

FOR PASTORS AND PEOPLE

DESK and THRONE

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"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth. But in a great house there are vessels not only of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honor and some to dishonor. If a man, therefore, purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (II. Tim. 2:15, 20, 21).

The chapter of which these verses are a part sets forth the Christian worker under a number of aspects.

1. He is a **soldier**, engaged in a strenuous warfare; therefore, he must endure hardness. ver. 1-4.

2. He is an **athlete**, striving for the masteries; therefore, he must strive lawfully. ver. 5.

3. He is a **husbandman**, careful in labors; therefore, he must first be partaker of the fruits. ver. 6.

4. He is a **student** who would be approved unto God; therefore, he must rightly divide the word of truth. ver. 15.

5. He is a vessel for the Master's use; therefore, he must be sanctified. ver. 20, 21.

6. He is the **servant** of the Lord reclaiming Satan's captives; therefore, he must be gentle, patient and apt to teach. ver. 24-26.

Each of these figures is attractive and would repay a careful study, but we are especially interested at the moment in a thought suggested by the **vessels** linked with the idea of the **student**.

That the **vessels** which the great Head of the Church condescends to use in His service are of different caliber in their essential quality is obvious to all. Some few among them may be of such outstanding merit as to warrant the designation "vessels of gold" or "vessels of silver." Here and there is found a mighty intellect or an eloquent tongue, but in general the Lord's servants are not more than **average men** as so many of us are painfully aware. Had their calling and anointing depended on their own resources or upon human estimates of their fitness for the work, the door to service would have been for ever closed.

It is these **average men**, and often less than average according to the world's estimate, whom God so often condescends to use, because when His power is manifested **through** them it becomes plain to see that it is not of them. The treasure is in an earthen vessel that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of themselves.

Hence, it often happens that God takes up for His use the weak things of the world and with them He confounds the mighty. He uses the base things and the things that are despised that no flesh might glory in His presence.

Yet whatever may be our natural endowment or whatever may seem to be our lack it is required of us that as **vessels** in His hands we should be effective, and therefore at our best.

Two outstanding facts should characterize

the man of God who is Divinely set apart for service, namely, an **anointed soul** and a **trained mind**. If one of these must be sanctified let it be the training. The anointing is vital and must be obtained and maintained at all costs. The anointing is to abide. (I. John 2:27). It is rare, however, that where there is a willing mind, some degree of definite preparation cannot be obtained, and this, like the anointing, is not to be regarded as incidental to a former day when preparing to preach. It is to be viewed as part of a lifelong development.

The preacher who ceases to be a student soon becomes a bore. He becomes stale in his thinking and repetitious in his expressions. He may stew and fume and shout, but his effectiveness will be less than his effort. It was more than a literary taste that prompted Paul to exhort Timothy to give attendance to reading and to study to show himself approved unto God.

Hence, we insist that a true minister of Jesus Christ must possess this twofold qualification:

1. **Constant acquisition.** Knowledge acquired at the **desk**. It is here he develops his **mind**.

2. **Continuance of anointing.** Experience absorbed at the **Throne**. It is there he develops his soul.

To be "meet for the Master's use and prepared unto every good work" these two must never fail. In a well rounded life the **desk** and the **Throne** are never far apart.

It is perilous to **sit** more than we **kneel**, or to **study** more than we **pray**. These two, however, rightly proportioned and determinedly developed will produce for God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.—Heart and Life.

"I OWE MY PASTOR"

1. Reverent attention when he comes to me personally, or when he comes into the service as God's message bearer. Nothing in my attitude should appear discourteous, careless nor annoying.

2. Enough of my time to assist him in gospel and church work when he needs my help.

3. Trust and holy unity that he may not fear criticism nor faultfinding.

4. Protection from any "gossipy" tongue, from his having to hear any slander or unkind speech about anyone that would unnecessarily add anything to his load.

5. Time to pray frequently that God may bless and help him to accomplish the great work before him; I should be continually lifting with him on the spiritual load.

6. Regularity in church attendance. He is human; empty pews will not encourage him.

7. Co-operation in matters large and small; hearty co-operation in fasting, prayer, calling in homes and personal work.

8. Expressions of appreciation and encouragement, for he, too, has vexing and annoying problems and criticisms. My encouragement is needed. "A minister to do his best work must live in an atmosphere of good will. Laymen ought to create such an atmosphere."

9. The best support financially that I can give him—enough so that he can work unhampered. My tithes and offerings should be circulating in His service. My pastor could do some things that he is not doing now if he had more finances to work with. Many good things come my way. Am I sharing all I can?—Selected.

LET US STRIVE

So that in our church, no stranger shall remain ungreeter! No unfortunate member go unfriended! No invalid . . . be unvisited! No needy person . . . be unassisted! No bewildered soul shall go unadvised! No home of mourning shall be neglected! No act of needed mercy shall be omitted! LET'S BE WORKERS, NOT SHIRKERS!—Earl Gentry, in Church Bulletin.

REDEEM THE TIME

"We may not be able as individual Christians to stem the tide of evil that is sweeping in upon the world like a tornado for the tribulation, but we can "redeem the time" and make our influence felt by letting the Spirit of Christ possess us, and by walking circumspectly, looking for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. If each one of us exercises all his ransomed powers for God and righteousness, may we not yet experience a mighty change, may not one yet chase a thousand and two put ten thousand to flight?"

"LOVE NOT THE WORLD"

"The world is trying to crash the Church today. We are living in an age of compromise with evil when sin is glamorized, beautified,

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