

# What Is In My Cup?

Rick Railston

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It's no secret that the world has changed drastically in the last few weeks. I scratch my head and ask the question, why did this crisis occur at this time of year? Could it be, in part, that there is an attempt to disrupt our preparation for Passover and to distract us from spending the time and effort necessary to prepare ourselves for it? Someday we'll find out. But I wouldn't be surprised if this or a similar event occurs prior to the Fall holy day season for the same reason frankly.

So, with Passover preparation in mind, let's examine a common occurrence that we've all been through. Let's say you are holding a cup of coffee and someone comes along and bumps into you and the coffee just spills everywhere. We've all experienced that and it's exasperating. The question is, why did you spill your coffee? You would say, someone bumped into me. But that's not really the answer. I spilled my coffee because coffee was in my cup. If tea had been in my cup, I would have spilled the tea. The point is, when we were bumped whatever was in our cup was spilled out.

Think about this: When life comes along and bumps us or shakes us, which does happen and will indeed happen, whatever is inside us tends to come out. It's easy to fake it, but when something comes along to rattle us or to shake us or to cause some kind of emotional response then what is in our cup, will come out. With all that's going on in the world, we cannot be distracted from what's really important in our lives and right now, that's preparing for the Passover. As we do so, as we spend time in fasting, praying and studying, we have to ask ourselves the question—what is in my cup? What spills out from time to time?

That is the very subject that we are addressing today. The title of the sermon is:

## What Is In My Cup?

First point I would like to make:

### **1. What is in our cup is the character that we have built up to the time of the spill.**

Whatever we have built up in character, up to that time of a spill, is what will come out. Either good or bad. Let me give you a carnal reaction that I used to have years ago. In times past, if I ever bumped my head, I would have an immediate flash of anger. Then a stream of unmentionable words would come out. My dad had, to say the least, very colorful language. I grew up on a cattle ranch in New Mexico. When I went to Texas A&M, it was all male and all military and cursing became an art form. So, when I came into the church, I had a lot to repent of. Whenever I bumped my head there was just a

flash and out poured things that I'm not very pleased about and not very happy about. I've learned to control that since, but it was a mighty struggle for a while.

Before conversion we are building—we were building—a carnal character because of our carnal nature; our human nature. We grew up in Satan's world and most of us were building a carnal character. Let us see what can be in our cup; what can be there. We know the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, Jeremiah 17:9 tells us that. But turn to Romans 8:7 and look at a scripture that tells us what can be in a carnal cup. This is one of the first ones I learned when I came into God's church well over fifty years ago and is a very familiar scripture. We are told.

**Romans 8:7** *Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. (KJV)*

The Greek word for *carnal* is very interesting. It has a literal and a figurative meaning. The literal meaning is, "the flesh stripped away from the skin". So that you are looking at the core of the body—what's in the body, what's in the core. The symbolic meaning of the word is, (I'm quoting from Strong's) "human nature with its frailties and its passions".

So, our carnal nature, our carnal mind, is what is in the core of our very being. We're told it is enmity against God. We don't use that word very often, but the Greek word for *enmity* is "hostility, opposition or hatred". We are told what is at the core of a human being, naturally of itself, apart from God and it hates God. It's in opposition to God and in hostility towards God. We are told that our nature will not submit to God. The Greek word for *submit* means "to submit to yourself unto or to obey".

With that in mind, look at 1 John 2:16. We can see what can be in our cup, apart from God and His influence in our lives through the Holy Spirit. This is something we are all aware of, but it's good to refresh ourselves with this principle, this fact.

**1 John 2:16** *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. (KJV)*

Lust of flesh, lust of the eyes that we bring into our minds and the pride of life. Continuing on with that, look at Galatians 5:19. You know where this is going, we are going to talk about the works of the flesh.

**Galatians 5:19** *Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness ... (KJV)*

Notice verse 20 though.

*20) idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,*

21) *envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. (KJV)*

It is just not going to happen. Some of the above, we would say we would never do that. Sorcery for example, but if we are honest, others come to us more easily. Back to verse 20—idolatry—putting anything before God, we've all done that. Hatred, contentions—done that—jealousies, outburst of anger, selfish ambitions, dissensions, envy—all of that comes more easily. We have seen all of these frankly, in the past two or three years and we have seen those directed at us in many cases; us in Pacific. We don't want them in our cup—we just don't want them in our cup.

What should abound in our cup? In James 1:27, there is a general principle that is always good to review and remember. He is talking about what pure religion is and what being undefiled is.

**James 1:27** *Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, [to get the mind off the self and onto others] and to keep himself unspotted from the world. (KJV)*

Unpolluted from the world; not even a spot on our pant leg or on the hem of a dress. Unspotted from the world. Thankfully we have a forbearing Father, we have a patient Father Who gives us time to put His character and the character of His Son and the mind of His Son into our cup. We need to note that there is a time limit to this process. Matthew 25:1, is again a very familiar parable, and one which has direct application as a motivation for us to get ready for the Passover.

**Matthew 25:1** *Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. (KJV)*

It's important to note here, that all are virgins—that means they are all converted, having God's Holy Spirit. These are not good and bad. These are all virgins that have God's Holy Spirit.

2) *And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. (KJV)*

Here is the distinction between ten converted individuals, five foolish and five wise.

3) *They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:*

4) *But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.*

5) *While the bridegroom tarried [or was detained or was delayed], they all slumbered and slept ... (KJV)*

It is my opinion that the leadership of the greater church—those are all of God's people regardless of where they attend Sabbath services—has been putting the brethren to sleep for years. That's my opinion. Continuing in verse 6.

6) *And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh;* (KJV)

Bridegrooms don't come in the middle of the night so this is obviously a time that was least expected; it was a surprise.

6 continued) ... *go ye out to meet him.*

7) *Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.*

8) *And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.* (KJV)

In other words, they had not been working to replenish the oil—the Holy Spirit—in their supply.

9) *But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.*

10) *And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.* (KJV)

The five wise had behaved in such a way and had put in the time and effort to get close to God and close to His Son. They had been doing what God wanted them to do to please Him and had made themselves ready. At that point, the door was shut.

11) *Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.*

12) *But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.* (KJV)

I do not recognize you. Why? Because you are not like Me. You don't have My character, you don't have My attitude, My approach, you don't know Who I am and you do not put Me first. You don't follow my commandments in a way that is pleasing to Me. Therefore, I do not know you, I don't know who you are. We see that they wanted to get in but they could not, the door was closed—it was too late.

13) *Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.* (KJV)

Our Father gives us time to build His character in us, but as we see here, there is a limit. At the end of the day, there is a cut off period. But prior to that, He allots time for the building of His character in us. So, when something hits us and we spill what is in our cup, what comes out is what is in our heart and is either good or bad. Thankfully our Father gives us the time to put His character into our heart but there is a limit.

That leads to the second point.

**2. God causes or allows pressure to come on us to see what is in our cup, so He can see what's in our cup.**

He causes or allows pressure on us so He can see what is in our cup. To test our character so that He can see what we are made of, so to speak. Look at what is happening all around us now. With this virus, our Father is shaking the institutions that people trust in. All the trappings of modern society, most of them are shut down. Grocery stores are not, pharmacies are not, governmental agencies are not, but most all others are shut down. The things people trusted in—jobs, schooling—are shut down. God is shaking all of our institutions, whether it is society's institutions or frankly, institutions in the church, because most all of us are keeping the Sabbath at home. We have no place to meet and to congregate. No Sabbath services, no social clubs, no weekend gatherings, weekend outings, camps and all of that; right now, they are all gone. God shook that tree and removed those from us. We are right now sitting on our own on the Sabbath; it is us and our Father and His Son and He is watching. How do we keep the Sabbath? Will we focus on Him more now that we're not traveling back and forth? He watches to see. Acts 14:22 is a scripture that is coming to pass right before our very eyes.

**Acts 14:22** *strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said. (NIV)*

We must go through many hardships. The New King James says *tribulation*. The Greek word for *hardships* or *tribulation* means "pressure or trouble". Through much trouble, through much pressure, through many hardships, through many tribulations, we enter into the Kingdom of God.

Why does God allow this pressure to happen to us? Why does He either cause or it allow it? As with Abraham, God brought immense pressure on him. He told him he would have to slay his son and burn him on an altar as a sacrifice. He wanted to know what was in Abraham's cup. When Abraham fulfilled his end of what he was supposed to do and the knife was coming down, our Father said, now I know. He brings trials and tribulations to know what is in our heart, what is in our cup and to see what comes out of our heart when we are subject to pressure due to trials and tribulations. He wants to see how we handle adversity. To see where our faith ultimately lies. Does pressure cause us to blame God? Some people have done that. When things didn't go the way they expected or the way they wanted, they would blame God. Or does the pressure and the tribulation cause us to draw closer to God and to trust Him more. To look to Him more as our Savior and as the only one Who can rescue us out of hard times?

When under pressure our heart will come out. What is in our heart—our true heart—will come out. Matt 5:16 is very familiar and Christ is making a point to His disciples.

**Matthew 15:16** *So Jesus said, Are you also still without understanding?  
17) Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated?  
18) But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. (KJV)*

Those things which proceed out of the mouth, they come from what is inside us; what's in our core, what's in our cup and they can defile us.

19) *For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.* (KJV)

When under stress, if carnality is in our cup, that's exactly what is going to come out. What will come out of our minds and out of our mouths and our cups, will spew forth carnality, if that is what is in our hearts. The point is, ending this second point, that as Passover approaches, we need to reexamine what is in our cup, what is in our heart, which leads us to the next point—the third point.

### **3. We need to see what is really in our cup.**

What do I mean by that? To see ourselves as God sees us. Not as we want God to see us or how we want to see ourselves, but how God actually sees us. That should be our goal at this time of year; to ask God, to show me how You see me. Not as I see myself, but as You see me.

In Luke 15 and beginning in verse 11 Christ is speaking to the Pharisees and to the Scribes. He is giving us a very familiar parable that illustrates a point which is pertinent to our subject today.

**Luke 15:11** *And he said, A certain man had two sons:*

12) *And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.*

13) *And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.*

14) *And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.*

15) *And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.*

16) *And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.* (KJV)

Notice verse 17, here's an important principle.

17) *And when he came to himself, [keep that phrase in mind] he said, how many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!* (KJV)

The term, *came to himself*, was a common idiom of the day. The Jewish New Testament translates it, "to come to his senses". Today we would say, he woke up or he woke up because he got hit between the eyes with a two by four. He realized, when he woke up, what on earth had he been doing? He was astonished. What have I done? What have I done with this inheritance? Look at how I've been living.

Have we ever come to such a conclusion about our behavior; about ourselves? I have on several occasions. With shame I look back and say, what on earth did I think I was doing? There comes a time, usually through the pain of trials, when God's people do come to themselves, to see what really is in their cup. It comes spewing out and we are abhorred, seeing and acknowledging our sin. How could I have done that, how could I have said that, how could I have been in such a state that I allowed that to come out of me? Acknowledging that and knowing that is the beginning of repentance.

In coming to himself, in other words truly seeing what was in his cup, what did this young man do? He did three things. Verse 18:

18) *I will arise and [number one] go to my father, and will say unto him, Father [symbolic of Jehovah], [and number two, I will say to Him—my Father] I have sinned against heaven, and before thee ... (KJV)*

Then in verse 19:

19) [number three] *And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. (KJV)*

We see three things happened.

He came to reality and he saw himself for what he had really done. In other words, as His Father saw him.

He acknowledged his sin before his Father and then he went to His Father in humble repentance.

He was willing not to be his son, but just to be a servant of his Father.

We first come to ourselves at our baptism, in our study and preparation, our baptismal counseling and at the baptism itself. The fact is, when we were baptized, we were just beginning to see ourselves as God sees us, just scratching the surface. It was limited because God and His mercy, does not open our eyes to all of our sins all at once. We just couldn't take it; we couldn't handle it. So, He gives us knowledge of our sins, seeing ourselves, seeing what's in our cup, in bite sized chunks. This is over time so that we can see ourselves and chew on it, digest it, repent and change, grow in the character of God our Father. Therein lies a lifelong process of change and transformation from the old person to the new person.

Coming to ourselves is indeed a lifelong process. In the time I've been in the church, I've come to myself on at least four different times. I mean, serious, come to yourself, acknowledge the way you've been and deeply repent of it. I had blind spots that I just didn't see and sometimes I didn't see them for decades.

For example, in the first years in the church, I did not see my harshness, my toughness, my lack of Godly love in how I treated people. I look back on it now and how in the first twenty to thirty years in the church, I ran roughshod and I didn't see it—I was blind to it.

Remember the blind man that Christ healed and he was confronted by the religious leaders of the day and the blind man said, I don't know what else went on but I was blind and now I see. That was in John 9 and that's a type of what we go through when we come to ourselves. I was blind to what I said, to what I did, to what my character was like, how I treated other people; I was blind but now I see. When we come to ourselves, we begin to see everything or some things rather, that prevent us from becoming like our older Brother and emulating Him.

David, as we know, had some serious problems and he had a coming to himself like few others. We know this is David speaking in Psalm 51:1. This is after the incident with Bathsheba and he came to himself. When Nathan told him, you are the man, then it was all out there and it hit him like a thunderbolt.

**Psalm 51:1** *Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.*  
2) *Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.*  
3) *For I acknowledge my transgressions: [he hadn't done that before but now it was right there in front of his face] and my sin is ever before me. (KJV)*

It was a matter of self-awareness and at that point, he was looking back at all that he had done. He had spied Bathsheba on the top of her roof and he abhorred everything that he had done. It finally hit him and he finally came to his senses. He had a self-awareness that he didn't have before. That self-awareness is how we compare to the One who came to this earth and lived a perfect example. How do we compare with that perfect example? It's a self-awareness that we need and that God wants us to have. How have my attitudes and words and deeds affected others? What kind of mate am I? What kind of father or son am I? What kind of sister or brother or friend am I? Being able to see that with clear eyes is coming to ourselves. We realize when this happens, that we had been blind in certain areas of our character and of our conduct. I am just amazed at how blind I have been in times past. I ask God that if I have any blindness at this moment in time, show it to me because I want to change, I want to be like You and Your Son.

We're breaking into this letter in Ephesians 4:17, but at this moment in the letter, Paul is addressing the Gentiles within the church of God. These are converted Gentiles with God's Holy Spirit.

**Ephesians 4:17** *This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye [he's talking to the converted Gentiles] henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, [or as you walked before you came into God's church or as you see other Gentiles walk, he says don't do that] in the vanity of their mind,*  
18) *Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: (KJV)*



What Paul is implying is, you can have God's Holy Spirit, you can be a baptized member of God's church but at the same time, you can be blind to certain aspects of your character. Don't walk the way the Gentiles walk. Obviously, the Gentiles in the church that he was addressing didn't see that at this moment in time. This shows us that humans who have God's Spirit, can behave as Gentiles because of a certain blindness. We can do that, not in all areas of our conduct, but in certain large areas. We can be absolutely blind as to how we compare to our older Brother who lived a perfect life. So, as we approach the Passover, we need to ask our Father to show us how He sees us. Not as we want to be seen, but to show us the reality of who we are so that we can compare that with the record of God in scripture, the record of His Son in scripture. We can then make changes.

Now that leads us to the fourth and final point.

#### **4. After coming to ourselves, we need to do something about it.**

If we see that we have had a blind spot and we come to ourselves and say, how could I have done that, it can't stop there. We have to do something about it. Let me give you an example. Years ago, I felt compelled to go to the minister above me because we were on a visit and he had treated a widow horribly. The world wouldn't treat this elderly widow the way he treated her. I thought about it. These were in the days in which you didn't criticize the individual over you, but I just couldn't let that stand. So, I tried to gather up as much respect and humility as I could and I went to him and I laid it out in front of him—what had happened. Do you remember that this is what happened? He remembered of course, but his answer to me was, that's just the way I was raised, that's just the way I am. In other words, he was not prepared to do anything about it. He knew about it but he wasn't prepared to do anything about it—about his character. The excuse was, that's just the way my parents raised me. That's what is in my heart and people are just going to have to accept that. That is not what God's word tells us. Go to Romans 8:29 and read just the first part of verse 29. This is our calling—we are called to do this, to become this.

**Romans 8:29** *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son ... (KJV)*

That is our destiny if we will allow it to happen. That is our calling; to conform ourselves as human beings into the image of His Son, who lived a perfect life as a human on this earth. This obviously involves change—transformation—from the old man to the new man. Now in Ephesians 4:13 notice what Paul says here, following this theme.

**Ephesians 4:13** *Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, [what are we to come to?] unto a perfect [or mature] man, [here's the goal] unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: (KJV)*

Changing to be like our elder Brother should be our goal. Not to stay the way we are, not to accept the way we are. Not to be content with how we see ourselves but to ask

God how He sees us. Then we start to compare with how we really are with our elder Brother and begin to make some changes. We can't just sit on this.

I saw an interview with a sculptor on television a number of years ago. He was world renowned apparently and he had sculpted this gigantic, beautiful horse, reared up on its hind legs and it was just perfect; it was probably twice life-size. The interviewer, who was astonished, said to the sculptor how on earth could he do that? The sculptor replied, with a little smile, I just chip away everything that doesn't look like a horse. Quite an answer. You see, that is true for us too. We have to chip away everything in our character that does not look like Christ. That does not look like His Father. Anything that does not look like either one of those. Christ set the perfect example of how a human should behave. We have that example to look at. God has revealed Himself as to Who He is and what He has done immensely over the last several years. What His name implies and what His titles imply. We have a more extensive knowledge now—not because any of us are great—but because of His mercy. We know the Father and the Son more than ever before and shame on us if we just sit on that knowledge or it becomes academic knowledge and we don't apply it in changing who we are. Colossians 3:10. is a very familiar scripture which shows what we must be doing.

**Colossians 3:10** *And have put on the new man [we would say today, the new person], which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him [the Father] that created him [the new man]: (KJV)*

Our goal is to be as our Father is. He is perfect. We'll never be perfect but we have to seek that with all our being. 1 John 3:2 carries on with this theme. John is establishing the fact that we are the sons of God; the sons of the Father. We are not sons of Christ; Christ is our elder Brother; we are sons of the Father.

**1 John 3:2** *Beloved, now are we the sons of God [God the Father], and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear [and He will indeed do that], we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.  
3) And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [the Father] is pure. (KJV)*

We go through the process of un-spotting ourselves from the world; of purifying ourselves through the power of the Holy Spirit to get rid of those things that do not look like the Son or do not look like the Father. We must also change our behavior. Look at Matthew 12:34; Christ is speaking to the Pharisees. Christ is not holding back here.

**Matthew 12:34** *Brood of vipers! [Christ says to the Pharisees] How can you, being evil, speak good things? [How is that possible?] For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. (NKJV)*

The Greek word for *heart* is “cardia” and that's where we get our English word cardio or cardiac. It means figuratively, “the thoughts or feelings of the mind”. What He is saying to them is, you are in bad trouble, because out of the abundance of your thoughts and

your feelings inside you and what your mouth speaks. To change our behavior, in order to change our actions, we first have to change our minds—that comes first. In James 1:26 He is mentioning one of the most difficult things we have to do as Christians.

**James 1:26** *If any man among you seem to be religious, [seems to be religious, he says] and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. (KJV)*

It's interesting, the tongue is mentioned fifty-two times in Psalms and Proverbs so, as we all know, there has to be a problem with the tongue. The point is, the tongue speaks what's inside. The tongue speaks what is in our cup, so to speak. Verse 19.

**James 1:19** *Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: 20) For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. (KJV)*

With that in mind go to James 3:5. James is talking some more about the tongue.

**James 3:5** *Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!  
6) And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: (KJV)*

We've all seen in the fire season, particularly in the Northwest, how a little campfire or a little spark from a car can start a massive wildfire. James is saying, if carnality is in our mind and in our heart, it will come out in our words and a great fire will start. Going on in verse 6.

6 continued) *... so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.  
7) For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:  
8) But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. (KJV)*

The only way the tongue can be contained is if our heart, if our cup, if what is inside us, is like that of our Father and His Son. Through the power of the Holy Spirit is the only way that happens and can occur. It is a gift to us.

9) *Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.  
10) Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. (KJV)*

Meaning that if one cup is full of blessing, then that will come out. If one cup is full of cursing, that will come out. Or if in the morning we are closer to God and blessing comes out, our cup is full of the right character of God. Then later in the day, if we get in a snit or a carnal attitude, then bad things come out of our cup.

10 continued) ... *My brethren, these things ought not so to be.*

11) *Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?*

12) *Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh. (KJV)*

He says no fountain can do that. The point is, whatever is in our heart, whatever is in our mind, whatever is in our cup, will eventually come out. One of the hardest things we have to do in this conversion process is to get control of our mind.

In 2 Corinthians 10:5. Paul is giving this dysfunctional church in Corinth, this very mixed up church and frankly, this very carnal church, some advice.

**2 Corinthians 10:5** *Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; (KJV)*

Every single thought. That is what we have to do. We must think with the Mind of Christ and not with the carnal mind, not with a satanic mind. When a wrong thought or a wrong emotion enters us—we've all had that—we must number one, recognize it immediately. Sometimes I think I'm going along just fine, happy and then bam! I feel agitated, I feel uncomfortable, I feel kind of ticked off about something, for no apparent reason. My first thought is, where did that come from? We know where that came from. Then we have to cast it out, turn our mind away from that and on to the things of God and obviously we must pray.

Our deeds also reflect what is in our cup. Out of the heart, the mouth speaks and when we get into a stressful situation, what comes out of our cup, reflects what's in our heart. That leads to a deed. Our deeds reflect what is in our heart, what is in our cup.

**James 2:21** *Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? (KJV)*

Our Father told him what he wanted him to do. Did Abraham just sit on that? No, he started the process; he picked up and went to the mountain. He did something.

22) *Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?*

23) *And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called [because of that] the Friend of God. (KJV)*

Wouldn't we like God to call us His friend because we please Him, do His will and seek His mind and His character and that of His Son.

24) *Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.*

*25) Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?*

*26) For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*  
(KJV)

The point is, after coming to ourselves, after doing that, we must do something about it. We must bring forth works, fruits, deeds, that demonstrate to our Father that we have seen ourselves and we have repented. Now we are in the process of changing and putting Him first in front of ourselves. We are demonstrating to Him by our deeds, our love for Him and the fact that we are willingly submitting to Him and we are willingly changing to be like Him and His Son.

Let's wrap this up and conclude.

Today we have seen that what is in our cup is our character. When something agitates us or shakes us, then whatever is in our cup spills out. Whatever comes out is the character that we have built up to this point. We have also seen that God causes or allows pressure to test our character, to see what is in our cup and in our heart. We also need to beseech God, at this time in particular, to be able see ourselves as our Father sees us. Not as we want to be seen, but as He actually sees us and as we really are. So, after coming to ourselves and seeing that we do lack, then we have to see what we have done, and how we have come to this place. We must acknowledge that. We must then do something to control our behavior, to control our mind and to put Godly character into our heart and into our cup.

So, when life gets tough, when we are shaken, what comes out? Is it love and joy and gratefulness and peace and humility? Or is it anger and bitterness and harsh words or harsh actions? Here is the point; life provides us with the cup, God provides us with the cup. We choose what we put in that cup. We choose what goes into that cup and eventually what's in that cup will come out for all to see and for God to see. As Passover approaches, let us work toward filling our cups with gratitude, forgiveness, joy, kindness, gentleness, love for others and above all, the love for our Father, putting Him first, along with the love for His Son Jesus Christ and gratitude for what He has done for us. Particularly as we look at it at this time of year and as we go forward, let us continually ask the question, what is in my cup?