

Vessels for Victory

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This booklet was created from a message preached by Pastor Stevens.

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

Details of life dominate the thinking of so many people. God has commanded that we be content in whatsoever state we find ourselves, speaking of how we respond to the situations we face.

Having to drive on a cold, snowy morning is simply a detail. You put the car in low gear, move slowly, try to avoid sudden braking, and you get where you are going. That was a simple thought process, wasn't it?

We can activate the same simple thought process in every situation that we encounter. Being overwhelmed with the heat on a summer day is a detail. Business success is a matter of bringing together the details. Fighting through a disease is a detail. Marriage involves many details, but most of them are very simple, and the answers from the Word of God are very clear and very precise.

The details are the not problem; our re-

sponses to the details are the issue. How do we face down failure? How do we get back up and confess God after we fall? These are questions that we all want answered.

You will find those answers in this booklet. Herein, you will find great truths on how to combat the human tendency to let details drive us. When we discover how to live for truth and by truth in the power of the Holy Spirit, we will become vessels for victory. The Lord will be exalted in our lives. His name will be lifted up and men will draw near to Him as He draws people to Himself.

Chapter One

THE PROBLEM OF PROFANITY

“As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust in him.

“For who is God save the LORD? or who is a rock save our God?

“It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.

“He maketh my feet like hinds’ feet, and setteth me upon my high places.

“He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

“Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great” (Psalm 18:30-35).

“And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD” (Leviticus 18:21).

I really want you to understand the deep meaning of the word “profane.” In these pages, I intend to give a careful definition about it. We know that it means to defile, pollute, or bring dishonor to the things of God. At any moment, we could be profaning God’s Word or God’s presence through our mental attitudes. We could bring profanity against God’s provision. For this reason, we need to be very attentive to God’s presence.

“Profane” also speaks of forms of familiarity, or taking for granted something that is sacred. Those who are profane are filled with an attitude of dishonesty. Fervency, earnestness, consistency, and steadfastness are out of the picture when we are profane, and opposition toward God’s plan takes root. When we know it, we must use God’s provision intensely.

For instance, when we clearly reflect on a promise in the Word of God, we must then confess faith in the Promiser. It is profane when we do not relate the details we face to the precise Word of God.

Profanity is human love that falls short of divine love.

Profanity is human good that falls short of divine good.

Profanity is human forgiveness that falls short of forgetting the action that caused some offense.

Tempers and Tantrums

Anger often brings out what we call profanity. Angry people say things that shouldn't be said. It is an emotional response to a detail of life—usually a detail that cannot be changed. When we know the truth about who we are in Christ, we realize that a detail is something God permitted. We also know that because we belong to Him, it will work together for good, for all things are for our sake.

One great problem comes when anger is allowed to profane a marriage. There are two precious vessels of God, two people who have been brought together to share in the work of Christ. But details get the best of them. A marriage is a great place for two people to learn how to be vessels for victory. It is an opportunity to be conformed to Christ's image until He works in His patience and grace into both parties. Love and prayer make all the difference.

God is in all of our details. Suppose you want to be married. Don't be profane and miss out on God's absolute best for you. If someone

seemingly rejects you, and it is someone you really like, then perhaps that relationship is not for you at this point. By the last count, there were more than 5 billion people on the planet. The right one is out there for you. God knows.

Be a vessel for victory, and leave the rest up to Him.

Chapter Two

SPIRIT-FILLED TRAINING

“And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean.

“And in controversy they shall stand in judgment; and they shall judge it according to my judgments: and they shall keep my laws and my statutes in all mine assemblies; and they shall hallow my sabbaths.

“And they shall come at no dead person to defile themselves: but for father, or for mother, or for son, or for daughter, for brother, or for sister that hath had no husband, they may defile themselves.

“And after he is cleansed, they shall reckon unto him seven days.

“And in the day that he goeth into the sanctuary, unto the inner court, to minister in the sanctuary, he shall offer his sin offering, saith the

Lord GOD" (Ezekiel 44:23-27).

A Spirit-filled Christian learns by grace to be kept by the power of God and to glorify Jesus in the details of life. You may get a telephone call tonight, and that conversation might include some bad news. That is when Satan gets busy and communicates suggestions and projections. Perhaps your business is going through a valley. Remember, that's just a detail. You can remain a vessel for victory until you reach the mountain-top again.

Circumstances can overwhelm me, frustrating my emotions and draining my capacity to allow God into the middle of the situation. In times like these, I need to let God teach me. He can show me the sacredness of such moments. That is when I need to avoid becoming profane. Instead, I learn to confess truth. I might say, "God, I know you are the God of love and forgiveness. I know you are Lord of reconciliation and patience. I know you are the God of power, mercy, and kindness." This type of confession will help me honor the characteristics of God in the details, and I will come to understand something precious and beautiful about Him.

Hallowed Things

“Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, that they separate themselves from the holy things of the children of Israel, and that they profane not my holy name in those things which they hallow unto me: I am the LORD” (Leviticus 22:2).

What we commit unto God is holy. Church meetings are holy times, and the Bible tells us that they should not be missed (Hebrews 10:25). Of course, we need vacations and family times, but for the most part we should be at church whenever there is a meeting going on. When the Body of Christ draws together, those times are sacred. Don't profane them with worldly thinking.

Teachers in the college setting or in the day school are filling holy positions. God has set these apart for Himself. When a teacher says something lovingly, that is holy. When he responds to a student's challenges in the will of God, that is holy. These are sanctified details of life. A student who gets amazing grades and is exalted in some way, that exaltation is from God. It is hallowed.

In preparing music for the church services, the musicians are setting aside something as sa-

cred. They could choose to profane their gifts and do any number of things with them. But they have chosen to glorify God. Instructions that come from the music leadership are holy as well. The rehearsal times are necessary and they are sacred. They are holy, holy, holy!

We listen. We hear. We love. We follow orders in the will and purpose of God. We are vessels. God pours His life into us, and we reveal His victory to the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Chapter Three

STAND FOR YOUR CONVICTIONS

“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

“Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them, Whatsoever he be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers in Israel, that will offer his oblation for all his vows, and for all his freewill offerings, which they will offer unto the LORD for a burnt offering;

“Ye shall offer at your own will a male without blemish, of the beeves, of the sheep, or of the goats.

“But whatsoever hath a blemish, that shall ye not offer: for it shall not be acceptable for you.

“And whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD to accomplish his vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein.

“Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a

wen, or scurvy, or scabbed, ye shall not offer these unto the LORD, nor make an offering by fire of them upon the altar unto the LORD.

“Either a bullock or a lamb that hath any thing superfluous or lacking in his parts, that mayest thou offer for a freewill offering; but for a vow it shall not be accepted.

“Ye shall not offer unto the LORD that which is bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut; neither shall ye make any offering thereof in your land.

“Neither from a stranger’s hand shall ye offer the bread of your God of any of these; because their corruption is in them, and blemishes be in them: they shall not be accepted for you” (Leviticus 22:17-25).

“Therefore shall ye keep my commandments, and do them: I am the LORD.

“Neither shall ye profane my holy name; but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel: I am the LORD which hallow you” (Leviticus 22:31-32).

We are human, and as humans we can become so familiar with things. Taking things for granted is such a dangerous practice. I cannot afford to take my wife for granted. I cannot afford to take my children for granted. Children should not take parents for granted. That should

never, ever happen to a believer.

Many thoughts come to us after we go to a funeral. Often, we think, "I wish I had spent more time with that person. I could have expressed my love in a better way."

It is so easy for us to walk through life and take every day for granted. We miss opportunities to reveal God and exalt Him among the heathen.

God desires that we would be vessels of victory and exalt His name among the heathen. When we are with unsaved loved ones and co-workers, we want to stand up for God. We hallow the One who lives within us. In the midst of these people, we stick with the convictions God gives us.

Convictions are great things. The middle part of that word forms the old word "victuals," which refers to provisions for living. People who have convictions and carry them carefully are people who have substance to think right, to act right, and to speak right.

A person of conviction isn't drawn to barrooms. He isn't one who uses funny language at the workplace just to fit in with the guys. A person of conviction hallows God's name. He is a vessel for victory. He knows the price God paid

to win the greatest battle ever fought—the battle for the souls of men that was won at Calvary by the death of the Savior.

The Perfect Law of Liberty

“Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

“For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

“Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

“For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

“For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

“But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed” (James 1:19-25).

We have been saved by grace through faith.

Our salvation is a gift, and we have much freedom because of what we have received. We are not under a program of performance. Still, we have been called to live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

It is important for me, therefore, to live without familiarity. Foolish and loose talking should not be a part of my life. I become a doer of the Word as I fellowship in and around the truth in the power of the Holy Spirit. Something happens in my heart, and I become energized by the Lord of all Creation.

Don't settle into a routine. Good, godly habits are awesome for our lives. We should have a commitment to practice prayer. Bible study and Bible reading should be a regular part of our schedule. These habits grow as the fruit of something happening in our hearts. Don't settle on your lees. Learn to understand the necessity of being always prepared for war, not looking for the way of ease.

“Cursed be he that doeth the work of the LORD deceitfully, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood.

“Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he

gone into captivity: therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent is not changed.

“Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will send unto him wanderers, that shall cause him to wander, and shall empty his vessels, and break their bottles” (Jeremiah 48:10-12).

Familiar spirits are wandering spirits. People who are seduced by them will travel here and there and everywhere, looking for things that appeal to their emotions and make them feel good. These people stray from things that are sacred. They don't recognize the precious provisions God has given them.

As vessels for victory, God develops in us a capacity to reveal supreme grace and supreme love. Our exchanges are filled with supreme edification and supreme kindness. We are confident, joyful people who rest at throne of grace. We are people who pray and live and love and win.

CONCLUSION

God holds all things together by the word of His power. We are people of such potential because of what God is doing in us. For many, this great potential remains unrealized. It is stagnant and dormant within them because of how they see themselves.

Look to the Word of God. See there in the pages what is said about you. God lives in you. Let His Word be the quick and powerful force it is meant to be in your life. Learn to make right choices and then operate in the grace of Jesus Christ's presence and the resurrection power of His Holy Spirit. The provision of God is yours. Let God guide you.

It would be so wrong for me to live in the sentimentality that comes with cliques and exclusive "party" spirits that would separate me from the people I need to live with and learn to love. I need to be very prayerful and humble. I want God to be my Lord. I want to believe that

God can lead me forward and use me to make a difference.

I have been made a vessel unto honor, according to 2 Timothy 2:21. I am made for victory and I will have it if I allow Christ to make me ready for anything. I will have total victory and, as a result, God will empty out of me grace, forgiveness, love, and joy. I will reveal a growing relationship with a living Savior, who now sits as my ascended Lord.