

## What Kind of 'VESSEL' Are YOU?

Are you a 'vessel' that wants to please the Lord (1 Thess 4:1, 2 Tim 2:4) ....

even knowing that you will be mistreated for doing so?

**2 Tim 3:12** Yea, and **all** that **will live godly in Christ Jesus**  
**shall suffer persecution.**

It is the grace of God that brings salvation teaches us to live godly  
(Titus 2:11-12) .... as our reasonable service for His mercies (Rom 12:1):

**Heb 12:28** Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved,  
**let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably**  
**with reverence and godly fear:**

We are compelled to witness by God's grace with an open, honest heart:

**2 Cor 1:12** For our rejoicing is this, **the testimony of our conscience,**  
**that in simplicity and godly sincerity,** not with fleshly wisdom, but **by**  
**the grace of God,** we have had our conversation in the world, and more  
abundantly to you-ward.

God's people are 'vessels' that are sanctified .... purified .... cleansed ....  
separated from profane things .... and dedicated to serving Him in holiness:

**Psa 4:3** But know that **the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for**  
**himself:** the LORD will hear when I call unto him.

When we are enticed to sin .... we rely on God's Spirit and His word for help:

**2 Peter 2:9** The Lord knoweth how to **deliver the godly** out of tempta-  
tions, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

The trials we face are nothing new .... God will always make a way for us:

**1 Cor 10:13** There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to  
man: but **God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above**  
**that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to**  
**escape, that ye may be able to bear it.**

Do you sense the hand of God upon you .... encouraging you through suffering? He is the true Light that darkness cannot overcome (John 1:5-9):

**2 Cor 4:6-11** For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

- 7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, (Lam 4:2)  
that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.
- 8 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed;  
 we are perplexed, but not in despair;
- 9 Persecuted, but not forsaken;  
 cast down, but not destroyed;
- 10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus,  
 that the life also of Jesus might be **made manifest in our body.**
- 11 For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake,  
 that the life also of Jesus might be made **manifest in our mortal flesh.**

In ourselves .... we are full of sin. We are guilty before God. We don't just decide, of our own will, to become a clean 'vessel'. The LORD works in us:

**Isa 64:6-8** But we are all as an unclean thing,  
 and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags;  
 and we all do fade as a leaf;  
 and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

- 7 And there is none that calleth upon thy name,  
 that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee:  
 for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us,  
 because of our iniquities.
- 8 But now, O LORD, thou art our father;  
we are the clay, and thou our potter;  
and we all are the work of thy hand.

God repeatedly teaches us with the analogy of the Potter and the clay:

**Jer 18:3-6** Then I went down to the potter's house,  
 and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels.

- 4 And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel,  
as seemed good to the potter to make it.

(Jer 18:) 5 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,  
 6 O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.

The things that happened to Israel are examples for us. They are written for our admonition (1 Cor 10:6,11) .... that we would reverence God.

God's word will not return to Him void. It will accomplish that which He pleases; it will prosper in the thing whereto He sent it (Isa 55:11):

**Rom 9:6-26** Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect.

Natural, physical Israel are not the Israel of God (Gal 6:16, Rom 2:28-29).

The true Israel .... are those of faith (Rom 4:1-18, Gal 3:7-9):

For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:

7 Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.

8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God:

but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. (Gal 4:28)

9 For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son.

10 And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac;

God's elect were chosen before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:4)

.... not because of 'their' works .... or 'their' faith .... or 'their' anything:

11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)

12 It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.

13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

14 **What shall we say then?**

**Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.**

There is no unrighteousness in the LORD (Psa 92:15).

The LORD is righteous in all His ways (Psa 145:17).

True and righteous are His judgments (Rev 16:7).

(Rom 9:) 15 For he saith to Moses, (Exo 33:19)

I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy,  
and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

The doxology begins, "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow".

God is the Source. Mercy begins with His purpose .... not our faith:

(Rom 9:) 16 So then it is not of him that willeth,

nor of him that runneth,  
but of God that sheweth mercy.

God hardened Pharaoh, so that the Egyptians would know He is the LORD

(Exo 14:18), and that His people would tell their children and grandchildren:

**Exo 10:1-2** And the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these my signs before him:

2 And **that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son,** what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; **that ye may know how that I am the LORD.**

God cannot sin .... and He did not make Pharaoh sin. Pharaoh sinned because that is what he wanted to do. When God speaks as He does about hardening, we understand that He is Sovereign. He is in charge of all things. He allows men to do evil for His purposes to come to pass and for His good and glory to be seen. But the scripture also says that Pharaoh hardened his own heart (Exo 8:15), and the Egyptians hardened their own hearts (1 Sam 6:6). God is under no obligation to restrain them from sin.

(Rom 9:) 17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, **that I might shew my power in thee,** (Exo 9:16) **and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.**

18 Therefore hath **he mercy on whom he will have mercy,**  
**and whom he will he hardeneth.**

God works everything after the counsel of His own will (Eph 1:11):

(Rom 9:) 19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault?  
For who hath resisted his will?

God did and will do whatever pleases Him (Psa 115:3, 135:6; Isa 46:10):

**Daniel 4:35** And **all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven,**  
**and among the inhabitants of the earth:**  
and **none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?**

Again, He is the Potter; we are the clay. We are nobody to question God:

(Rom 9:) 20 Nay but, O man, **who art thou that repliest against God?**  
Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it,  
Why hast thou made me thus?

21 Hath not the potter power over the clay,  
of the same lump to **make one vessel unto honour,**  
**and another unto dishonour?**

Are you a 'vessel' of mercy unto honour .... or of wrath unto dishonour?

(Rom 9:) 22 What if God, **willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering**  
**the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:**

23 And that he might **make known the riches of his glory on**  
**the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,**

24 **Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only,**  
**but also of the Gentiles?** (These verses now apply to Gentiles.)

25 As he saith also in Osee, (Hosea 2:23) I will call them my people,  
which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved.

26 And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them,  
Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living  
God. (John 11:52, 2 Cor 6:16-18, Gal 3:26, Rom 3:29, 1 Peter 2:10)

God separated Paul from his mother's womb .... and called him by His grace (Gal 1:15). Mid-Acts-ers make a big deal that Paul was "the" apostle of the Gentiles (Rom 11:13) .... but the article "the" is not in the Greek. Just the noun <apostolos> for "apostle" is there.

2 other times (1 Tim 2:7 and 2 Tim 1:11) the scripture reads that Paul was a preacher, and "an" apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. The article "an" is not in the Greek there either .... just the noun <apostolos> exactly like in Rom 11:13.

Thus the 'mid-Acts-hyper-dispensationalist' argument that Paul was "unique" and "distinctive" from all the other apostles is shown to be in gross error .... because the verse does not hold it up. Neither do 'mid-Acts-ers' receive God's word that Paul's gospel preaching was "according to the scriptures" (1 Cor 15:3-4) and that he said "none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come" (Acts 26:22).

**Acts 9:13-16** Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem:  
 14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name.  
 15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for **he is a chosen vessel unto me**, (Acts 13:2 also includes Barnabas) to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:  
 16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

The prophet Jeremiah has a similar testimony as Paul, even to the Gentiles:

**Jer 1:5** Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and **before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.**

God's truth is firm, strong, reliable, dependable, and steadfast.

His elect are sealed (John 6:27, 2 Cor 1:22, Eph 1:13, 4:30).

Those who call on His name are to refrain and withdraw themselves from unrighteousness and wrong .... to be holy and fruitful in His service.

**2 Tim 2:19-21** Nevertheless **the foundation of God standeth sure,** having this seal, **The Lord knoweth them that are his.** And, **Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.**

20 But in a great house there are not only **vessels of gold and of silver,** **but also of wood and of earth;**  
**and some to honour, and some to dishonour.**

21 If a man therefore **purge himself** from these, **he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.**

We are to cleanse our way by taking heed to God's word (Psa 119:9).

We are to purge out malice and wickedness, and keep sincerity and truth (1 Cor 5:7-8, Isa 1:25, 52:11).

We are to purify ourselves in obeying the truth (1 John 3:3, 1 Peter 1:22):

**2 Cor 7:1** Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us **cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit,** **perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**

Jesus described the separation of good and just -or- bad and wicked vessels:

**Matt 13:47-50** Again, **the kingdom of heaven** is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

48 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and **gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.**

49 **So shall it be at the end of the world:**  
**the angels shall come forth,**  
**and sever the wicked from among the just,**

50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

God will purge and purify His people as gold and silver (Mal 3:3, Zech 13:9).

We are to be set apart unto holiness .... as He is holy (Lev 20:26,

1 Pet 1:15-16). That is God's will. We are to please Him in our walk:

**1 Thess 4:1-7** Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.

2 For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

3 For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;

5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, (desire, craving, lust for what is forbidden) even as the Gentiles which know not God:

6 That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.

7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

God made the 'vessels' of wrath unto dishonour .... for destruction:

**Prov 16:4** The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

God made the 'vessels' of mercy unto honour .... for salvation:

**1 Thess 5:9** For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

What kind of 'vessel' are you?

**Rom 12:1** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

*This is David Dowell saying, "Think about it!"*