

Manifest the Treasure

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

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INTRODUCTION

“We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

“We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

“Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed” (2 Corinthians 4:7-9).

Think of this carefully. How is God going to get His treasure out of us? We are so busy with relationships, with duties, with making a living. How will God release this treasure? A Christian can be sure of this: God will do everything short of violating our free volition to get the treasure out of us.

You don’t have to be a leader to have this treasure come out. “We have a treasure...”—Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, and the Father—in our earthen vessel, “...that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.”

But, what would you do if you were God, and you couldn't get out the treasure that is inside a vessel you created?

Do you prefer the pleasures of this world to the treasure in your earthen vessel? Do you take your treasure up into the high mountains to live happily ever after? Do you have a soul-power relationship with someone? What comes out of you in these cases? You. Just you.

In this booklet, we will see that God needs to break people in order release the treasure within them. If the treasure is not released, however, only more problems can result. As we will explain, when the treasure is held back, blind spots and novice tendencies develop to keep the Christian from revealing Christ. But thank God, He has a plan to get the treasure out. And when it is released through our weak vessels, everyone will benefit.

Chapter One

**BROKEN TO REVEAL
GOD'S LIGHT**

If you turn a glass of milk upside down, what comes out? Milk, of course. If you turn a glass of water upside down, water comes out. If you turn your flesh upside, what comes out? Flesh. If a Spirit-filled Christian is turned upside down, what comes out? The treasure.

God wants the treasure to come out, and He is going to find a way to do it. He will do it by breaking the earthen vessel, just as He commanded Gideon's three-hundred-man army to break the pitchers to defeat the enemy (Judges 7:16-21). The torches inside the pitchers couldn't shine in the night until the vessels were smashed.

This is how God does it. Either His Word will break you, a relationship will break you, or God will let the devil break you (Psalm 31:12). Otherwise, you will be broken by being miser-

able all by yourself. Which would you prefer? Settle it with God.

Types of Breaking

“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise” (Psalm 51:17).

Shabar is the Hebrew word for ‘broken’ in this passage. David was broken in pieces by God. After he had sinned with Bathsheba, Nathan the Prophet came and told him of a rich man with all kinds of lambs, yet he took from a poor man the one lamb he had. David became angry and said that man should die. “Thou are the man,” Nathan said to David. “Uriah had one precious wife, and you took her from him. You are the man who should die” (2 Samuel 12). And die David almost did, according to Psalm 118:17. He was under *shabar*—he was being broken to pieces by God because of his sin.

Another type of breaking is *meroach* in the Hebrew (Leviticus 21:20). This is when circumstances come to break a person.

Adversity and circumstances were threatening to break Israel, in Deuteronomy 1:21. *Chathath* (which is translated as ‘discouraged’) is when violence is allowed to break people. It is what

happens when people kill and murder. It is when a drunken driver injures someone. These things break people.

Then there is *dakah* (Psalm 38:8; Psalm 51:8). This is the breaking that happens when one collapses under pressure because of not being oriented to grace. "Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice" (Psalm 51:8). This is what God brought upon David, who prayed this prayer.

If you are a Christian, I promise you that you will be broken. It doesn't matter whether you are a rebellious sixteen year old, a passive thirty year old, or a striving fifty year old. You will be broken. But God will find a way for you to fulfill your purpose by getting the treasure out of you.

Chapter Two

PERPLEXITIES, PROBLEMS,
AND GOD'S PLAN

People reveal some strange defense mechanisms when they go through trouble, perplexities, and persecutions. When people are knocked down, it is very unusual to see what they allow themselves to go through. They don't understand that we are in a body of death, first, because of sin. Secondly, we are in a body of death so that we can find our purpose through the treasure that is in us.

I know of a girl who grew up in a very affluent family. But the father got very angry with his wife and tried to choke her. As the daughter grew up, the father would often hit her. She lived under terrible fear that her father would do something to her or her mother. Slowly, anger accumulated in her soul and she grew very angry.

The woman left home. She became very dis-

ciplined, but very angry nonetheless. She accepted Christ and the treasure inside became a tremendous blessing to her. But her anger was also still there, and she grew to become abusive to her children. When she was abusive to her children, she was bringing out the anger that built up toward her father. Genesis 5:2-3 says we are made in the image of Adam, and this woman was reflecting the image of the father who made her so angry. Though she had managed to cover it up and seemingly forget it, she took out her anger on her children just as her father did to her and her mother.

There are people who grew up in circumstances that were so perverted or violent that most of us could not fathom what they went through. The scars that remain often cause them to reflect and transfer their affliction to others.

This is often the case with people who have been sexually or physically abused, and they themselves become abusers. They may be well aware of the problem and desire a breakthrough. They may even let down their guard long enough to receive the Gospel and get saved. Very often, the road to recovery is rough. But thank God for His longsuffering, lovingkindness, and compassion that will turn the most

obstinate sinner who is willing to be turned.

Healing That Comes Within

I know of a case where a drug addicted mother allowed her husband to sexually abuse their daughter. "It's okay. Go ahead with him," the mother would say to her daughter.

This girl grew up and threatened to commit suicide on several occasions. She hated her mother and anyone who represented authority. A few years ago, this girl who suffered so much became a born-again Christian. She endured quite a process but has come through it wonderfully. Her pastor is so proud of her now. She is a wonderful mother, and she does not waste her life dealing with the anger that is within her.

Every time she opens her mouth, the precious treasure comes out. Why? Because the Lord draws near to them who have a broken heart. He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds (Psalm 147:3).

"...the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound" (Isaiah 30:26).

This means that God heals all the areas in the nervous system affected by the breaking process. A person can hurt so much that he ex-

periences an emotional stroke. Just as a person is paralyzed from a physical stroke, a person can literally be paralyzed by an emotional stroke. But God heals the stroke of our wounds. He heals the brokenhearted.*

I have been through some very unusual times as a pastor. The only reason I am allowed to be alive is first because of the prayers of my people. I don't care if all that is said is "Lord, bless my pastor today"—that prayer is heard. I am also alive because God still has to get the treasure out of me.

God Is in Charge of the Results

Though He doesn't cause it, sometimes God *permits* us to sin because of our free volition. If He ends up getting out the treasure from us, our sin doesn't glorify God, but the results of getting right with Him do.

So many wonderful people around the world fight the trouble that comes to them. They resist the perplexities, and they can't understand the reason for persecution. When they are cast down by people, they are left with wounded spirits.

These dear people fail to understand that they are in God's will, and that His will is to get

the treasure out, so His light will shine in the world (Matthew 5:14) and the power of His resurrection will be revealed on the earth (Matthew 5:13). The whole thing with God is getting out the treasure.

The greatest lesson to learn is this: Don't fight the plan of God to release the treasure that is in you. The issue is not your husband, your wife, your kids, your ministry, or any of your circumstances. It is not any of those things. God will use people and circumstances, but they are never the issue. The issue is not your marriage. It isn't that you don't love your children or your partner. You can't love someone else if you don't love yourself. That is a law of God—it is the royal law of love, in James 2:8.

The point is this: We are on earth to show people that even in the midst of thick darkness (1 Kings 8:12), there is a treasure hidden (Isaiah 45:3) within us that is going to come out. The treasure is love, joy, and compassion. The treasure is wisdom, kindness, and edification. The treasure is identification with people whatever they are going through.

**Freely Receive from God, by Pastor Carl H. Stevens, Grace Publications, 1998, discusses the stroke of a wound in depth.*

Chapter Three

OVERCOMING BLIND SPOTS AND NOVICE TRAITS

If you enter into competition with someone else, your flesh will be elevated and your treasure will remain locked within you and never be released. When the treasure is not allowed to get out, blind spots develop within us. John 12:40 says that whoever has blinded eyes hardens his heart. Deuteronomy 28:29 speaks of those who grope in darkness. Some were blind as they walked the streets (Lamentations 4:14). Second Corinthians 3:14 refers to those whose eyes are blinded because the veil hasn't been removed. Satan's plan is to blind people's eyes (2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 John 2:11).

Blind spots. All of us have had them. Consider what happens with photoreceptors, which are designed to receive light as in process photography. The diaphragm of the camera lens opens, allowing light to enter a specific space.

The varying intensities of reflected light are received onto film at the back of the camera. That light transfers a discernible image of the reflected object to the film, which is developed and becomes a photograph. But if the lens is partially covered by a foreign object, such as a speck of dirt, the image will be marred and only partially visible.

In our bodies, we have specialized cells that are photoreceptive neurons. These cells catch light and transmit it through the specialized optic nerves to the brain, and we see things. Spiritually speaking, we have photoreceptors that receive the light of the Word of God. If, however, we have a blind spot, the spiritual photoreceptors cannot carry all of the information to the human spirit. As a result, there is always a part of the divine picture that we can't see.

If all of the information presented in the entire picture of the Word of God is not allowed to be transferred to our human spirit by our faith response in the power of the Holy Spirit, then we never see the whole situation and we are left with blind spots (2 Peter 1:9).

A blind spot is something that you can carry with you all the days of your life, unless your

heart is revived according to the principle of Isaiah 57:15:

“For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”

God desires to enlighten the eyes of our understanding with the Word of God through the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:18).

Real Revival

Jesus Christ will quicken a broken and humble spirit. Blind spots can destroy individuals if they never become broken. They miss the whole purpose of what is going on in their lives to break them. Instead of becoming broken, they become miserable and they sublimate. Whatever their weakness is, they enter into it to withdraw from God's plan of action. As a result, the treasure is never seen by the husband, the wife, or the children. The treasure is not seen, but the earthen vessel is seen everywhere.

In 1 Timothy 3:6, Paul warned Timothy not to be a novice, lifted up with the pride of the devil. Pride can cause one to lift up his heart and

begin to criticize and condemn others. A novice trait is a beginner's trait. It is something that stays with you when you are older—at a point in your life when you really shouldn't have novice traits.

Blind spots and novice traits go together. The difference is that the novice trait has to do with pride, while the blind spot has to do with ignorance, willful or not.

Paul made a mistake in going to Jerusalem (Acts 21:13). He was warned not to go there by those who were hearing from the Holy Spirit, but Paul said, "Why do you weep? Why do you break my heart? I am willing to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus!" There was just one problem, the Holy Spirit was telling him not to go. He went anyway because he had a blind spot. But God used him, even though he was arrested and sent to Rome, because he rebounded. The faithfulness of God overcame the blind spot, and Paul went on with Him.

Peter had a blind spot when he rebuked Jesus, telling Him that He would not go to the Cross, in Matthew 16:22. Peter thought he was loving God; instead he was being used by Satan in his blind spot.

So many Christians are crippled by blind

spots. And if God isn't allowed to lovingly reveal our blind spots through the Spirit, prayer, the Word of God, our pastor, or godly friends, then a lifetime of novice traits may develop out of it. We end up defending our actions because we don't know that we have a blind spot.

Remember, "the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Psalm 51:17). When you are broken and on your knees, you will begin to realize that you have a treasure within. You are God's property, and He considers you a very wonderful creation. There is no creation like you anywhere. He loves you, and He desires more than anything to release the treasure in you.

CONCLUSION

When we really understand how much God loves us, we begin to be broken. The problems turn into solutions. Pain turns into joy. Wounds turn into liberation. And all of these things produce godly experience in us.

And to the experience, God starts adding faith. To that faith is added virtue; and then to virtue He adds knowledge. Godly knowledge—a real treasure—produces temperance, which is the ability to restrain through the Holy Spirit from, for example, reacting when we are unfairly accused.

Now the treasure is able to be released outwardly as a testimony to God's grace. To temperance He adds patience; and to patience, godliness. What does godliness produce? Brotherly kindness and charity.

These things make it so that we are never barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. (See 2 Peter 1:8.) This is why we can

glory in tribulation—“That I may know Him...”
(Philippians 3:10).