

# THE VESSEL

By B. V. Cornwall

The Master was searching for a vessel to use:  
Before Him were many—which one would He choose?  
“Take me,” cried the gold one. “I’m shiny and bright;  
I’m of great value and I do things just right.  
My beauty and luster will outshine the rest,  
And for someone like You, Master, gold would be best.”

The Master passed on with no word at all,  
And looked at a silver urn, grand and tall.  
“I’ll serve You, dear Master, I’ll pour out Your wine;  
I’ll be on Your table whenever You dine.  
My lines are so graceful, my carving so true,  
And silver will always complement You.”

Unheeding, the Master passed on to the brass,  
Wide-mouthed and shallow and polished like glass.  
“Here, here!” cried the vessel. “I know I will do;  
Place me on your table for all men to view.”  
“Look at me,” called the goblet of crystal so clear.  
“My transparency shows my contents so dear.  
Though fragile am I, I will serve you with pride,  
And I’m sure I’ll be happy in Your house to abide.”  
Then the Master came next to a vessel of wood;  
Polished and carved, it solidly stood.  
“You may use me, dearest Master,” the wooden bowl said.  
“But I’d rather You used me for fruit, not for bread.”

Then the Master looked down and saw a vessel of clay.  
Empty and broken it helplessly lay.  
No hope had the vessel that the Master might choose  
To cleanse, and make whole, to fill and to use.  
“Ah! Now this is the vessel I’ve been hoping to find.  
I’ll mend it and use it and make it all Mine.  
I need not the vessel with pride of itself,  
Nor one that is narrow to sit on the shelf,  
Nor one that is big-mouthed and shallow and loud,  
Nor one that displays his contents so proud,  
Nor the one who thinks he can do things just right,  
But this plain earthen vessel I’ll fill with My might.”

Then gently He lifted the vessel of clay,  
Mended and cleansed it and filled it that day.  
He spoke to it kindly. “There’s work you must do.  
Just pour out to others as I pour into you.”

The greatest men are nearly always the most humble. England’s Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) is remembered for observing a falling apple and discovering the law of gravity. A mathematician and physicist, he made many other discoveries, such as how the rainbow gets its colors. Newton became a Member of Parliament and Master of the Royal Mint. But when a friend complimented him on shedding so much light on the workings of the universe, Sir Isaac replied quietly, “I am only like a child picking up pebbles on the shore of the great ocean of truth.”

The great composer Franz Josef Haydn (1732-1809) at the age of 76 attended a gala performance of his oratorio “The Creation.” At the end of one of the most rousing passages the audience broke into cheers and applause. At first Haydn thought they were showing their appreciation of the music, but suddenly he realized they were applauding him. At once he rose to his feet and calmed them with his hand. “No—not from me, but from There comes all,” he said, pointing heavenward.

The Lord doesn’t judge you by accomplishments, by talents, by how much you know, or how good you are. He judges by your heart—and the things that get the highest marks are love and humility. They make you a blessing in all that you do, even little tiny things.

Most of the greatest saints the world has ever known were little people who just did what they thought should be done—whether others ever heard about it or not! But they were always there when they were needed, always willing to see the need and respond. If we have real love for the Lord and others, we’ll do whatever needs to be done! It depends on our humility, which is synonymous with love, which is the only thing that can make us willing to go anywhere, anytime, to do anything for anybody, and be nobody, to please Him and help everybody!

—David Brandt Berg.