

## **Man is a Vessel (Container)**

*But we have this treasure in earthen vessels...*  
**2 Cor. 4:7a**

**1. Man has God's image and likeness**

**Genesis 1:26a**

*And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness...*

**2. Man is a vessel (container)**

**Romans 9:21, 23-24a**

*Or does not the potter have authority over the clay to make out of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? In order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He had before prepared unto glory, even us...*

**3. This vessel is for containing God**

**2 Corinthians 4:7**

*But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not out of us.*

**4. God is first contained in man's spirit**

**John 3:6**

*That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*

**1 Thessalonians 5:23a**

*And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete...*

# Man is a Vessel

## Man has God's Image and Likeness

In Genesis 1:26, God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Here we can see that God created man differently from all other creatures. All the other things that God created were after their own kind. Only man was after God's kind. Do you see how close man is to God? A good way to illustrate how man is in God's image is with a glove and a hand. Man is to God like a glove is to a hand. A glove is made according to the shape of a hand and for the hand to enter into the glove. Man was created according to God's image and after His likeness so that God could enter into him. Do you see how wonderful you are? Only you, among all of God's creation, were made in such a wonderful way. This makes you a "V.I.P." of the universe. You were created as a vessel in the image of God so that you could contain Him and express Him. None of this was by accident or evolution. It was absolutely planned by God in eternity past and carried out in His creation for the fulfillment of His eternal purpose.<sup>1</sup>

When God created man, He created him in His image, according to His attributes and virtues, so that man can express Him through these attributes and virtues. For example, God has love, and God loves. God also created man that man may have love and that man may love. God has wisdom and God has His purpose, so God made man also to have wisdom and to have a purpose. God can think, God can consider, God can love, God can like and dislike, God can make choices, God can have intentions, and God can make decisions. God created man in the same way so that man could express God. What man has, however, is only the image of God's attributes and virtues but not the reality. Man must receive God as his life and content, and then God with His attributes and virtues will fill up man to become the reality of man's attributes and virtues.<sup>2</sup>

## Man is a vessel (container)

The Word tells us clearly that we are vessels (Rom. 9:21, 23). Not many Christians have paid adequate attention to the fact that we are vessels of God. Christians talk about men being God's creatures or men becoming God's people. Some even go to the highest point by saying that man can be a child of God. But in Romans 9 we are told that man is a vessel of God. A vessel is a container. It is different from a utensil or an instrument. A vessel is not used to do something but to contain something.

We are not supposed to do something for God. Forget about your doing. We are destined to contain God. We were made to be containers of God. The human concept is that we have to do something for God. I do not say that this is wrong, but it does not touch God's central thought. We have to realize that we are vessels unto God. God, strictly speaking, does not need us to do something for Him. God needs some containers. According to Romans 9 God desires that we be vessels unto honor, vessels unto glory, and vessels of mercy to contain Him. Brothers and sisters, you have to realize that you are vessels unto God!<sup>3</sup>

## This Vessel is for containing God

Man is God's vessel. God wants to put His life and light into man. He wants to live inside of man. What is the meaning of your existence? People say that they want to serve God and to keep His will; they want to please God, to work for Him, and to zealously do His will. Are these thoughts correct? Again there are those who hope to receive answers to prayers, to receive blessings, and to witness for God. To have blessings and peace is not the purpose of man. What then is the purpose of man?

**Consecration is a gate, and we must be determined to enter through this gate.**

Romans 9:20 and 21 say that man is a piece of clay. This piece of clay is not made to be God's servant or His maid. It is made to be a vessel. Any vessel, whether it is a cup or a bowl, exists for the purpose of containing something. A vessel is different from a tool. God has no intention to make you into a tool. He only wants to put Himself into you, so that His life can flow out of you.

The real way to serve God, glorify Him, and keep His will is to put yourself in the hand of God and to allow Him to fill you up. In this way, God will shine out and flow out from within you. This is to serve God. It is not a matter of your working for the Lord, but of God's working Himself into you. It is a great blasphemy to think that a man can do anything for the Lord. God is the Creator. He does not need you to work for Him; He only needs you to allow Him to work in you. Ephesians 2 says that we are God's workmanship. We are not His workers. God does not need you to be His tool. He wants you to be His vessel to contain Him.<sup>4</sup>

## God is first contained in man's spirit

As a container to contain God, man needs a receptacle to receive God, and this is the unique difference between God's creation of

## Key Verses

*Romans*  
9:21, 23

Or does not the potter have authority over the clay to make out of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?

23 In order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He had before prepared unto glory,

*2 Corinthians*  
4:7

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not out of us.

*Genesis*  
1:26a

And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness...

*Genesis* 2:7

Jehovah God formed man with the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

*Ephesians*  
3:16-17a

That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, that Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith...

man and His creation of other things. God did not give any other created thing a spirit except man. According to Genesis 2:7, God created man with the dust to form a body. Then He breathed the breath of life into man's nostrils, and man became a living soul. Genesis 2:7 shows us a picture of man as a vessel made by God. There is the need of a receptacle within man to receive and contain God. Today's radio has an outward box and an inward receiver to receive the invisible radio waves. Genesis 2:7 shows us that man has an outward body made with dust, and an inward receptacle, an inward receiver, produced by God's breath of life. This inward receiver is the spirit of man.<sup>5</sup>

### **Assignment**

**Using 2 Corinthians 4:7 and Romans 9:21, 23 prepare to speak to one of your friends that God's primary purpose in creating man was that man would contain Him.**

### **Prayer Assignment**

**Pray that the Lord would give you a thorough understanding of your status and purpose as a vessel of God.**

## Additional Daily Verses

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Genesis 1:26	Romans 9:21, 23	2 Corinthians 4:7	John 3:6	Genesis 2:7	1 Thessalonians 5:23	Ephesians 3:16-19

## Weekly Memorization Verses

Romans 9:21

Or does not the potter have authority over the clay to make out of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?

2 Corinthians 4:7

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not out of us.

#### References

1. *Lesson Book, Level 1: Salvation—God's Full Salvation*, Chapter 4, Section 1
2. *Basic Lessons on Life*, Chapter 1, Section 2)
3. *The Living and Practical Way to Enjoy Christ*, Chapter 1, Section 2
4. *Messages Given During the Resumption of Watchman Nee's Ministry (2 volume set)*, Chapter 20, Section 1
5. *Basic Lessons on Life*, Chapter 2, Section 1