

The Price Behind the Anointing

✖ Imagine that you are sitting in church one Sunday and suddenly, the room is filled with the fragrance of Jesus. As you look down the aisle, you notice some incredibly beautiful vessels of the Lord entering the sanctuary.

These vessels are full of the Shekinah glory of the Lord, and their transparent glaze wonderfully reflects the image of Jesus. You immediately know that they have been in the high glory fires of the Lord and that they have paid an incredible price for the powerful anointing they carry.

In your spirit, you see Jesus walking up and down the aisles with wedding gowns on His arms. “Do *you* want My anointing?” He asks. “Do *you* want My presence and My miracles?

“I’m calling you to be My bride,” He continues. “I want you to be like the chosen vessels of honor you see here. Do you love Me enough to come with Me?”

The Scriptures tell us, “Many are called, but few chosen” (Matt. 20:16, NKJV). I believe it is the Lord’s desire for all of us to be chosen vessels. But many believers are not pursuing the high calling and destiny the Lord has purposed for them because they are not willing to pay the price.

As clay vessels, each of us must take a journey. The steps in this journey can be painful but are necessary for us to be transformed from broken bits of clay into anointed vessels that reflect the glory of the Lord.

Step 1. The Potter's House

When the Lord, the Master Potter, first finds you in the potter's field, you are a broken vessel in need of salvation. He gently picks you up and carries you back to the Potter's house. "Even though you are a shattered clay vessel and all your hopes and dreams have been destroyed," He tells you, "I have a vision and a destiny for your life."

He takes a rock and begins pounding your broken pieces of clay into fine dust. When you cry out in protest, He explains with great compassion, "I must take out all the rocks, thistles, thorns and foreign matter—all the debris you have picked up on the highway of life."

Next, He carefully places the clay dust in large bins and pours in the clear living water that proceeds from the throne of God. He drenches you until you've absorbed this living water into every pore of your being. You begin to feel His love as never before.

Step 2. The Potter's Wheel

The Lord then scoops up the moistened clay with His mighty hand and places you on the Potter's wheel. You hear His

promise:

"I have measured you; I know your portion; I know what destiny
I have
for you. For even though the enemy would want to kill you, I
tell you,
I have a mission and a calling for your life."

He begins to center you on the wheel. Slowly, His gentle
hands go down into the very depths of who you are and begin to
pull up
the walls of your new vessel.

Step 3. The Potter's Shelf

While you are on the Potter's wheel, being shaped by the
hands of the Master Potter, there is a wonderful mystery
taking place
within you. You are growing! It is a time of great favor and
blessing.

But as you go around and around, you begin to notice
other vessels sitting on the shelves around the Potter's
house. You
want to be like them.

"Lord, I love the closeness and intimacy of Your hands,"
you cry. "But I see all these other vessels sitting on the
shelf, and I
want to be a part of what they're doing!"

Suddenly the Lord comes with His cutting wire and pulls
it under you to cut you off the wheel. Then He places you on
the shelf
to dry.

What a change this is from being on the wheel, where you
were joyfully spinning in the hands of God! At first, you
don't mind it
too much, but after a month or two, you say, " know, Lord,

I've
been sitting on the shelf for a long time, and I'm *really* dry.
When is my ministry going to begin?"

You remind Him over and over again, "Lord, I've been
praying to You!" But you don't feel His presence. In
desperation you
cry, "God, where *are* You? I seem to be in a dry and lonely
wilderness!"

"You're right," He answers. "You've been promoted!"
Surprised, you respond, "But, Lord, I thought promotion was
getting to
start my ministry!"

In His love and wisdom He explains, "Promotion is the
wilderness! I've called you here so you can learn to recognize
My
voice. I'm testing your heart. I'm testing your love for Me.
Will you
continue to seek My face, or will you turn away?

When you were on the wheel, there was great intimacy
between you and the Lord. Everybody said such wonderful things
about
your future! But now that you're on the shelf, everyone seems
to have
forgotten you.

"Does God really have a future for my life?" you begin to
wonder. "Did He *really*
speak those things to me?" You've learned all the worship
songs by
heart, read all the books, been to all the seminars—yet
there's a dying
in your heart because you feel the Lord has forsaken you.

The worst part is that other people don't understand.
"Why don't you have more faith?" they ask. They don't

understand that
God has taken you into the wilderness.

You see, the greater the calling on your life, the
greater the misunderstandings and persecutions of other
people. This is
the price behind the anointing.

“My child,” the Lord says, “as you seek My face you will
find the hidden streams of living water beneath the desert
floor. For
it is not the reputation and approval of man you need; it is
to be so
deeply rooted in Me that no matter what storms of life come,
you will
not be moved.”

While God works out His perfect plan, your soul is
wrestling and dying in the wilderness. Finally, you stop
struggling and
quietly pray a prayer of resignation: “Lord, I’ll stay in the
wilderness my whole life if I have to. I have found You in
this desert,
and You are all I need.”

Step 4. The First Firing

Almost immediately, the Lord takes you out of the
wilderness and places you in a large room with other dried
vessels. At
first you are relieved, but as fire starts to come through the
floorboards and the top of the ceiling, you panic.

The Lord has moved you from the shelf to the kiln, from
the wilderness to His consuming fire. You can sense the heat.
You can
feel the relentless blaze. Perspiring yourself, you suddenly
look over

at the sweaty people next to you and realize you don't even like them!

The Lord never fires just one vessel at a time. He takes a church, a family or a group of friends and sets them on fire to expose everyone's hearts. In the intense heat, all the impurities of the soul come to the surface. Resentment, bitterness, anger and greed are revealed.

As the fire gets hotter, the pain increases. You cry out, "Lord! Everything in my life is dying!" Relationships with family and friends become strained, you experience persecution at work, and you can't get along with the people at church.

"God, if you love me, You'll turn off the heat!" you complain. But the fire continues to blaze even hotter. Finally, the doors open, and the Lord removes the clay vessels and places them back on the shelves.

Now you're actually *happy* to be in a hidden place. You decide to sit in the back of the church and not give prophecies or be a part of the prayer team anymore. Oh, yes, you still raise your hands and occasionally pray for people, but you've become lukewarm. When the Holy Spirit stirs your heart to give a word, you say, "No! If I give a word, others will judge me. No, Lord, find someone else."

For a while, God tolerates your pulling back. Then He begins to nudge your spirit. He says: "Are you willing to settle for this, or do you want more of Me? Do you want to become My anointed bride?"

Step 5. The Glazing Room

Something deep inside you stirs—that first call, that sense of destiny you felt as a new believer. "Lord," you cry, "I don't want to just sit in the back pew and die. You made me to be a lover of your people and to go out and find broken vessels and bring them to the Potter's house.

"I know it won't be easy," you continue. "I know I will pay an incredible price for the anointing I will carry for You. But, Lord, I want to become Your bride."

So the Lord takes you into a huge glazing room filled with tables. Angels are moving pitchers from one table to another and placing them with cups on other tables in preparation for the high firing. The soft sound of weeping is heard as vessels that have been together all their lives are being separated.

God is sovereignly moving His different vessels to prepare them for His Great Commission. Some will be staying at home while others will be going to different cities and nations. The angels continue to carefully pour, paint and brush glazes onto each

vessel

before carrying them into a large kiln.

Step 6. The Second Firing

With raging intensity, the second fire starts to burn through the kiln. Quickly you move from a time of separation into a time of death. There are impurities within each clay vessel that only the fire can purge.

The Lord and His angels shut down the dampers on the kiln, cutting off the flow of oxygen and filling the kiln with carbon dioxide. Black soot along with heavy smoke and flames consumes every vessel in the kiln as it becomes a black fire, your personal Gethsemane.

Abandonment, isolation and death itself are all around you. The fire is so intense that you can't hear or see the dear friends who have been your comforters and intercessors for so many years. Everyone you love seems to leave you as you die in this blazing inferno.

You say: "Lord, the fire! I'm dying in the midst of it! Everything I've built and loved my whole life is being consumed!"

Your heart breaks as your reputation and your walk with the Lord are condemned. Competition, position, jealousy and pride are driven out of your life by the purifying flames.

You feel as if you're going to explode under the ever-increasing pressure. The Lord tenderly explains, "My

child, in the
midst of the black fire, a mystery takes place. Brilliant
color is
pushed deep into the body of the clay vessel.

“My mysteries and My revelations are revealed in the
tremendous pressure of the high glory fire. This is a hidden
time when
the most beautiful colors are formed in the earthenware
vessel. The
richness and depth of color come from the darkest hours of
agony and
grief, just as diamonds, rubies, and emeralds come from hot
fires
inside the earth. In the midst of this second firing, My glory
is being
released into the depths of who you are.”

Step 7. The Glory Fire

At the moment when you just *know* you're going to
die, the Lord opens all the dampers. Carbon and black soot
escape,
oxygen pours in, and the fire starts to burn clean, white and
fresh.
The resurrection light of the Lord and His white transparent
glory fire
fill the kiln. Everything seems new because you are no longer
looking
through the haze of ego, pride or religiousness. You start to
see with
clarity in the Spirit.

Suddenly, in the midst of the white, transparent, glory
fire, you hear the voice of the Lord and see all the angels as
well as
the Lord Himself. Fresh anointings and impartations are poured
out, and

fresh hot commissions and renewed visions are etched into the hearts of men.

The Lord begins to place His chosen mantles on various clay vessels. He takes coals of fire and places them on stammering lips to ignite prophetic giftings that were declared over these vessels when they were on the Potter's wheel. Shaking and crying, healing and deliverance, deep repentance and intercession fill the kiln as hungry hearts cry out for more of God.

They've been through a time of appointing, a time of testing, a time of separation and a time of death, but in this high fire they'll go through a time of resurrection as they start to move in the anointing with authority.

When the Lord walks through the kiln and sees Himself reflected on each vessel as in a mirror, He turns off the kiln. With great joy He announces, "Now that you reflect My glory, I can send you out to all the world." The Master Potter has perfected His work of art.

The late Jill Austin ministered the prophetic word of the Lord at conferences and in churches around the world.