

## **Unworthy Vessels**

by Moses Catan

My dad is one of the best inventors of our country today. With dozens of international awards, he stands out for his pioneering work in various fields. Among his 40-plus patents, what really impresses locals and foreigners alike is his “Green Charcoal Technology.”

No, he didn’t invent some fuel that’s color green. It’s just that through some secret enzymatic process, my dad can transform “green agricultural wastes” (like grass, cogon, corn stalks, etc) into high-energy charcoal. This invention has profound effects for us: it means we don’t need to cut trees or mine coal for fuel. All we have to do is collect our country’s useless agri by-products and — voila! We have a cheap, alternative source of energy.

For me, the best inventions in the world are those that transform useless stuff into something useful. Like the paper clip, which was just a piece of electrical wire in the trash that an employee started to bend to keep his piles of paper together. Or the 3M Post-It Notes, which was the result of an employee finding a use for the glue that everyone else rejected because it didn’t stick well. Or Velcro, which started when someone got interested in the little thorny seeds that stuck irritatingly to pants of farmers walking through their fields. Born from useless and unwanted stuff, these inventions have made our lives easier!

The best inventor there is, of course, is God. He’s the Master when it comes to turning what’s useless in us into something useful. To create, re-create, recycle, renew...name it, He can do it. Whatever’s ugly in our lives, His special touch can make it beautiful. Whatever’s rubbish, He can turn it into treasure. That’s His specialty: turning our humanness into holiness.

### **The Garbage Within**

“I’m only human.” We hear this often from those confessing to some personal weakness. Unfortunately, it has become a standard excuse for mistakes, failures or sin itself.

Humanness, according to the experts, means this: being susceptible to the frailties of man’s nature. No one is exempt from it. Not me, your teacher, your boss or even the saints. For some, one’s humanness can be glaring in some areas. It could be temper, impatience, laziness, impurity, selfishness, or some kind of addiction or bondage. Whatever the case, we fall when we allow our human nature to get the better of us rather than allow God’s grace to transform us.

The Bible is replete with examples of “weak” humans who were used by God. It might even surprise us when we look closely into the lives of most Bible characters and Church saints because they were all so human. They had their own mistakes, flaws and sins. In most cases, they are no different from us “lesser mortals.” The only difference is that God came into the picture. He touched their internal garbage and recycled it into something divine.

The good news is that God is raring to do the same with us. His light can cause any darkness in our lives to disappear. His power can charge up any weakness. His great wisdom can eclipse whatever is foolish. The key is just to let God come into the picture.

### **Treasure in Jars of Clay**

Are you struggling with some “human weakness” right now? Have you tried everything humanly possible to correct it or to ease the pain and still find yourself powerless? Is your conscience weighing you down? Do you feel that God can never use you anymore, or that He has struck you out of His list of “use-worthy” people?

The easiest thing to do in any of these situations is to sulk. To wallow in the miry pit of self-pity. To give up. But look at what St Paul says about human weakness:

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. (2 Corinthians 4:7, TLB)

In other words, St Paul’s focus was not on the perishable container, but on the priceless contents. Our humanness is the perishable container. God’s power within us is the priceless content. No matter how frail or fallible we human beings turn out to be, we become precious and valuable if we let Jesus be Savior and Lord of our lives, and allow His transforming power to work within us.

Patsy Clairmont, author of *God Uses Cracked Pots*, gives an analogy that clarifies this topic:

God works through cracked lives. Picture an empty clay pot with cracks all over it. Imagine a bright light put into the pot and then covered. Where does the light shine through? The cracks. That is the same way the Lord’s light shines through our lives. Not so much by what we do well naturally, but by what He must do in us supernaturally.

My friend, what are you focusing on now? Your cracks? Your weaknesses? Your past? Your struggles? We’ll it’s time for you to shift that focus away from failure and onto victory in Christ Jesus! Don’t let your weakness pull you away from Jesus; rather, let it draw you closer to Him who saves. Just give the Savior a chance to do what He does best and I assure you, in no time His light will shine through your cracks.

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