

The Parable of the Water Bearer

A water bearer had two large pots, one hung on each end of a pole which he carried across his neck. One of the pots had a crack in it, and while the other pot 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 always arrived only half full. For two years this went on daily, with the bearer delivering only one and a half pots full of water to his master's house. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, fulfilled in the design for which it was made. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it was unable to accomplish what it had been made to do.

After two years of enduring this bitter shame, the pot spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream. "I am ashamed of myself and I 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 causes water to leak out all the way back to your master's house. Because of my flaws, you have to do all of this work, and you don't get full value from your efforts," the pot said.

The water bearer felt sorry for the old cracked pot, and in his compassion he said, "As we return to the master's house, I want you to notice the beautiful flowers along the path." Indeed, as they went up the hill, the old cracked pot took notice of the sun warming the beautiful wild flowers on the side of the path, and was cheered somewhat. But at the end of the trail, it still felt the old shame because it had leaked out half its load, and so again the pot apologized to the bearer for its failure.

The bearer said to the pot, "Did you not notice that there were flowers only on your side of the path, and not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, and I took advantage of it. I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we've walked 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 flaws. We're all cracked pots. But if we will allow The Creator, he will use our flaws to grace His table. In The Creator's great economy, nothing goes to waste. Don't be afraid of your flaws. Acknowledge them, and you, too, can bring something beautiful to God.