

Charlyne Cares

February 8, 2010

Each Monday we share a guest devotional written by a fellow stander. The views expressed below are those of the writer and may not reflect the views of Rejoice Marriage Ministries, Inc. or the Steinkamps.

Jars of Clay

"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

Flowers were always my favorite Valentine gift. Sentimental cards were nice and chocolate candies were delicious, but beautiful flowers were always my favorite. Sometimes these flowers came in decorative vases. Sometimes in plain clay pots. But it wasn't the vessel that made the flowers beautiful, it was the flowers themselves.

So it is in our lives. Jesus has come to live in our simple earthen vessels and has filled our life with His beauty. It isn't the vessel that is important; it's what is in the vessel. Where weeds once flourished, flowers grow. Where there were once briars and thornbushes, the myrtle grows. Where there was once the ugliness of anger and unforgiveness, love and grace abound.

"You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. Instead of the thornbush will grow the pine tree, and instead of briars the myrtle will grow. This will be for the LORD's renown, for an everlasting sign, which will not be destroyed." Isaiah 55:12-13

Many of us have been made to feel like broken pottery - ugly, useless, not worth fixing. We may have felt discarded like so much junk - forgotten about and languishing in the dust and ashes. Jesus saw us there and hurt for us. Our cry came before Him, into His ears. He plucked us from the garbage heap, washed us with His Word, filled us with His truth, and set our feet on solid ground. He took the broken pieces of our lives and made us whole again with His love.

"I will be glad and rejoice in your love, for you saw my affliction and knew the anguish of my soul. You have not handed me over to the enemy but have set my feet in a spacious place." Psalm 31:7-8

You and I have already received the greatest gift ever - salvation, redemption, forgiveness, grace and mercy. We have also been privileged to receive the promise that the Lord can make all things new; that He can touch and change hardened hearts; that He can turn what was meant for evil around to good; that He can restore families and rebuild marriages and He can do it in the blink of an eye. He took a simple earthen vessel, a jar of clay, and planted a seed to stand in the gap and pray for those who are far from the Lord and far from us. This tiny seed was all we needed to grow a mountain-moving faith.

*"The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" He replied, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you." **Luke 17:5-6***

In this season of hearts and flowers, sentimental cards and loving words, we can rejoice that the Lord has chosen us to be the simple jar of clay that holds the treasure of His promise. The love of Jesus lives inside us and makes us a beautiful bouquet. Our prayers for the ones we love are a fragrant aroma rising to heaven. It doesn't matter if our earthen vessels are wrinkled or drooping or a little on the plump side. We are only the vessel that holds the love, the garland of Jesus wrapped around our hearts. It is this love that will make us beautiful to the ones we pray for. Where they once saw broken pottery, they will see a life that has been mended and made whole by Jesus. Where they once saw weeds and thistles, they will see the flowers of forgiveness and unconditional love. Where they once saw a wilted marriage, they will see a family restored and thriving, watered and cared for by the Master Gardener.

*"Oh Lord, You are the potter. We are the clay. Mold us and shape us. Take these jars of clay and fill them with the bouquet of Your love. May all who see us know that it is You we treasure in these simple earthen vessels. And may those we pray for find this treasure, too. In Jesus' name, we pray. **Amen.**"*

God bless,

Kim, a stander in Nebraska

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