

Yield as Pliable Clay to the Potter

by Hans R. Waldvogel

The sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering to God and allowing him to work in us to make us vessels unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use.

Duration: 18:01

Scripture: Philippians 3:13

Topics: "Yielding"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher uses the analogy of a potter shaping clay to illustrate God's work in our lives. He describes how the potter takes a misshapen vase and continually works on it until it becomes a beautiful symmetrical piece. The preacher emphasizes that God chooses us, like the potter chooses clay, to mold us according to His will. He highlights the importance of being pliable and surrendering our own desires to allow God to work in us. The sermon concludes with the reminder that we should not be satisfied with ourselves but continually press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God.

Transcript

The Lord said unto him, Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name. For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. I'm sure we were all greatly moved by Sister Riccio's word this morning, when she kept repeating, Oh Jesus, we need you.

Jesus, we need you. Oh Jesus, give us a revival. Jesus, how we need you.

We are in school, and we certainly are in school. But I would like to turn that around. I think that we'll find a shortcut to a revival when we turn that around and find out that Jesus needs us.

Jesus needs me, and until I see that it isn't so much my needing him as he needing me, or my wanting him, but he wanting me, he purchased me. He says, You've not chosen me, I have chosen you. But you know the reason we choose him, and the reason we want him is because we want to get something out of him.

You'll find that the great bulk of Christians everywhere in all churches are situated that way. They want God for what they can get out of him. Salvation, forgiveness of sins, healing, oh, and all kinds of blessings.

And that constitutes our whole experience, our whole Christianity. But that doesn't satisfy him. He purchased us that we might be vessels unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use.

And the reason we don't listen to that, I've chosen you, is because he says, I'll show him how much he must suffer. That's where we back down. But he says, You cannot be my disciple, you can't follow me, as long as you love your own life.

Now that simple gospel and that sound doctrine, and nobody likes it. Nobody likes it. Oh, how we love our lives.

How we love them. And as long as we have what we want, and God blesses our lives, and God blesses us with health, and gives us enough to eat, and gives us clothes, and gives us a comfortable life of following him, why, he's okay. I tell you, Jesus is okay.

He's all right. He's nice. He's wonderful.

And we sing he's wonderful. But let him cut a little bit deep. Let him begin to cleanse us, and purify us, and demand of us to give up, to repent, to quit ourselves.

Oh, how we hang on to our own lives also. We beautify them. We get all the blessings of God, and we paint them over our dirty flesh.

And we call it spiritual. But I'm so thankful this morning for one great truth, that he purchased me for himself. He bought me, he paid a great price.

Evidently he thought a lot of me. Evidently he wanted me very badly. Glory to God.

And there will be no question about blessing. There will be no question about forgiveness of sin. In fact, Jesus will not be satisfied until I'm cleansed and purified from all unrighteousness.

All that self-life that I'm hanging on to, that I have bit myself into, that will be crucified. Praise the Lord. But it'll never happen.

He will not do it unless you give him the key to your life. Unless you read, oh beloved, we talk about other churches. Let's talk about them lovingly.

Maybe in the sight of God they're doing far better than we. There's just one standard, just one standard. It's Jesus.

Jesus says, you've not chosen me. And you know, today everything depends on his choice. I cannot fool my Lord.

I just can't. I can fool people and myself and make people believe that I'm a deep-life saint and something like that. But I cannot fool the heavenly bridegroom.

He has eyes like fire. But oh, the wonder of it. Think of it.

Think. You poor, miserable creature. You know we're all a lot of fizzles.

We're all good for nothing in ourselves, and yet he has chosen us. God the Father has chosen us in him. Like a potter chooses clay.

And what does he choose that clay for? Well, if he had a lot of sand, he couldn't use it. That sand wouldn't yield to his judge. And if he had coal, that wouldn't yield to his judge.

It's got to be liable clay without shape, without will, without desire, so that the potter can put his will into it, his desire. He can work out his own plan the way he wants to. Did you ever see a potter make a vessel? I was in the rookery in Cincinnati and saw them do it.

It was a marvelous sermon to me, how he took that clay and how he kneaded it. My mother used to make me knead the dough for the bread. She said, the bread works better when you knead it because your blood is young.

And I put my blood into that dough. But here was the potter, and he kneaded that clay, and he worked it and worked it until every bit of impurity was out of it. It was just as pliable as you could imagine, you know.

And then, then he began to take that lump of clay and he put it on a wheel, a wheel spinning around, and then he took his fingers. I still see him do it. He put his thumbs into the center and that thing was spinning around.

And the first thing you know, he had made a beautiful vase. My, I thought, what a masterpiece, a vase beautiful enough to adorn anybody's house. But when he was through, he took a great big knife and slashed it in two.

And then he discovered that the sides were not even. Oh, it satisfied the clay. That clay was satisfied, but the potter wasn't satisfied.

So he took that vase and cut it in two, and then he began to knead it again and knead it again. And then he shaped it again. I don't know how many times he did that, but finally he was satisfied with his proportions.

And now there was a beautiful symmetrical vase. And then he said, now, now that wasn't finished. Now that vase was not only put in the fire, but it was masoned into an oven.

They had no, no door to it. It was put in the oven and then bricks were cemented right around it. And there that poor vase was lost in the fire.

Couldn't think of getting out. It had to stay in that furnace. And it stayed there.

That is the funny part of it. It didn't kick. It didn't say, ouch.

It had to stay there 38 hours until that exterior was beautifully glazed. And then, and then the ornaments were put on it. We like to put the ornaments on the raw stuff.

We like to kick. Oh boy, ain't you through yet, Lord? My, what a potter you are. You need me too much.

That fire's too hot. But I have chosen you and ordained you before the foundation of the world. How is this potter ever going to get a vessel unto honor so that the principalities and powers in the heavenly places will be astonished at the riches of the wisdom and the goodness and mercy of God.

That's what he's chosen us for. And I'm so happy this morning that I don't have to choose him. And I don't have to tell him how to sanctify me and how to finish me.

But one thing I must do, surrender, submit, absolutely hate my own life also. He wants my life. That's what this church has been standing for very imperfectly.

But I know one thing that after 36 years, the Lord seems to be a great deal more in earnest than he was in the beginning. Although in the beginning he was hewing to the core. But it seems to me that God is beginning to see of the travail of his soul.

I don't know how many there are. And the day is not far hence when there will be a tremendous separation among the people of God and when there will be great surprise. What? That fellow, I thought he was a top Nazi.

Why, that woman, she prophesied. Yet visions and love. Oh, beloved, that stuff will just fall off thee.

The ungodly will be like chaff that the wind drives us away. God's going to see to it that his own will come forth like himself when he shall be revealed. We shall be revealed with him in glory.

There will be vessels, but they'll not be the vessels that we made out of ourselves. They'll be the vessels that his masterful hand prepared and made. I will show him how much he will have to suffer for my namesake.

There he had a vessel. He said, he's a vessel unto me. He is a chosen.

Oh, Ananias began to kick his head. What? That's Gallowack? That persecutor of the church? Let me say something else. You know, we make a great mistake in these days when we manufacture preachers.

We send them to seminaries to learn how to preach. That's never been God's way. I don't mean that we shouldn't have seminaries and Bible schools.

We should. We should have not only more, but better Bible schools, more spiritual. And we ought to pray for them.

But God's way is for us to pray the Lord of harvest, to thrust laborers into his harvest field. Now that's evidently what the early church did. When Stephen was killed, they said, now who's going to take Stephen's place? And God had his eye on Saul.

He knew there was one that would go all the way. He knew what timber Saul was made out of. And when Ananias complained, he said, that man, why has come here to persecute the church? Jesus says, go your way.

He's a chosen vessel unto me. And he was the master potter taking this clay into his mighty hand. And when Saul said, who art thou Lord? He immediately surrendered to Jesus Christ, everything he had.

And Jesus was able to take him and shape him and mold him and make him a vessel like nobody's business. None of the other apostles measured up to Paul. And God knows what he can make out of you.

God knows, God alone knows what he can make out of you. The trouble is we're trying to make ourselves. Oh, how often I've seen that.

And we, as soon as we attain to some kind of fruitfulness and success, we begin to advertise. By now it's high time to advertise what we've been doing. The success we've had, the fruitfulness we've had and so

on.

And we stopped the work of God. In other words, we're satisfied with ourselves. Not as if I had already attained.

Either we're already perfect. Paul knew that that vessel would not be finished until he received the crown of life, until Jesus called him up higher. And so he said, one thing I do, I press towards the mark for the prize.

There is the blueprint. It's not finished yet. And you fellows there in Philippi that think you're so good and so finished because God's blessed you, you better do as I do.

Forget the things that are behind. Nevermind, forget yourselves too. Yea, my own life also, I count it not dear unto myself.

Why did Paul not obey the prophecies? They were well meant and perhaps well given. When he said, don't you go up to Jerusalem, why they're going to bind you. They're going to torment you.

Oh, Paul was given to Jesus. Jesus Christ, have you chosen me too? Do you want me too, Jesus? Do you want me, Lord? Oh, do you really want me? Then fake out of me that self-love. Jesus, make me love you.

Make me want you. Never mind what anybody else does. Oh, give me eyes anointed with eyes to have to see the King.

Oh, give unto me the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. It'll change everything. Look at what happened to the Old Testament people when they came up to the borders of the promised land.

They all murmured. They said, why weren't there graves enough in Egypt? Now we're going to die. They all went to the clinic to have a checkup.

They said, well, we ought to have faith, but then we've got to know what to take faith for, you know. Lots of people have told me that. And so they all came back with a negative report.

They all suffered from diabetes and they suffered from heart trouble and gas on the stomach and whatnot. And so they murmured. They said, well, God can't.

But Caleb and Joshua, they had a different spirit with them. That's what made the difference. Beloved, you and I need to have a different spirit.

We need to have a spirit who is Lord and master, who controls us absolutely. Glory to God. He's not only chosen our, he's chosen our bodies.

He that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God. And that's why Paul says we're not longing for the grave. We're longing for that moment when we shall be close upon with immortality.

And that's why God never allowed death to conquer Paul. He was offered upon the sacrifice of martyrdom. That was something different.

But he said, I shall receive a crown of life. Oh beloved, he has chosen us for this very same thing. And when we talk about deep life churches, I wish God could rub it under our second chin this morning that we're not nearly as spiritual as we think we are and as we ought to be.

Oh, that God might put into every one of our hearts a cry. Oh, that I might know him and the power of his resurrection. That's what we're here for.

That's what Jesus chose us for. And has he got a right to do his will in us? Tell me, does he have a right? Why is he a great blessing? And why is he not a great king? Take thy great power and reign now alone over my will and over my affections. That will never happen until I actually make that surrender.

That's why God lets us run in our folly. That's why he allows us to go in our own counsel and to fool ourselves and think that we're spiritual when we're not spiritual. To think we're rich and increased with good and have need of nothing, until Jesus is my wealth, until I boast of nothing and nobody but him.

Then I enter into rest, thank God, and nothing in the world matters but Jesus.

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