

**Grace Bible Church
The Tree of Life
A Weekly Review
Week ending 02/06/11**

The Doctrine of the Riches of His Glory upon Vessels of Mercy. Part 3.

We are looking at the subject of the riches of the glory of God upon vessels of mercy, and being the first Sunday of the month and therefore, as is our custom we celebrate the Lord's supper; and what a great subject, it is, indeed this doctrine of the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy,

For what greater manifestation is there of the glory of God upon vessels of mercy than the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Doctrine of the Riches of His Glory upon Vessels of Mercy.

Point 1. The Bible Uses Vessels as a Reference to the Doctrine of Election Where the Believer is Said to Be a Chosen Vessel unto God.

Therefore, as a chosen vessel, the apostle Paul needed to be filled up with the word of God or Bible doctrine, not because he was an empty vessel lacking the word of God. We know that because he tells in **Phi 3:6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.**

Act 26:5b, notice his reputation, **since they have known about me for a long time previously, if they are willing to testify, that I lived {as} a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion.**

What was it that Paul needed as a chosen vessel?

He needed to learn, understand and be able to teach the mystery doctrine of the Church-age.

Point 2. Vessels were used to provide an analogy between the mystery doctrine Bible doctrine resident in the soul and capacity for life among those who are mature believers, Eph 4:22-24; 2Co 4:7-18.

Point 3. Vessels are used to illustrate the principle of not putting the cart before the horse and therefore understanding the importance of understanding the mystery doctrine of the Church-age.

The Church-age, which we are all a part of, and its doctrine was never mentioned in Old Testament prophecy, but instead was fully developed in the New Testament Epistles.

Paul states in Rom 16:25-26, Col 1:25-26 and Eph 3:3-6 that this mystery is now revealed.

Of this church [Church-age] I was made a minister according to the dispensation from God bestowed on me for your benefit, that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, the mystery doctrine which has been hidden from the past dispensations and generations; but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Col 1:25-27)

Therefore, there is no excuse for ignorance. Ignorance and arrogance become the two worst enemies of the believer, and cause him to make a wrong assessment of life, and to establish wrong priorities. Bible doctrine must be your #1 priority.

Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past [in the Old Testament], but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets [the New testament prophets], according to the

commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith or to the obedience of doctrine; to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen. (Rom 16:25-27)

The apostle Paul needed a crash diet of the mystery doctrine of the Church-age and therefore was led to the Arabian desert for his teaching and training.

Why?

What was the reason?

Why was it so important?

For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles--if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of God's grace which was given to me for you; that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery doctrine, as I wrote before in brief. And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; (Eph 3:1-5)

Church-age doctrine was blacked out in the Old Testament. There are many Old Testament passages which could have mentioned the Church-age but passed over it.

Between the following passages the Church-age occurred and so could have been revealed, but it was passed over in silence: Dan 2:40-41, 7:23-24, 8:22-23, 11:35-36; Hos 5:15; 6:1. So, it is this body of doctrine known as mystery doctrine which sets the Church-age apart from other dispensations. The mystery doctrine of the Church unveils the characteristics unique to the Christian way of life.

Point 2. Vessels were used to provide an analogy between Bible doctrine resident in the soul and capacity for life among those who are mature believers, Eph 4:22-24; 2Co 4:7-18. There is a passage that we use many times, as do many other doctrinal ministries, to communicate the doctrine of rebound but miss out on an even greater principle of application. That is the passage found in Eph 4:22-24, concerning laying aside the old man and putting on the new man.

that, in reference to your former manner of life, [your former lifestyle], you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, [strong pressures from the sin nature in your area of weakness]. and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. (Eph 4:22-24)

This passage emphasizes rebound as the beginning of the means of victory over the old sin nature. But, more than that, it also refers to the shattering of the OSN and, at the same time, the emptying of the treasure found in our new nature which is also found in our earthen vessels. These two natures are sometimes referred to as the:

1. New Man - Old Man
2. New Self - Old Self
3. New Creature - Old Creature
4. First Adam - Last Adam

We have heard it in so many ways, in so many different approaches, 66 books written by 40 different authors, all inevitably agreeing and bearing the same message. The flesh [human effort] counts for nothing, (Joh 6:63). If anything is to be done, God must do it.

The only means that God has chosen to use and limit Himself to because of the Angelic Conflict, is found under the principle of *theopneustos* which means breathing in and breathing out, and therefore God-breathed. *Theo* means God, *pneo* means to breathe.

There are many translations which translate this passage by that exact word, “All Scripture is God-breathed” referring to the doctrine of inspiration.

What does the phrase “All Scripture is inspired by God or God-breathed” really mean? It means that God the Holy Spirit so supernaturally directed the human writers of Scripture, that His complete message to mankind was recorded with perfect accuracy in the original languages of Scripture. One of the sad things is that we cannot get men who are honest translators.

Therefore much of the communication of the word of God is hidden behind a lot of phoney words.

The greatest profit and wealth in the world is contained in the Bible. It is for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; this is a reference to training which produces integrity. It is the teaching of Bible doctrine or the power of the word of God which performs all of these things.

Then the next verse says so that the believer will be proficient, capable, mature and equipped for every good work.

2Ti 3:17, that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

For this to happen, you must learn the principle of not putting the cart before the horse. Without doctrine there is no legitimate Christian service. This means that understanding the principle of not putting the cart before the horse means that you understand that your spiritual skills must precede your production skills for the performance of divine good.

When 2Ti 3:16 says, **All Scripture is inspired by God or God-breathed**, the concept of God-breathed is two-fold: First, the inhale is the ministry of God the Holy Spirit, who communicates to the human author God’s complete and coherent message to that generation and all future generations of history. Remember that the soul has lungs, the nous and the *kardia*, the mind and the heart. The Holy Bible was written by men who had old sin natures. Remember that Jesus Christ did not personally write any of the scriptures, it is His mind and His thinking. The application of the doctrine of inspiration is found in **Heb 10:35-36, Therefore, do not throw away as worthless your confidence, which keeps on having rich distribution of blessing. For you keep on having need of perseverance** [persistence in perception, cognition, and inculcation of doctrine], **in order that when you have accomplished the will of God, you may carry off for yourself the promise.**

When you neglect Bible doctrine, you are throwing away the only true confidence related to the spiritual life. Anything else is false confidence. This confidence is the extrapolation of the ten problem solving devices in your soul their application in your daily experience. This is how you become a vessel of honor unto the Lord. This is how you store up the treasure found in our earthen vessels. This is confidence which avoids converting the outside pressures of adversity into the inside pressures of stress in the soul.

An so in **Joh 6:63, “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.”**

If anything is to be done, God must do it. Believers who become vessels prepared to be used for the Master’s plan are those who realize their utter unfitness and overwhelming inadequacy to do the works of God on their own.

2Co 13:4 For indeed He was crucified because of weakness, yet He lives because of the power of God. (2Co 13:4)

For we also are weak in Him, yet we shall live with Him because of the power of God directed toward you. The phrase *we are weak in Him*, is not a cliché but a certainty. It bothers us to think of ourselves so useless, but there is where our true strength lies. The problem with many of us is that we’re much too gifted; we’re dangerously adequate and self-sufficient.

And so we go on our way, believing in ourselves and our own power and personality, relying on our own strength and show. But our self-confidence is our stumbling block. We're so good at what we do we're no good at all.

God must frustrate our energy at its source. He wears down our noble determination through the frustrations of life and He squeezes out of us every piece of our self-confidence by disappointment and defeat. He allows our goals and dreams fall apart or sink in the swamp of human power and strength. The wheels fall off our cleverly contrived programs; our dreams go belly up. He teaches us through our flops and failures until we learn that most precious of all God's premises: We can't. When *can-do* can't, He shows us that He can, and therefore we can. I can't then becomes blasphemy.

For He performs what is appointed for me, And many such decrees are with Him. (Job 23:14)

Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass. (1Th 5:24)

The demands that have been placed on us are now demands on Him; Our pressures and problems are now His. We are now becoming vessels prepared for the Master's use. Then, we can say with the apostle Paul: **2Co 4:8-12, we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death works in us, but life in you.**

There are still those problems and difficulties that frustrate us, but they're honorably resolved in His time because we are now vessels who are being prepared for the master's use not for our own use. For we are being prepared to live for others and not for ourselves. **Rom 15:1, Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not {just} please ourselves.**

We're sometimes confused and uncertain, not knowing what to do or say, but when we have to know, we know. We're still hounded and harassed by people, principalities, and powers, but we're shadowed and sheltered under His wings. We get down now and then, but we're never out.

We can, in fact, do all things that must be done, through the One who strengthens us.

I can do all things through Him who strengthens me. (Phi 4:13)

God's activity through our fragile humanity is our great assurance. We should then confess ourselves poor creatures, for that is the beginning of being great men and great women. To persuade ourselves that we are something when we are nothing is terrible loss; to confess that we are nothing is to lay the foundation of being something.

Point 4. Shattered vessels are used to describe personal judgements from God.

When David was in reversionism or in a backslidden state in Psalm 31, he wrote:

Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am in distress; My eye is wasted away from grief, my soul and my body {also.} For my life is spent with sorrow, And my years with sighing; My strength has failed because of my iniquity, And my body has wasted away. Because of all my adversaries, I have become a reproach, Especially to my neighbors, And an object of dread to my acquaintances; Those who see me in the street flee from me. I am forgotten as a dead man, out of mind, I am like a broken vessel. (Psa 31:9-12)

In other words, he felt completely and totally deserted, which is what happens when you get into intensive discipline, that stage of reversionism. In Jer 22:28 king Coniah was also a reversionist or a shattered vessel. **Jer 22:28, Is this man Coniah a despised, shattered jar? Or is he an undesirable vessel? Why have he and his descendants been hurled out And cast into a land that they had not known?**

They were taken into captivity and the reason was because they were shattered vessels. A shattered vessel holds nothing; it is no longer a container. Shattered vessel means you had every opportunity to learn doctrine, to be filled up with doctrine, to have more doctrine than you've ever had before. But once you are shattered it means you are on the way to the sin unto death, the final and last stage.

Apostate communicators of doctrine can also be reversionistic and be described that way.

“Wail, you shepherds, and cry; And wallow {in ashes,} you masters of the flock; For the days of your slaughter and your dispersions have come, And you shall fall like a choice vessel.” (Jer 25:34)

This is an emotionally unstable person who is trying to rebound by wallowing in ashes.