

Vessels for Honor

School of Foundations for Ministry. April 23, 2012

2 Timothy

The Apostle Paul's final letter.

A sad farewell and a powerful "call to action"

A quick overview of the "action" verses in this book.

1:6-7 For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.

1:8-9 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us to a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace....

1:12 ..but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.

1:13-14 Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you.

2:1-3 Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus

2:8-9 Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel, for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned.

2:13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful

2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth

2:16 But avoid worldly and empty chatter

2:22 ...pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace

2:25 with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition

3:14 continue in the things you have learned

3:16-17 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work

4:2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season;

4:5 But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, Do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Focus Verse

2 Timothy 2:21

20. Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor.

21. Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work.

There are 2 very distinct parts to this verse.

One part "our obedience"

And One part "Gods faithfulness"

Our Obedience

“..if anyone cleanses himself from these things”

We all have areas of weakness, areas of sin, areas of rebellion that we know are contrary to the way God wants us to live. God wants us to cleanse ourselves. He wants us to get rid of that stuff

We need to remember who we are in Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

Romans 6:11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, resulting in death, or of obedience, resulting in righteousness.

{God does not command us to **become** dead to sin. He tells us that we **are** dead to sin and alive unto God, and then He commands us to act upon it....by walking in obedience.

Will I choose to live in the victory that I have in Jesus? Or will I choose not to?

Joshua 24:15 choose for yourselves today whom you will serve. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord

God wants us to continually kneel before the throne of grace.

Psalms 139:23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my thoughts;
And see if there be any wicked way in me. And lead me in the way everlasting.

This cleansing can be very challenging on our own.

2 Timothy 1:9 God, who has saved us and called us to a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace....

If we are living the way God wants, if we are seeking him, He will take notice. And He will meet us there.

Psalms 5:12

For it is You who blesses the righteous man, O Lord,
You surround him with favor as with a shield.

2 Chronicles 16:9

For the eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His.

Jeremiah 29:13

You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

Hebrews 11:6

And without faith it is impossible to Please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

1 Thessalonians 5:24 Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass

God's Faithfulness

“you will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the master, prepared for every good work”

1. Vessel for Honor

Honor: The world's definition: **high public esteem; fame; glory: high respect, as for worth, merit, or rank:**

The Greek definition for the word honor in 2 Tim 2:21
timē *tee-may'* a *value*, that is, *money paid*.

Jesus paid the price, in order that we can become this vessel.

A vessel of honor does not care for recognition or the praises of men; his desire is to take the place of a servant in order to do the will of His master.

Our *value* as a vessel for honor is because of what He did, not because of our own good works.

This honor (or value) is from the Lord, not ourselves, or our fellow Christians

Hebrews 5:4 And no one takes the honor to himself, but receives it when he is called by God, even as Aaron was.

Should we desire to be used by God so we will be recognized by fellow Christians?

No, we should desire these things to Glorify Jesus. And in doing so, we will edify and build up the body of Christ.

It is Him who is doing this great work. But he is searching for humble servants to use for His great work. What a privilege... To be used.

2. Sanctified

Greek work Hagiazo

hag-ee-ad'-zo; to make holy, that is, (ceremonially) *purify* or *consecrate*;
set apart and made holy

1 Peter 2:9

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness in His marvelous light.

Did you know we are a royal priesthood?

In the old Testament, the priests came from the tribe of Levi. They were set apart for the things of God. Their whole life was dedicated to the work of the Lord.

Joshua chapters 13-22, when the land was being divided up, The Levites received no share of the land.

When the Lord divided Canaan among the tribes of Israel, Levi received no share of the land. God said to him simply, "I am thy part and thine inheritance," and by those words made him richer than all his brethren, richer than all the kings and rajas who have ever lived in the world. And there is a spiritual principle here, a principle still valid for every priest of the Most High God. The man who has God for his treasure has all things in One. Many ordinary treasures may be denied him, or if he is allowed to have them, the enjoyment of them will be so tempered that they will never be necessary to his happiness. Or if he must see them go, one after another, he will scarcely feel a sense of loss, for having the Source of all things he has in One all satisfaction, all pleasure, all delight. Whatever he may lose he has actually lost nothing, for he now has it all in One, and he has it purely, legitimately and forever. *A.W Tozer - The pursuit of God*

Matt 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God

3. Useful to the Master

Useful to who? Ourselves? Our pastor?

No. Useful to the Master. Remember we are slaves to obedience.

It is His work we are doing. Not ours.

2 Corinthians 4:5-7, 15

For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus sake. For God, who said, “let light shine out of darkness”, made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God’s glory displayed in the face of Christ.

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.

vs. 15 All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.

It is not the level of our spirituality that we can depend on. It is God and nothing less than God, for the work is God’s and the call is Gods and everything is summoned by Him and to His purposes, the whole scene, the whole mess, the whole package - our bravery and our cowardice, our love and our selfishness, our strengths and our weaknesses. The God who could take a murderer like Moses and an adulterer like David and a traitor like Peter and make of them strong servants of His. This is a God who can also redeem savage Indians, using as the instruments of His peace a conglomeration of sinners who sometimes look like heroes and sometimes like villains, for “we are not better than pots of earthenware to contain this treasure [which is] the revelation of the glory of God in Jesus Christ, and this proves that such transcendent power does not come from us, but is God’s alone.

We are not always sure where the horizon is. We would not know which end is up were it not for the shimmering pathway of light falling on the white sea. The One who laid earth’s foundations and settled its dimensions knows where the lines are drawn. He gives all the light we need for trust and for obedience.

Elisabeth Elliot. Through Gates of Splendor

4. Prepared

To be used by God, we must be prepared.

❖ **We must be in prayer**

1 Thessalonians 5

pray without ceasing

❖ **We must be in the word**

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

❖ **We must step out and DO, knowing that the Holy Spirit is flowing through us**

When Jesus began his ministry, one of the first things he talked about was the filling of the Holy Spirit

John 4:13

“Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

John 7:38

**He who believes in Me, as the scripture said, From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water
But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive;**

John 14:26

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

Acts 2 When the day of Pentecost had come,.....

Be confident when you step out. Remember its Gods work. His Holy Spirit will be there with you.

2 Cor 12:9 And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness”

5. Good Work

God wants to use us in a lot of different ways.
All of us have our own strengths and giftings in the body.

Prophecy, Service, Teaching, Exhortation, Giving, Leadership, Mercy, Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith, Healing, Miracles, Tongues and Interpretation, Apostleship, Helps, Administration, Evangelism, Shepherd or Pastor, Worship, Encouragement...

2 Timothy 1:6-7 For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.

Contemporary English Version: **make full use of**

Common English Bible: **to revive**

New Century version: **keep using**

Amplified: **stir up (rekindle the embers of, fan the flame of, and keep burning)**

All of these works are very important.
But I think the most important work is spreading the gospel.
When you lead someone to Jesus.....
It's the biggest impact you can make in a person's life.
Their eternal destiny is changed in the twinkling of an eye.

John 9 “One thing I do know, I was blind but now I see”

This blind beggar washed the mud away and his physical eyes were opened.
But at the back door of the synagogue, Jesus washed his sins away and his spiritual eyes were opened.
And that is the heart of Jesus. He wants to open the eyes of the spiritually blind.

The secular world seems so opposed to Christ.
Because of that, we are often tempted to conform, to retreat, to be silent.
But what does Jesus say? **Look up!.... (John 4:35)**

John 9:4 “As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work.

“Don't neglect opportunities to step out in boldness and obedience”

Matthew 5:14-16

**You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden;
Nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lamp stand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.**

Summary

**Accepting Jesus was the single most important thing that happened to all of us.
And we can live out the rest of our Christian lives without doing much for God.
But God wants more.**

- **He wants us to walk in obedience.**
- **He wants us to pursue Him in a deeper way.**
- **He wants us to set ourselves apart.**
- **He wants willing and humble servants to accomplish His great work.**
- **He wants us to let our light shine in this dark world.**
- **He wants Vessels for Honor.**

....Deeper surrender