

VESSELS OF HONOR

2 Tim 2:20-22 Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of 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. [22] Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

“It is godly ambition that motivates a man to bring order and direction to life, and to use the gifts God has given him for that purpose” (Dave Harvey, *Am I Called*, p. 34)

The Useful Vessel

1. Two Vessels and Two Purposes (verse 20)

A. Gold and Silver

- Honorable (ESV) or noble (NIV) use.

B. Wood and Clay

- Dishonorable (ESV) or ignoble (NIV) use.

2. A Condition and a Promise (verse 21)

- If a person cleanses himself of worthless things (the condition) he will be a vessel for honorable use (the promise).
- Holiness precedes usefulness and readiness.

3. How to Cleanse Yourself (verse 22)

A. Flee Youthful Passions

- “What young men will be, in all probability depends upon what they are now, and yet they seem so easily to forget this.... Young man, do not be deceived. Do not think you can willfully serve your self and your pleasures in the beginning of life, and then go and serve God with ease at the end.... It is a mockery to deal with God and your soul in such a fashion.” (J.C. Ryle, *Thoughts for Young Men*, p. 10)

- “This is not to be understood exclusively as a reference to sexual lust, but to self-assertion as well as self-indulgence, to selfish ambition, headstrong obstinacy, arrogance and indeed all the ‘wayward impulses of youth’ (NEB).” (John R.W. Stott, *The Message of 2 Timothy*, p. 73)

1) Pride

- “Cease to be sure that you are always right, and others always wrong. Be distrustful of your own opinion, when you find it contrary to that of older men than yourself, and especially to that of your own parents.” (J.C. Ryle, *Thoughts for Young Men*, p. 25)

2) The love of pleasure

3) The love of self

4) Fear of man

5) Immorality and immodesty

6) Lack of seriousness

7) Indifference to spiritual things

B. Pursue Righteousness, Faith, Love and Peace

- These are the four essential marks of a Christian.
- “We are both to run away from spiritual danger and to run after spiritual good, both to flee from the one in order to escape it and to pursue the other in order to attain it.” (John R.W. Stott, *The Message of 2 Timothy*, p. 75)

C. With Those Who Call on the Lord with a Pure Heart

- Pursue fellowship and be devoted to fellowship not fun. Find your joy in spiritual not worldly things.
- Who you hang out with says a lot about what you value. It also says a lot about your discernment.

Prepared for Every Good Work

1. Called by God

A. Ask for Clarity and Confirmation

- *Am I Called* by Dave Harvey

B. Trust in God's Sovereignty

- Pray and commit future to the Lord. Be patient and trust God. Focus on preparedness.

2. Holy Ambition

A. Pray for Purity of Motivation

- Cultivate a passion for God's glory.

B. Anticipate Increase of Desire

- 1) Desire does not equal timing.
- 2) Desire is not determinative.

C. Learn About Pastoral Ministry

- Meet with pastor
- *Eldership in the New Testament* by Brent Detwiler

3. Proven Character

A. Identify Pride – Grow in Humility

- The Fifty Fruits of Pride - messages are available on website:
http://crosswaync.org/docs/teaching_brent.html

B. Ask for Input of Others.

- Inventory Questionnaire

C. Find Joy in Serving

- Effectively Serving Those Over You - messages is available on website: http://crosswaync.org/docs/teaching_brent.html

4. Charismatic Gifts

A. Evaluate Gifts

- 1) Administration
- 2) Leading
 - Wife and children
- 3) Teaching
- 4) Exhortation

B. Look for Ministry Opportunities

- Take on more responsibility. Use time effectively. Renounce passivity. Get organized. Grow in discipline.
 - Event planning

C. Ask for Honest Feedback

- Pastor's College Assessment Form

D. Asked to be Mentored

E. Develop Gifts Outside Church

- Excel at school or work

5. Sound Doctrine

A. Learn the Bible

- *For the Love of God* (2 vols.) by D.A. Carson

- B. Read Theology
 - Pastors College textbooks
 - C. Build a Library
 - D. Take a Greek Course
6. Plan for the Future
- A. Talk to Your Pastor
 - B. Save Money
 - C. Rejoice With Others