficulties destroys / central message of Scripture
- Bible consistently reveals who God is / what sin has done
    - how Christ saves / how God will restore His creation

John 17:17 Jesus declared "Your word is truth"

Psalm 119:160 psalmist wrote "The entirety of Your word is truth"

- There are many things about God = that we cannot fully explain
- Yet what we do not understand should never cause us to reject
    - what God has made unmistakably clear
- May not understand every detail of creation = but can know Creator
- May not understand every mystery surrounding inspiration
    - but we can trust / inspired message
- May not be able to answer every question = but can know
    - Jesus Christ died for our sins / rose from the grave
    - ministers for us in heaven = and is coming again
- God asks us to walk faithfully in / light we have received

Proverbs 4:18 "The path of the just is like the shining sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day"

- Faith does not mean = we have no questions
- Faith means we trust God while continuing to study / pray / grow