

The Cracked Pot

A water bearer in India had two large pots, each hung on opposite ends of a pole he carried across his neck. One pot had a crack in it; the other was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water at the end of the long walk from the stream to the master's house. The cracked pot arrived only half full.

For two years the bearer delivered one and a half pots full of water to his master's house daily. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments. The cracked pot was ashamed of its imperfection, and miserable that it was only able to accomplish half of what it had been made to do. After two years of what it perceived to be a bitter failure, it spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream.

"I am ashamed of myself, and I want to apologize to you." "Why?" asked the bearer. "What are you ashamed of?" "I have been able, for these past two years, to deliver only half my load because this crack in my side allows water to leak out all the way back to your master's house. Because of my flaws, you have to do all this work, and you don't get full value from your efforts," the pot said.

The water bearer said noting to the old cracked pot, except, seeming to change the subject, replied, "As we return to the master's house, I want you to notice the beautiful flowers along the path." As they went up the hill, the cracked pot took notice of the sun warming the beautiful wild flowers on the path side, and this cheered it some. But, at the end of the trail, it still felt bad because, as always, it had leaked out half its load. It again apologized for its failure. The bearer replied, "Did you notice that there were flowers only on your side of the path, but not on the other side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, and took advantage of it. I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back from the stream, you've watered them. For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate my master's table. Without you being just the way you are, he would not have this beauty to grace his house."

Each of us has our own unique flaws. We're all "cracked pots." But, if we will allow it, the Lord will use our flaws to grace his Father's table. In God's great economy, nothing goes to waste. So, as we seek ways to serve, don't be afraid of your flaws. Acknowledge them, improve those things that can be helped, and allow God to take advantage of each talent and flaw to bring beauty to his pathway. Go out boldly, knowing that in our weakness we find his strength.

"... My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Corinthians 12:9-10).

By Allen Webster