

The seed must be rooted into the ground. This speaks of the believer in **EPH 3:17: ...you, being rooted and grounded in love...** This concept is also covered in **COL 2:7: ...having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith...** The seed brings forth the harvest which provides for and preserves those who are in need.

So, Jesus explains to the Greeks the necessity for the uniqueness of His death and His resurrection. He uses the analogy of the seed which, again, has to die in order to bear fruit.

Life is in the grain of wheat, but there is a shell, a very hard shell, on the outside. As long as that shell is not split open, the wheat cannot grow. What is this death that Our Lord is describing? It's the cracking open of the shell through the working together of temperature, humidity, etc., in the soil. Once the shell is split open, the wheat begins to grow.

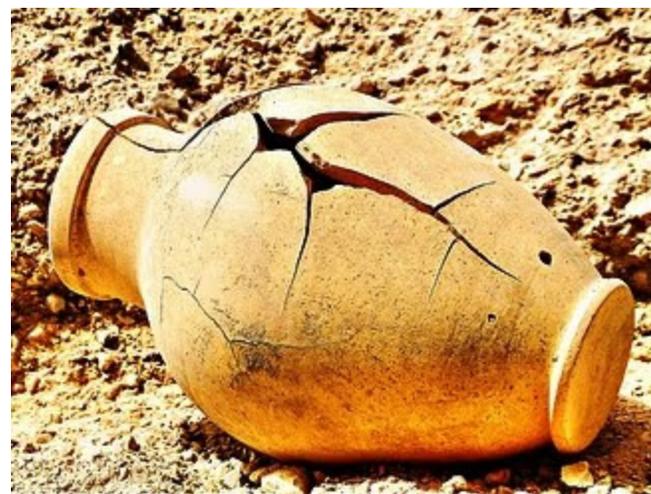
So the question here is not whether there is life within, but whether the outside shell is cracked open – just like the vessel we talked about earlier. The Lord shows us here that the outer shell is our own life (our soul life) while the life within is the eternal life which He has given to us. **He who loves his life loses it; and he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal. (JOH 12:25)** To allow the inner life to come forth, it is imperative that the outward life be lost. If the outward shell remains unbroken, the inward would never be able to come forth.

When we say, "We need the Lord to break us," this is not merely a way of speaking, nor is it only a doctrine. It is a vital principle that we be broken by the Lord. But remember this: once you're a shattered vessel, it means you are either on the road to spiritual adulthood and spiritual growth or you are on the road to apostasy or the sin unto death in the negative realm. The Lord clearly teaches that the key to faith is humility and brokenness, and that Godly faith, true faith, is a gift from God — a gift which only comes to the humble obedient servant — the broken vessel.

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# THE TEEN TREE OF LIFE

## THE POTTER'S WHEEL OF PROGRESS



### Part 2

June 12, 2016

# PLEASE READ THIS FIRST...



**BEFORE we begin, if you are a believer in Jesus Christ, take a moment to name your sins to God the Father. This will allow you to be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit as you read this booklet (EPH 5:18 & 1JO 1:9). IF YOU HAVE never believed in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you have that opportunity right now. Simply tell God the Father that you are believing on His Son Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. If you make that decision, you are now a believer and will always be a child of God! When you die, you will spend eternity with Him forever in heaven! (JOH 3:16 & ACT 16:31).**

We are looking at the Potter's Wheel of Progress which is a doctrine which Paul writes about in **ROM 8:28: And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.** Whether the believer is progressing (going forward) or retrogressing (going backward), the Potter's Wheel is for the believer's benefit.

The goal of the Potter's Wheel is two-fold. The first goal is to teach us the principal taught in **ROM 6:6: ...knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin...** The second goal is to put on the new self: **and put on the new [a]self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. (EPH 4:24)** Putting on the new self means that when living in God's Power as the new man. It means that we must think as Christ thought. This is what we calling having the Mind of Christ: **For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he will instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ. (1CO 2:16)** It means when we're tested to become independent of God that we value what Christ valued: the Father's Will. Putting on the new man means when we are tempted to be afraid, we handle problems as Christ handled problems – with confidence and obedience.

**MAT 26:41** teaches us that **"the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."** So, we must always remember this and fight the temptation. **JOH 3:30** warns us: **He must increase, but I must decrease.** For many believers, because of the distractions of the outward man, their spiritual lives do not seem to function properly basically because the outward man has never been dealt with. Eventually, one way or another, the believer learns that there is just one basic element that

can enable him to be useful before God: brokenness. For the believer who realizes that he is to be a full-time, full pledged, vessel of honor, the Plan of God requires brokenness. Now with brokenness comes those feelings of failure and defeat. But they can all be blessings in disguise. They are designed to lead you to the brokenness needed to become a vessel fit for the Master's Use.

We must come to know that the vessel of honor, who can serve and honor God, is the one whose inward man can be released. However, the vessel has to be broken so that what is inside it can flow out. If we have never learned how to release our inward man by breaking through the outward man, we will never be able to serve God properly. Nothing can hinder us as much as the outward man motivated by the old sin nature.

Our goal as Christians is to be fruitful according to God's Plan. Whether our works are fruitful or not depends on whether our outward man has been broken so that the inward man can pass through the break and come forth. The Lord wants to break our outward man in order that the inward man may have a way out. When the inward man is released, both unbelievers and believers will be blessed. This is the motivation of the believer who has the attitude the apostle Paul has described for us in such passages as: **JOH 12:24: "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."**

As usual the isagogics (the historical setting) is important to the interpretation of God's Word because our Lord's audience according to verse **JOH 12:20**, was basically Greeks and resurrection was entirely foreign to their thinking and culture. However, at this time, the crowd had been intrigued by the fact that Lazarus had been brought back from the dead. Now the Greeks would learn something about resurrection and understand it from the framework of their own culture along with the purpose of death and brokenness.

The Greeks understood the principle of death and life which is what our Lord pointed to in **JOH 12:24** (see above). They knew that before the wheat came up so that their cities were provided for, the seed had to die; and they knew that the seed had to die in order for the roots to emerge from the ground. So the Greeks knew you first had to have a seed. The people of God are the seed which the Lord takes as His children and then lovingly plants them in soil where they will produce the best results for Him.