

# THE POTTER'S HANDS



Debby Baril

*Student Notes*

## **The Potter's Hands**

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# 1 ~ The Master Potter

## INTRODUCTION

*Genesis 1:2-3 NLT – <sup>2</sup> The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. <sup>3</sup> Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light.*

- While we are in a hurry to fulfill “our calling”, God is taking His time developing our character, because character is needed to sustain the gifts and the call on our lives.
  
- As the Master Potter, one of God's priorities is to form and develop your personal potential.

*Jeremiah 18:1-6 NKJV - The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying: <sup>2</sup>“Arise and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will cause you to hear My words.” <sup>3</sup>Then I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was, making something at the wheel. <sup>4</sup>And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make. <sup>5</sup>Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying: <sup>6</sup>“O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?” says the Lord. “Look, as the clay is in the potter’s hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel!”*

**I. THE POTTER IS A \_\_\_\_\_**

- A person with a \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

*Isaiah 64:8 NLT – And yet, O Lord, you are our Father. We are the clay, and you are the potter. We all are formed by your hand.*

- The crowning of all creation was man

*Genesis 2:7, 21-22 AMP – <sup>7</sup>Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath or spirit of life, and man became a living being. <sup>21</sup>And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam; and while he slept, He took one of his ribs or a part of his side and closed up the [place with] flesh. <sup>22</sup>And the rib or part of his side which the Lord God had taken from the man He built up and made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.*

*Psalm 139:13 NLT – You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb.*

*Job 10:8a NKJV – Your hands have made me and fashioned me, an intricate unity.*

- He is Father God, He is the Master Artist, and He is the Master Potter.

## **II. THE POTTER HAS \_\_\_\_\_ OVER THE CLAY**

*Jeremiah 18:6 CEV – People of Israel, I, the Lord, have power over you, just as the potter has power over the clay.*

- Clay cannot mold itself.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- *“Lord, why did You make me this way? I don't like my shape! You should have done this instead! I don't like my talents! I don't like my personality! Why didn't you make me like my sister, or my brother, or my friend?”*

*Romans 9:20b NLT – Who are you, a mere human being, to argue with God? Should the thing that was created say to the one who created it, “Why have you made me like this?”*

*Jeremiah 18:6 NLT – O Israel, can I not do to you as this potter has done to his clay? As the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand.*

- God is not asking for permission. *"Can I please have power over you like the potter has over the clay?"* God is making a statement of fact
- Remember the moment you gave your life to Christ? *"Not my will, but Your will be done. Make me what You want me to be!"*

*Ecclesiastes 5:2, 4, 5 - NLT – <sup>2</sup> Don't make rash promises, and don't be hasty in bringing matters before God. After all, God is in heaven, and you are here on earth. So let your words be few.... <sup>4</sup> When you make a promise to God, don't delay in following through, for God takes no pleasure in fools. Keep all the promises you make to him. <sup>5</sup> It is better to say nothing than to make a promise and not keep it.*

*Proverbs 20:25 NLT – Don't trap yourself by making a rash promise to God and only later counting the cost.*

- God will do whatever is necessary, in keeping with His character, to bring your will back in line with His. He will use every situation in your life to get you back on the right path.
- Why?

**III. THE POTTER HAS A \_\_\_\_\_**

*Jeremiah 29:11 NLT – “For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.”*

*Ephesians 2:10 NLT – For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.*

- With God, as the Master Potter of our lives, we need to realize that He never makes second best.
  
- When God pulled us out of sin, He saw the finished product in His mind.

*Philippians 1:6 NLT – And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.*

**IV. THE POTTER HAS \_\_\_\_\_**

- It takes time to make a worthwhile product, and God is willing to take that time and wait.
  
- God took His time in preparing Moses, Joseph, David, John the Baptist.
  
- Moses:
  
- A believer may be spiritually gifted, have visions and encounters, be full of faith, but still be unsuitable because of their character.
  
- God will not “cut corners” in forming our character.

- Moses went through 40 years of testing, 40 years of character building, 40 years of learning, so he could be a deliverer and a father to a whole nation later.

**V. THE POTTER HAS A \_\_\_\_\_ FOR MAKING \_\_\_\_\_ VESSELS**

- God's passion is to release us to become what He designed us to be.

*Isaiah 6:8 NLT – Then I heard the Lord asking, “Whom should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?”*

- God has these great ideas and then He searches out the world to find a vessel that He can do it through.
  
- God has the power and the wisdom to do it without us, but His passion is to use His crowning creation to bring glory to His name, by releasing them to fulfill what He has called them to do; to be His representatives and ambassadors on earth.

**CONCLUSION**

- God is the Master Potter, who designs and creates vessels of honor, useful to the Kingdom, carriers of the wine of the Spirit, and the Bread of Life.

## 2 ~ Preparing & Centering the Clay

### INTRODUCTION

*2 Corinthians 3:18 NLT - So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.*

*Jeremiah 18:1-6 NKJV – The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying: <sup>2</sup>“Arise and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will cause you to hear My words.” <sup>3</sup>Then I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was, making something at the wheel. <sup>4</sup>And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make. <sup>5</sup>Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying: <sup>6</sup>“O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?” says the Lord. “Look, as the clay is in the potter’s hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel!”*

### I. \_\_\_\_\_ OUT THE CLAY

*Genesis 2:7 NLT - Then the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man’s nostrils, and the man became a living person.*

*Psalm 40:2 NAS - He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay; and He set my feet upon a rock making my footsteps firm.*

*Titus 3:4-5 NLT - <sup>4</sup>But—"When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, <sup>5</sup>he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit."*

*Colossians 1:13-14 NKJV - <sup>13</sup>He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, <sup>14</sup>in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.*

## II. \_\_\_\_\_ **THE CLAY IN WATER**

- Throughout the Bible, water represents the \_\_\_\_\_.

*Isaiah 44:3, 4 NLT - <sup>3</sup>For I will pour out water to quench your thirst and to irrigate your parched fields. And I will pour out my Spirit on your descendants, and my blessing on your children. <sup>4</sup>They will thrive like watered grass, like willows on a riverbank.*

*John 7:38-39 NKJV - <sup>38</sup>"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."<sup>39</sup> But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.*



## **MAKING IT THROUGH**

### **A. \_\_\_\_\_ You Are Going Through.**

*Job 13:15 NKJV - Though he slay me, yet will I trust him.*

- With humility you must determine to make it through, and recognize that you can only do it by the Holy Spirit who so powerfully works within you.

*Psalm 16:8 NKJV - I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.*

### **B. \_\_\_\_\_ Your Eyes On Jesus.**

*Hebrews 12:2-3 NIV - <sup>2</sup>Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>3</sup>Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*

*Isaiah 43:1b-3 NLT - I have called you by name; you are mine. <sup>2</sup>When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you. <sup>3</sup>For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.*

*1 Peter 5:10-11 NKJV - <sup>10</sup>But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. <sup>11</sup>To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

**C. \_\_\_\_\_ To The Skillful Hands Of The Potter.**

*Luke 1:38 NKJV - Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word."*

**IV. \_\_\_\_\_ THE CLAY**

- The goal is to get the clay on the same axis that the wheel is spinning on, as well as get the clay so quiet that it runs smoothly under the potter's hands, so that he barely feels it.
  
- The Master Potter takes us in His hands, places us on His wheel, and begins to align us to the center of His will; pushing us with His strong hands into the middle of His plans.

*Hebrews 12:5-6 NLT - <sup>5</sup>And have you forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you as his children? He said, "My child, don't make light of the Lord's discipline, and don't give up when he corrects you. <sup>6</sup>For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child."*

- God will discipline us concerning the sins in our lives. He will work out His holiness and sanctification in our lives.

- He may begin to discipline you concerning:
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### **MAKING IT THROUGH**

**A. Allow The Lord To \_\_\_\_\_ You To \_\_\_\_\_.**

*Jeremiah 31:3 NIV - I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving kindness.*

*Psalms 46:10 NAS - Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.*

**B. Recognize His \_\_\_\_\_ In \_\_\_\_\_ You.**

*Hebrews 12:5-6 NLT - <sup>5</sup>And have you forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you as his children? He said, "My child, don't make light of the Lord's discipline, and don't give up when he corrects you. <sup>6</sup>For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child."*

**C. \_\_\_\_\_ Carefully.**

*Psalms 139:23-24 NLT - <sup>23</sup>Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. <sup>24</sup>Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.*

**V. \_\_\_\_\_ THE CLAY**

- The potter begins to form the clay, pulling up he makes it rise and shapes a vessel into the image that is in his mind.
  
- This can be a dangerous time. We may think that we are finished and so we run ahead instead of submitting to the rest of the process. This is zeal without wisdom.
  
- As we are being formed into a vessel useful for His Kingdom, we need to stay in the process where we will learn \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

**MAKING IT THROUGH**

**A. Resist \_\_\_\_\_ Ahead Of The Lord.**

*Exodus 33:15 NLT - Then Moses said, "If you don't personally go with us, don't make us leave this place."*

**B. Be \_\_\_\_\_.**

*Psalm 46:10 AMP - Let be and be still, and know (recognize and understand) that I am God.*

**C. Resist Self-\_\_\_\_\_ And Selfish \_\_\_\_\_.**

*1 Peter 5:6 NLT- So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time he will lift you up in honor.*

**VI. \_\_\_\_\_ THE CLAY**

- Sometimes the potter will take a very thin wire and press through the clay searching for air bubbles. If he doesn't search the clay, the pot could crack, break and explode, when it goes through the fire.
- This is a time when the Holy Spirit investigates and burrows through our motives; He uses the sword, which is the Word of God, to search our hearts.

*Hebrews 4:12-13 NLT - <sup>12</sup>For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires. <sup>13</sup>Nothing in all creation is hidden from God. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes, and he is the one to whom we are accountable.*

*Proverbs 16:2 NLT - People may be pure in their own eyes, but the Lord examines their motives.*

*Proverbs 16:2 AMP - All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the spirits (the thoughts and intents of the heart).*

## MAKING IT THROUGH

### A. Welcome The Holy Spirit To \_\_\_\_\_ Your Heart.

*Psalm 139:23-24 AMP - <sup>23</sup> Search me [thoroughly], O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! <sup>24</sup> And see if there is any wicked or hurtful way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

### B. Learn Immediate \_\_\_\_\_.

*1 John 1:9 NLT - If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

## VII. \_\_\_\_\_ THE CLAY

- After the potter carefully pokes through the clay with his wire, he remolds and shapes it again.
- God never leaves us “undone” but re-builds and re-shapes us.

*1 Peter 5:10-11 NKJV - <sup>10</sup> But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. <sup>11</sup> To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

## CONCLUSION

- He is bringing you up into the vision and purpose He has for you.

## 3 ~ Drying the Clay

### INTRODUCTION

*Jeremiah 18:1-6 NKJV – The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying: <sup>2</sup>“Arise and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will cause you to hear My words.” <sup>3</sup>Then I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was, making something at the wheel. <sup>4</sup>And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make. <sup>5</sup>Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying: <sup>6</sup>“O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?” says the Lord. “Look, as the clay is in the potter’s hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel!”*

### I. \_\_\_\_\_ THE CLAY

- He's walking with the vessel in his hands, and without any fanfare he places the vessel on a \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ the pot to dry and harden.

- Welcome to the next stage of the process: the testing of faith, endurance, and character.

*1 Peter 1:6-7 NKJV - <sup>6</sup>In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, <sup>7</sup>that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

*Jeremiah 11:20 NLT – O Lord of Heaven's Armies, you make righteous judgments, and you examine [test] the deepest thoughts and secrets.*

**A. Time/\_\_\_\_\_ Test**

*Psalm 31:14-15a AMP - <sup>14</sup>But I trusted in, relied on, and was confident in You, O Lord; I said, You are my God. <sup>15</sup>My times are in your hands.*

**B. Hiddenness/\_\_\_\_\_ Test**

- Will you serve Him with joy and passion even if no one knows your name, if you never receive recognition, and if others overlook you?

*1 Peter 5:6 AMP – Therefore humble yourselves (demote, lower yourselves in your own estimation) under the mighty hand of God, that in due time He may exalt you.*

- Every time you submit to a season of hiddenness, you will come out with a greater depth to your character.

**C. Frustration/\_\_\_\_\_ Test**

*Revelation 3:7b NLT - This is the message from the one who is holy and true, the one who has the key of David. What he opens, no one can close; and what he closes, no one can open.*

- Common church scenarios:

**D. Self-Will/\_\_\_\_\_ Test**

- God alone is the one who takes us off the shelf. We must break away from our independence and our self-sufficiency, and come in agreement with God.

*2 Corinthians 3:5 CEV - We don't have the right to claim that we have done anything on our own. God gives us what it takes to do all that we do.*

**E. Solitude/\_\_\_\_\_ Test**

- Solitude is a place of quiet reflection. It's the place where God removes the clutter of our soul and we begin to see ourselves, others, and God in proper perspective.

*Psalm 73:25 CEV - In heaven I have only you, and on earth you are all I want.*

*Psalm 73:25 AMP - Whom have I in heaven but you? And I have no delight or desire on earth besides You.*

**II. \_\_\_\_\_ THE CLAY**

*Isaiah 49:16 NLT - See, I have written your name on the palms of my hands.*

## CONCLUSION

- These tests are not meant to destroy you but to build endurance and character, so that you can reflect Christ, and make a difference in the world around you.

*Psalm 26:2 NLT – Put me on trial, Lord, and cross-examine me. Test my motives and my heart.*

## 4 ~ The First Fire

### INTRODUCTION

*Jeremiah 18:1-6 NKJV - The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying: <sup>2</sup>“Arise and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will cause you to hear My words.” <sup>3</sup>Then I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was, making something at the wheel. <sup>4</sup>And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make. <sup>5</sup>Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying: <sup>6</sup>“O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?” says the Lord. “Look, as the clay is in the potter’s hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel!”*

- As we sit on the shelf we have to resist the desire to remove ourselves from the darkness. We have to resist an independent spirit.

*Isaiah 50:10-11 NLT - Who among you fears the Lord and obeys his servant? If you are walking in darkness, without a ray of light, trust in the Lord and rely on your God. <sup>11</sup>But watch out, you who live in your own light and warm yourselves by your own fires. This is the reward you will receive from me: you will soon fall down in great torment.*

## I. KILN PREPARATION

- The kiln is an insulated chamber, or oven, made of bricks that can withstand intense temperatures of 1300C (2400F) and higher.
  
- Once the firing is complete the cool down begins. It is essential to allow the kiln to cool naturally. If the kiln is cooled too quickly or if there are drafts from open peepholes, the pots can crack from the sudden stress.

## II. THE FIRST \_\_\_\_\_

### A. \_\_\_\_\_ Test

- In the kiln, the fire steadily grows and intensifies. It's dry, it's parched, and there isn't a drop of water in sight.
  
- Like Jesus, we've been led into the wilderness.

*Matthew 4:1-2 AMP - Then Jesus was led (guided) by the [Holy] Spirit into the wilderness (desert) to be tempted (tested and tried) by the devil.*

*<sup>2</sup>And He went without food for forty days and forty nights, and later He was hungry.*

*Matthew 4:3 AMP - <sup>3</sup>And the tempter came and said to Him, if You are God's Son, command these stones to be made [loaves of] bread.*

*1 John 2:15-16 AMP – <sup>15</sup>Do not love or cherish the world or the things that are in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world – the lust of the flesh (craving for sensual gratification) and the lust of the eyes (greedy longings of the mind) and the pride of life (assurance in one's own resources or in the stability of earthly things) – these do not come from the Father but are from the world itself.*

- Tempter was offering Jesus a way out.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- In the wilderness our souls wrestle and die to our own ambitions, desires, and ways.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- “Experience” is not enough to get you through.

- Being rooted in the Word of God is the key to getting through the wilderness.

**B.** \_\_\_\_\_ **Test**

- The fire is hot; it's uncomfortable. Impurities in you are breaking down and being consumed. It's miserable.

- David had to learn to encourage himself in the Lord at a time when his men wanted to stone him.

*1 Samuel 30:6b AMP - But David encouraged and strengthened himself in the Lord his God.*

*Psalm 42:11 AMP - Why are you down cast, O my inner self? And why should you moan over me and be disquieted within me? Hope in God and wait expectantly for Him, for I shall yet praise Him, Who is the help of my countenance, and my God.*

*Proverbs 18:21 AMP – Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and they who indulge in it shall eat the fruit of it (for death or life).*

**C. \_\_\_\_\_ Test**

- A metamorphosis is taking place and you no longer fit into people's frame of thinking.

The key to making it through this test is to know the voice of God. You have to know what God is speaking to you.

**D. \_\_\_\_\_ Test**

- The key for us in this test is to look to God for our security instead of man, break away from performance, and start BEING.

**E. The \_\_\_\_\_ Test**

- The fire is peaking.

*Isaiah 43:1-2 NLT – But now...listen to the Lord who created you...the one who formed you says, “Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine. <sup>2</sup>When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you.”*

*Proverbs 3:5-6 NKJV - Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; <sup>6</sup>in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.*

- In the time of King Nebuchadnezzar a great statue of gold was made in honor of him. A decree from the royal palace went forth.

*Daniel 3:5-6 NKJV - <sup>5</sup>At the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up; <sup>6</sup>and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.*

- Three young Hebrew men refused to bow to the image and worship it: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

*Daniel 3:15b NLT - If you refuse, you will be thrown immediately into the blazing furnace. And then what god will be able to rescue you from my power?*

*Daniel 3:16-18 NLT - <sup>16</sup>Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you. <sup>17</sup>If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty. <sup>18</sup>But even if he doesn't, we want to make it clear to you, Your Majesty, that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up."*

- The king became so angry that he ordered the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than usual.
  
- Yet, we read in...

*Daniel 3:25, 27 NKJV – <sup>25</sup>"Look!" he answered, "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." <sup>27</sup>And the satraps, administrators, governors, and the king's counselors gathered together, and they saw these men on whose bodies the fire had no power; the hair of their head was not singed nor were their garments affected, and the smell of fire was not on them.*

- The only things that got burned away in that fire were the ropes that bound them. They were loosed from their bondages!
- God's desire for us in the fire is that our bondages would be burned away, not that we would be destroyed. His purpose is that we would come out stronger and ready to be used for His glory.

## **CONCLUSION**

- Don't be surprised at being put through the fire!

*I Peter 4:12 AMP – Beloved, do not be amazed and bewildered at the fiery ordeal which is taking place to test your quality, as though something strange (unusual and alien to you and your position) were befalling you.*

## 5 ~ The Second Fire

### INTRODUCTION

*Jeremiah 18:1-2 NKJV - The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying: <sup>2</sup>“Arise and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will cause you to hear My words.”*

#### I. \_\_\_\_\_ OF THE CLAY

- With the cool down complete the potter removes the pots from the kiln, and the glazing begins.
  
- Every potter has his own formula for glazes which results in unique characteristics and designs – these become the trademark of the potter.

**II. THE \_\_\_\_\_ FIRE**

- With raging intensity the second fire starts to burn through the kiln. We are once again moved into a time of death, to bring out the beauty of Christ being formed in us.
- Jill Austin: *"The Lord tenderly explains, 'My child, in the midst of the blazing 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 depth of who you are.'"*<sup>1</sup>

**A. \_\_\_\_\_ Test**

Matthew 20:26-28 NLT - <sup>26</sup>But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, <sup>27</sup>and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave. <sup>28</sup>For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.

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<sup>1</sup> Jill Austin, *Clay in the Potter's Hands*, © 1998 Strang Communications

*1 Peter 4:10 CEV - Each of you has been blessed with one of God's many wonderful gifts to be used in the service of others. So use your gift well.*

- The colors of Christ's glory are revealed in us when we choose to serve rather than to be served.

**B.** \_\_\_\_\_ **Test**

- Every person has a basic need: acceptance. The desire to belong, to love and to be loved is a part of how we are wired.

- Jesus knew that the heart of man was fickle. He didn't place His trust or security in the hearts of men. One day they sang out, "*Hosanna, blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord!*" Another day, they cried out, "*Crucify Him!*" (Matthew 21:9; Mark 15:13,14).

- What happens when we are rejected? How will we respond?

*Luke 10:16 NIV - He who listens to you listens to Me; he who rejects you rejects Me; but he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me.*

**C. \_\_\_\_\_ Test**

- Joseph was betrayed by his brothers.
  - Moses was betrayed by his sister and brother.
  - David was betrayed by his own son.
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- Betrayals happen between parents and children, spouses, business partners, co-workers, friends, teams, pastors and congregations, brothers and sisters...it touches every kind of relationship.

*Philippians 3:10 NIV - I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.*

**D. \_\_\_\_\_ Test**

- Rejection and betrayal lead to the greatest test: forgiveness.

*Matthew 18:21-22 NLT - <sup>21</sup>Then Peter came to him and asked, "Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?"  
<sup>22</sup>"No, not seven times," Jesus replied, "but seventy times seven!"*

**1. Forgiveness Does Not Mean \_\_\_\_\_**

- If something is excusable, it does not require forgiveness. We excuse someone when circumstances are beyond their control.

**2. Forgiveness Does Not Mean \_\_\_\_\_**

**3. Forgiveness Does Not Mean \_\_\_\_\_**

- Forgiveness is a work that takes place in the heart of one person towards another, even if the offender does not ask for it.
- Reconciliation is a work that takes place in both hearts. The one who committed the offense must sincerely repent for the wrong they committed.

**4. Forgiveness Does Not Seek \_\_\_\_\_**

*1 Peter 2:23 NLT - He did not retaliate when he was insulted, nor threaten revenge when he suffered. He left his case in the hands of God who always judges fairly.*

**5. Forgiveness Sees \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_**

**6. Forgiveness \_\_\_\_\_ the Person \_\_\_\_\_**

*Mark 11:25 NLT - But when you are praying, first forgive anyone you are holding a grudge against, so that your Father in heaven will forgive your sins, too.*

**III. THE \_\_\_\_\_**

- During the firing, and the intensity of the heat, the clay “matures” becoming highly water resistant and durable.
- In the natural cooling of the clay the unique patterns and beauty of the vessel are brought out.

**CONCLUSION**

- Throughout the tests we must continually look to the Lord, putting our confidence in Him, knowing that He understands, and that His grace is more than sufficient to see us through.

## 6 ~ A Vessel of Honor

### INTRODUCTION

*2 Corinthians 3:18 NKJV - But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

- Dwayne Lusk: *"To hurry God is to find fault with Him."*<sup>2</sup>

*Jeremiah 18:3-6 NKJV – <sup>3</sup>Then I went down to the potter's house, and there he was, making something at the wheel. <sup>4</sup>And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make. <sup>5</sup>Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying: <sup>6</sup>"O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?" says the Lord. "Look, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel!"*

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<sup>2</sup> Dwayne Lusk, Christian Life School of Theology Lecture, *How To Study the Bible*.

*Ephesians 2:10 NLT - For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.*

*2 Timothy 2:20-21 AMP – <sup>20</sup> But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also utensils of wood and earthenware, and some for honorable and noble use and some for menial and ignoble use. <sup>21</sup> So whoever cleanses himself from what is ignoble and unclean, who separates himself from contact with contaminating and corrupting influences will then himself be a vessel set apart and useful for honorable and noble purposes, consecrated and profitable to the Master, fit and ready for any good work.*

**I. VESSELS OF HONOR ARE \_\_\_\_\_**

*Colossians 1:9-14 NIV - <sup>9</sup>For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, <sup>10</sup>so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, <sup>11</sup>being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, <sup>12</sup>and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. <sup>13</sup>For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, <sup>14</sup>in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

*Colossians 3:9b-10 NKJV - You have put off the old man with his deeds,  
10 and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according  
to the image of Him who created him.*

*1 John 2:16-17 NLT - 16For the world offers only a craving for physical  
pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements  
and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world.  
17 And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave.  
But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever.*

*Psalms 16:11 NKJV - You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is  
fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

**II. VESSELS OF HONOR ARE \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_**

*2 Corinthians 4:6-7 NLT - 6For God, who said, "Let there be light in the  
darkness," has made this light shine in our hearts so we could know the  
glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ. 7We now have this  
light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars  
containing this great treasure. This makes it clear that our great power is  
from God, not from ourselves.*

*Galatians 2:20 NKJV - I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who  
live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by  
faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

*Colossians 1:27 NIV - God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*

- In life we are going to get chipped, knocked around, and sometimes crack. The potter never discards us, instead He takes us in hand and reworks us, and whatever He does is good.

*Jeremiah 18: 4 NKJV - And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make.*

- The emphasis is not on being marred, the emphasis is on being in His hands.

*Colossians 2:9 AMP - And you are in Him, made full and having come to fullness of life [in Christ you too are filled with the Godhead—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—and reach full spiritual stature]. And He is the Head of all rule and authority [of every angelic principality and power].*

### **III. VESSELS OF HONOR ARE \_\_\_\_\_**

*2 Timothy 2:21 AMP –So whoever cleanses himself from what is ignoble and unclean, who separates himself from contact with contaminating and corrupting influences will then himself be a vessel set apart and useful for honorable and noble purposes, consecrated and profitable to the Master, fit and ready for any good work.*

- If you belong to Jesus you are destined for noble purposes.

*Ephesians 2:10 NKJV - For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

- What are some of the good works we are destined to do?

*Luke 4:18-19 NLT - The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, <sup>19</sup>and that the time of the Lord's favor has come.*

- You are destined to share the good news:

*Matthew 28:18-20 NKJV - <sup>18</sup>And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup>Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.*

- You are destined to fulfill the great commission:

*John 14:12 NLT - I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father.*

- Allow the fragrance of Christ to come out of your brokenness. Allow that which was difficult and painful to you, become a blessing and ministry to others.
- He has taken us, marred and flawed, and transformed us into noble carriers of His glory.

*2 Corinthians 3:5-6a NLT - <sup>5</sup>It is not that we think we are qualified to do anything on our own. Our qualification comes from God. <sup>6</sup>He has enabled us to be ministers of his new covenant.*

## **CONCLUSION**

- Go out as the vessel of honor He has made you to be and always remember that God is good and you can always trust the Potter's Hands!