

Cracked Pots At The Lord's Table

"A water bearer in India had two large pots with each suspended on opposite ends of a pole which he carried across his neck. One of the pots had a crack in it, while the other pot was absolutely perfect, always delivering a full portion of water at the end of the long walk from the stream to the master's house. Each time the cracked pot arrived only half full. For a full two years this went on every day with the bearer delivering only one and a half pots full of water to his master's house. Of course, the perfect pot was quite proud of itself and its accomplishments being perfect to the end for which it was made. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its imperfection, miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do.

"After two years of what it perceived to be a bitter failure, it spoke to the water bearer. 'I am ashamed of myself, and I want to apologize to you.' 'Why?,' asked the bearer. 'What are you ashamed of?' The cracked pot replied, 'I have been able for these past two years to deliver only half my load because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your master's house. Because of my flaw, you have to do all of this work but you don't get the full value for your efforts.' The water bearer felt sorry for the cracked pot, and said, 'As we return to the master's house, I want you to notice the beautiful flowers along the path.' Indeed, as they went up

the hill to the master's home, the cracked pot took notice of the sun warming the beautiful flowers on his side of the path, and this cheered it some. But at the end of the trail, it still felt badly because it had again leaked out half its load; and, so again, it apologized to the bearer for its failure.

"Then the bearer said to the pot, 'Did you notice there were flowers only on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? I have always known about your flaw, and I planted flower seeds on your side of the path. Every day while we walked back from the stream, you watered them. For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate my master's table. Without you being just the way you are, my master would not have this beauty to grace his house.' " ¹

Assembled around this sacred table this morning is a collection of "cracked pots." All of us have "cracks" in our lives, some of which were there before we were converted and some that have developed during our spiritual journey. Apostle Paul, in *II Corinthians 4:7*, likens our bodies to "*earthen vessels*" in which we carry, not water but, the

¹ This illustration of "The Cracked Pot" was taken from a source that the writer of this "Lord's Supper Table Talk" no longer remembers and therefore cannot credit. He has taken the liberty to do some editing of the illustration.

gospel of Christ. Sometimes our flesh springs "leaks." None of us is perfect; each of us is flawed in some way. Paul even admitted this about himself in *Philippians 3:12*. *"Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected, but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold."* Here, at this table of remembrance, where we are to examine ourselves, we are brought face-to-face with this same sobering reality. We can focus on only our failures or we can thank and praise God for allowing us "cracked pots" to grace His table not with flowers but with our presence. We can beat up ourselves spiritually until we are of little use to our heavenly Master or we can repent and pray and ask for God's continued forgiveness and that God will repair our "weak, damaged, earthen vessels" so that we will have the strength and determination to *"press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus,"* faithfully carrying the gospel of Christ in our own *"earthen"* vessel in spite of its flaws. I have no doubt that Christ would have us do the latter.

Sometimes, I wonder what God sees as He looks down upon this assembly as it prepares to break the *"loaf"* and drink the *"cup."* Does He see us only as a conglomeration of imperfect, cracked pots? He may. Or, does He see us as living souls who know how imperfect we are, who know how unworthy we are of His sacrifice and forgiveness, but who long to worship and adore Him for His

unspeakable grace shown through Christ and His cross? I certainly hope so. But, I am not prepared to answer my own questions. Knowing His holy character, I think it is very probable that He may see us in both ways.

As a child I remember sometimes plucking some wild flower growing in the ground somewhere to give to my mother. Can you remember how much your mother made over that thing that had been clutched in our hand until it drooped and wilted? Sometimes we gathered more than one flower and collected an entire bouquet. She would put those wilted, withered plants in a glass and proudly display them on the kitchen table. I wonder. Could it be that God might look at us in this way? We're not much to look at. Spiritually, the *"Rose of Sharon"* may not see us much more than as dandelions seeking the favor of the *"Lily of the Valley."* But here we are, a bouquet of dandelions at the Master's Table. The world's florists would be ashamed to have us in the display window of their shop, but we are God's bouquet. And we have come to the Table of the One Who gives those who thirst for it everlasting life made possible only because of what He did at the cross. Even though we may be spiritual dandelions today, let it be our prayer that as God looks down upon us week after week that we emit a beautiful fragrance for His pleasure and that He sees us growing from being a dandelion to becoming a beautiful floral arrangement for his glory and honor.

PRAYER

Our God and Father in heaven, by your grace you have saved and repaired us to be

fit occupants around this most sacred Table upon which rest the *"body"* and the *"blood"* of our Lord Jesus Christ. By our eye of faith we see Jesus and His Apostles assembled around a table on the night of His betrayal where He taught them and us what this table is to commemorate - Him. It is about His sacrificial death. It is about the price He paid for our salvation. It is a table that the world does not understand and has no yearning to be around. But we do, Lord. We want to be here. We want to commune with Him Who is called the *"Rose of Sharon"* and the *"Lily of the Valley."* Lord, if you look upon us as flowers in the garden of Your kingdom, we ask that you will cause our roots to sink deep into the good soil of Your gospel and that we will produce beautiful fragrances for the sake of Christ, our Lord. Please keep us from withering and dying. So, we ask that You bless this *"loaf"* which is the *"body"* of Christ and that you will receive our thanks for this *"cup"* which is the *"blood"* of Christ. For Your sake and for Your glory, we ask these things in the name of Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

