

II Timothy, Sermon #13

II Timothy 2

In this chapter, God uses metaphors to describe what we are to be like as followers of Christ.

1. Steward (vs. 2) – Pour into faithful people
2. Soldier (vs. 3) – Committed to the Captain of our salvation
3. Athlete (vs. 5) – By the guidelines/by the Book of God
4. Farmer (vs. 6) – Work hard
5. Workman (vs. 15) – Works in the Bible – so that our tongues will be a blessing not a curse.
6. We are to be a vessel (vs. 21) – vessel unto honor

I've entitled this morning's message "Vessels of Honor."

II Timothy 2:19

Let us stand for the reading of God's Holy Word

II Timothy 2:19-22

Let us pray

You may be seated

Vessels of Honor

Vs. 19 – we are talking about the church – not the church building, but the church people

The foundation is secure – the foundation of the Church is Jesus Christ.

I Corinthians 3:11, *“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”*

Foundation is a rock – Jesus Christ

Vs. 19 – the Church has God’s seal on it.

In the Bible, a seal is a mark of ownership and security.

The Lord knoweth them that are His.

This phrase refers back to a story in the Book of Numbers 16—group of people rebelled against Moses.

They also wanted to be part of the priesthood.

So, Moses told them to take up their censers, and we will see who is on God’s side.

Numbers 16 – Is it Moses or Korah? God knows who are His and who is holy.

Moses in Numbers 16:25-26 – warned the people to leave the side of Korah and the rebels

You with me, come over

You with Korah, stay

Moses said if these people die a common death, then I’m not God’s man, but if God does something unique—like open up the earth and swallow them—they went alive into Hell.

Numbers 16:27-33

The Lord knoweth them that are His – we may not be able to tell, but God can.

Sin is contagious, and association with openly sinful people is spiritually dangerous.

Proverbs 13:20, *“He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.”*

I Corinthians 15:33, *“Be not deceived: evil [company] corrupts good manners.”*

Fellowship with sinful believers develops in us a tolerance for sin.

II Thessalonians 3:14, *“And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.”*

We should not want to be around those whose language and lifestyle do not honor Christ.

We should not want to associate with those who have a critical tongue, who tolerate sin in their lives, or whose commitment to the Lord is shallow and artificial.

A vessel for honor cannot remain honorable and usable if he is continually contaminated by vessels of dishonor.

Who are our friends? Our friends will determine our future.

So, who is God talking about? vs. 17

So, what does God say to us?

The same thing He told the congregation in Moses' day—separate ourselves

Vs. 19e

Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from what? Iniquity.

Every person that professes Christianity—depart, refrain, remove, withdraw thyself.

Proverbs 1 – If sinners entice thee, consent thou not;

Proverbs 16:16 – By fear of the Lord, men depart from evil

Iniquity – unrighteousness, wrongful in character, in action, in thinking, in living
Iniquity is not what you and I think is wrong—it is what God says is wrong.

We are to make an effort to remove sin by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Self discipline, choices we make, decisions

Romans 6:12-13, *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in its lusts.*

Do we hate sin? Do we hate it when we sin?

Neither yield our members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin but yield ourselves unto God.

Now, God wants us to see the big picture.

Vs. 20

The **great house** represents the entire church composed of all true believers.
The Owner of the house is God.

This great house has a solid foundation—the foundation has no problem.

But the vessels are in question.

You want to guess who the vessels are? That's us.

The **vessels** represent individual believers—the honorable are vessels of **gold and silver** and the dishonorable are **vessels of wood and earth**.

God divides the utensils into two categories: those of honor (gold and silver) and those of dishonor (wood and clay).

Honor and **dishonor** do not refer to true and false Christians.

Nor is he speaking here of the God-given differences among believers.

The good news is that every believer can be a vessel of gold or silver.

The bad news is that every believer can be a vessel of wood or dirt.

The honorable **vessels** represent believers who are faithful and useful to the Lord.

- ◆ They are the good soldiers—they obey the commander
- ◆ They follow the rules—they live by the Bible
- ◆ They are hard-working believers—they are studying the Bible

By contrast, the dishonorable **vessels** are the disobedient soldiers, they break the rules, lazy workers—they are not working in the Bible.

Honor and **dishonor** therefore refer to the ways in which genuine believers are found useful to the Lord in fulfilling the work to which He has called them.

In this sense, all believers *should be* **vessels** of **honor**.

Some vessels look expensive and some do not.

No matter what they look like, their education, color of the skin—all three of these dishes are clean and useful for God—they are gold and silver in God's eyes

We know and God knows that some vessels honor God – some vessels dishonor God

★So, how can we be a vessel that honors God? Vs. 21

God wants to use us in this world for Him, but He cannot use us if we're dirty.

Which one are we?

Are we a clean cup that God can use?

Or, are we a dirty cup that is set aside and needs washing?

God can use every single one of us.

God is desiring to use every one of us “IF,” “IF” – vs. 21

IF – it is up to us!

God uses clean vessels; He does not use dirty vessels.

Vessels of dishonor are people in the church who are not clean, not obedient, not submissive to the Lord, and not eager to serve.

And today, God is looking for clean vessels to use—not beautiful vessels, but clean.

The Bible says the honorable believer needs to be purged.

To “purge out” means to cleanse thoroughly – wash the cup, be sanitized and then we will be ready, useful

Sin stains, sin damages, sin wreaks havoc, sin destroys—nobody wants to drink out of a dirty cup.

We cannot have a clean mind if we’re filling it with trash.

The Bible tells us not to set any wicked thing before our eyes.

What excuse, what rationalization do we give to sin?

God said, don’t call good what I call evil.

The Bible says the honorable believer needs to be sanctified – 2:21b

A Christian is **sanctified**, set apart, in two ways.

He is set apart *from* sin.

He is set apart *for* God and for His righteousness.

True Bible separation is balanced: we flee sin, but we follow after Christ/righteousness.

Two kinds of sanctification:

- ◆ Salvation is sanctification—we have been made holy—we have given our sins to Christ, and we have received the righteousness of Christ.
- ◆ But sanctification is also the beginning of a lifelong process. It is both a reality and a progressive experience.

Vs. 21 is talking about the progressive experience.

So, Christians are not only **sanctified** by having a right relationship to God but also are being **sanctified** as they grow in righteous living.

The **sanctified** life is a life of purity, holiness, and Godliness.

Holy man/holy woman—

- ◆ I Peter—be ye holy for I am holy
- ◆ II Corinthians—come out from among them and be ye separate
- ◆ Colossians—cast off our sins/put on righteousness
- ◆ Galatians—walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh
- ◆ I John—be righteous as He is righteous.

I Thessalonians 4:3-5

I am to be a **vessel for honor**, worthy for the Lord to use.

Our new life in Christ is to be in stark contrast to our former / old life in sin / unsaved life.

Romans 6:19, “. . . *for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.*”

Ephesians 2:3, “Among whom also we all had our manner of life in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”

A vessel for honor is fit for the Master’s use – vs. 21 – we are usable; we are profitable.

It was the Apostle Paul’s greatest fear that he would lose his usefulness to God because of sin.

I Corinthians 9:27, “But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.” [set aside and put on the bench]

A vessel of honor to the Lord is **prepared for every good work**.

This carries the idea of willingness and eagerness to do the work of God on earth.

A human vessel has a will.

Our full preparedness for the Lord’s service therefore demands more than simply *having* His Spirit, more than attending a church and knowing the Bible.

It demands our genuine and unreserved willingness to *submit* our will to His Spirit, to *obey* His Word, and to *live* this out in His service.

The truly **prepared** Christian can honestly say, “To be used of God is my desire.”

We need to be vessels of honor

Are we a vessel of honor or dishonor to God?

Let us stand for closing invitation

For God to use us:

1. We must be saved
2. We must be clean

Are we a dirty Christian?

Are there any sins in our life today that need to be purged out?

How do we get clean? Wash the cup.

I John 1:9, *"If we confess our sins (if we agree with God), He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

Confess – Repent

This (cleaning of the cup) business of being holy, is a daily issue.

We have to keep ourselves clean every day.

Let God clean us up, forgive, wash that sin away in the blood

How do we know if we are dirty?

Keep looking in the mirror – Word of God, by the Holy Spirit

That is why it is important that we are in Sunday School and Youth Group on Sunday morning, where the Bible is taught and preached.

Rear of Document

God-honoring vessel

God wants to use us as vessels

1. Clean, God honoring
2. Available and separated unto God
3. Do the good work because he's a useful tool, but in order to be used, we first must be purged

If we are filled with sin or defiled by disobedience, He will first have to purge us; and that might not be an enjoyable experience.

Those who are of God prove it by living Godly lives.

Honor – precious, valuable

Sanctified – holy, consecrated

Fit – useful, profitable

Master – Lord

Dishonor = disgrace

Prepared = made ready

You know what God says about His people

They were used for those duties that were never seen and were kept out of sight as much as possible.

To display them before guests would be an act of unspeakable **dishonor**.

Very simple message

First of all – Salvation – We can't be holy apart from salvation, II Timothy 1:8-9.

Daily living – holy lifestyle

It would be inconceivable that a vessel could alternate between being used for vile waste and for food for guests.

An honorable vessel is kept pure.

Christians are not simply rightly related to God; they wholly *belong* to God.