



Northside Proclaimer

Proclaiming The Word Of The Lord

1 Thessalonians 1:8

Northside Church of Christ Welcomes You!

April 24, 2016

Are You a Vessel for Honorable Use?

Bryan Garlock

That the Christian is to be full of good works is undeniably taught throughout the New Testament. When one is saved by grace through faith he is God's "workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:8-10). Elsewhere Paul wrote, "Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable. Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work" (2 Tim. 2:20-21)." Therefore, while we were created for good works, we must make ourselves ready.

One such way we prepare ourselves is to become a vessel for honorable use. The word "vessel" has many definitions. Its meaning can range from a large ship to a container for holding liquids. Yet the Holy Spirit uses the word as a way to describe a *person* who is used for or holds something. Like a construction worker's hammer, we become an instrument that God keeps nearby for constant use.

Paul taught that God employs us for honorable use when we cleanse ourselves from what is dishonorable. Obviously things that are dishonorable to God are things that are contrary to His nature and law. When one hates, denies and avoids wickedness, he has cleansed himself from ungodliness (Rom. 12:9; Titus 2:12; 1 Thess. 5:21). In addition to these things, when he has thoroughly studied the Scriptures he has made himself ready for every good work in Christ (2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16-17).

Unfortunately, not every vessel will be fit for honorable use. Paul said that some instruments are for dishonorable use. Elsewhere Paul gave us an example of one who was a dishonorable vessel. In the context of Romans 9, Paul taught how God used Pharaoh to show His power and longsuffering and to proclaim His name to all nations (21-23).

Northside
church Of Christ

25 Greenfield Pike
Hillsboro, OH 45133

churchofchristatnorthside.com

Visit Us On Facebook!
Facebook.com/northsidehillsboro

Bryan Garlock
Evangelist

Office: 937.393.3634
Cell: 478.256.0325

preacher@churchofchristatnorthside.com

Announcements

- Remember the shut in's.
- Pray for the church and one another.
- Remember the spiritual sick among us.
- Call or email Bryan to add announcements, thanks.
- **We need volunteers for door knocking. Please see Bryan.**
- **We need volunteers for picking folks up. Please see Bryan.**

Five Day A Week Reading Plan

Mon: 2 Chron. 34-Ezra 2
Tues: Ezra 3-7
Wed: Ezra 8-Nehemiah 2
Thurs: Nehemiah 3-7
Fri: Nehemiah 8-12

From the Exodus passages we learn that Pharaoh had no allegiance to God; therefore he was an individual who sought to rebel against God at every opportunity (Exo. chapters 5-14). When God demanded that he let His people go, Pharaoh refused. Thus his heart was not only hardened each time he resisted God's will, but he made himself a vessel for dishonorable use. An individual acting as Pharaoh once did can be sure that he will not be ready for good work nor will he bring glory to God. Therefore, instead of being a vessel that God will show mercy to, he'll be a vessel prepared for destruction (Rom. 9.22).

One might ask how one is prepared for destruction. Consider the potter molding clay or the carpenter carving wood. If the piece is damaged in production and cannot be used for honorable use, does not the potter or the carpenter have the right to destroy that vessel? Thus God will throw away any vessels found to be dishonorable. However, He has assured us that He will show mercy to any vessels that are formed to the image of His Son.

Finally, Paul's imagery about a great house can be applied to church members being set apart for useful service. Interestingly, "in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use...." Notice that Paul says vessels of the highest material and even the lowest can be put to an honorable use.

Consider that every local church has a variety of members. They range from strong to weak, many talents to only one or two talents, etc. Not only does God recognize this, but He also benefits from this. Unfortunately, this writer has heard too many times from fellow Christians that they cannot be of service to the Kingdom of God due to their gender, age or a host of other reasons. Reader, Paul says otherwise! You may not be gold or silver. In fact, you may only be a lump of clay. Yet even a mound of clay can be molded into a beautiful vessel or a block of wood chiseled into an attractive piece of furniture! Whether our talents are many or few within the Lord's church, our aim ought to be to cleanse ourselves of that which is dishonorable so that we might serve God in holiness. Only then can we be ready for every good work. BG