

VESSELS OF MERCY

Communion, Michael Fox, SCCF 20-03-2011

Introduction

I believe the Lord would minister to us this morning as we take the communion together. This is our participation in Christ.

My recent meditations have been concerning the Father's will for us. The Father is willing towards us. From before time when the Godhead discussed His will, They counselled together to bring forth His will which was for *many sons*; the Father's will is for *you* to be a son.

The mystery of His will

Your sonship was discussed and completely known, before time began. Throughout history, (history being thousands of years and history being yesterday), the mystery of His will is being worked out. He is working that will through Christ. Today, the Father is willing towards you. He is working for you, working towards you, so that you may receive the full inheritance of your sonship, the full inheritance of your name that was written beforehand.

Are we vessels of mercy or of wrath?

However, we can only receive this inheritance of our sonship by God's mercy. We can only become *vessels of mercy* by His mercy, as we're obedient to that name by which He has called us.

Let us consider what it is to be a vessel of mercy. We are all vessels. What are we vessels of? Are we vessels that are full of wrath, or are we vessels of mercy? It is a continual matter in that we are either *storing up* wrath, or we are *storing up*, or touching the mercy of God. As we touch the mercy of God, we are participating with Christ, our mercy seat. Today, He is your mercy seat, and He is my mercy seat.

Your obedience is that you can fulfill the will of God, according to your name as it is in heaven. The will of God must be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Today, if you are walking out or fulfilling that name that He has in heaven for you, the will of God is being done.

Christ is our mercy seat

For all of us there is at times an accusation that comes against us. It says, 'No, you cannot be a son. Look what you have done! Look where you have fallen!' That is a voice that we don't have to

listen to. Christ is our mercy seat. Christ isn't accusing us or condemning us. John 3:20 says, 'If our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart'. God is bigger than the condemnation that is in your heart. Sometimes we do get condemned, but let us realise quickly that we can run for refuge behind the veil where Christ is our mercy seat.

Cain would not do well

Let us consider Cain who is a clear example of one who would not do well. God said to him, 'If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted?' So he was a vessel of wrath because of this.

Genesis 4:4-5 says, 'Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell.'

It's talking about *offering* here. Our obedience to our name is all about offering. That is how the Lord knows us. So verses 6 and 7 say, 'Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it."'

Revelation 12:10 tells us that Satan is the accuser of the brethren. So Cain presented himself, he made an offering. And the Lord said, 'No, that's not you'. I believe that Cain was making offering - He knew the mercy of Christ; he was touching that. But when God said, 'No, that is not you', he did not avail himself of the mercy of God, but rather refused and said, 'I am going to hold onto what I've done; it has to be right', and he ended up murdering his brother Abel.

Aligning ourselves with God's naming of us

Cain was being filled up with wrath, and this was poured out in the end; he could not contain it. When we don't align ourselves with the testimony of God concerning our name, and with the word that comes to us regarding our offering, then we will store up wrath in ourselves. Our vessel will be filling up with wrath and all we'll be able to do in the end will be to pour it out. However, if we touch the mercy of God and make offering, then find that the offering is not in

accord with who we are, we must at that point, go back and find the mercy of the Lord. Go and offer again and your countenance will lift! That is what He said to Cain. So let *your* countenance be lifted - present yourself a living sacrifice by the mercy of God. Christ is your mercy seat.

I believe the Lord desires to minister to us today in this regard. The condemnation that you have in your heart is not from the Lord, He is not rejecting you. The Father's will is *towards* you. He wants many sons to be brought to glory. We need to recognise when a voice of accusation comes against us, and refuse to listen to it. We may try to fight back, but will probably only sink further into condemnation. Christ walked this way - showing us that we don't have to answer to the accusation that arises against us.

Christ condemns no-one

John 8:3 - 11 tells of when men brought to Jesus, a woman who had been caught in adultery. This was obviously not her 'name'; it wasn't what she was meant to be doing. She'd been caught in sin, and they were accusing her, wanting to kill her. Jesus said nothing at first. He just stooped down and started drawing in the dirt. But then He said, 'He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.' And they all realized that Christ wasn't condemning anyone. And that's who Christ is to you today - He is your mercy seat.

Genesis 4:7 says, 'If you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you.' Cain heard this voice of accusation - waves of accusation were coming over him. God hadn't accepted his offering, and the enemy, Satan, saw that and said, 'Ha! I am going to accuse him.' God didn't accuse him, but Satan did. Sin was crouching at the door - ready to overtake him. At any time when we fall, that accusing voice is ready to come against us, but we must be ready, at that point, to refuse to listen to that voice - it is a lie. Rather, God's testimony is: 'If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted?'

And so we can be vessels of mercy! Instead of storing up wrath, we are able store up mercy - so that we can pour it out.

Continually touching the mercy of God

As we live this way, believing that the Father is holding us in His hand, making us into vessels for honour, vessels of mercy, we are able to show the mercy of God to others. A vessel of mercy is continually touching the mercy of God.

A light that reveals God's mercy

So we are raised with Him to the mercy seat, here and now. As soon as we touch that mercy, we can immediately go out and be a part of the light that shines, so that every man can find this mercy seat. Christ is the mercy seat for every man - for all who are under condemnation, and who are not knowing their true name. As we touch mercy, we are a vessel of it, and the light of that mercy shines forth. At that point we identify with Christ's blood, for it is through His blood that mercy is brought forth and declared to every man. We can be confident that as we are touching the mercy of God, though we are not perfect, Christ has perfected those who are being sanctified.¹ We are on a journey - we are being sanctified to our sonship by the mercy of God, and we can be a light!

2 Timothy 3:1 - 7 says, 'But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, ... [verse 5] holding to a form of godliness although they have denied its power.' Don't deny the power of God today. 'Avoid such men as these ... for they are always learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth'.

A vessel of wrath would be one who is always learning but never coming to a knowledge of the truth. The word comes to us constantly calling our name saying, 'This is your name, it's in heaven. This is the will of God for you and you can fulfill it today.' Let's not be those who are always learning but never coming to a knowledge of the truth. God's testimony, God's word to you and to me is the truth and that's all we have to impute to; that's all we have to believe, it's all we have to listen to.

Wherever you are, whatever state you are in - you need His mercy. We all need His mercy - let's cast ourselves upon His mercy today!

¹ Heb 10:14