

Monday Morning Rewind (Tuesday evening edition) – March 2, 2010

In this new month of March I have four words of advice: “Stay in His hands!” On Sabbath we took a trip down to the Potter’s house in Jeremiah 18. After 40 years of watching the people of God slide into moral decay and spiritual bankruptcy, Jeremiah was told by God to visit the Potter’s house to observe what God wanted to do with His rebellious children. Rewind to Jeremiah 18:1-6 to read this living object lesson in redemption.

The first we notice is that the Potter’s house was “down” in the Valley of Hinnom—a valley notorious as a place of Baal worship and the insane practice of “passing through the fire”—offering human sacrifice. Jesus later called this same location Gehenna or “hell.”

The Potter in this living parable is Christ. Notice that outside the Potter’s house is a place of human sacrifice. It is not a place of redemption, but a place of destruction and death where humans sacrifice themselves to the false gods of this world. From a distance it looks like a party, but lives are being consumed on the altars of lust, greed, self-mutilation, drugs, booze, sexual sin, pride, unbelief and rebellion. This is the world outside the Potter’s house. But it is from the valley of death that the Potter collects the clay to be redeemed. Jesus has come to take you into His house!

The gathering of the clay from the valley parallels the first step in salvation—justification. (See John 5:24.) But there is more to salvation than just rescue. The work of the Potter has just begun. When we come to Christ we are rescued lumps of clay snatched from the fires of Baal. But God has greater plans for you yet!

Like Jeremiah, you need to watch the potter at work with the clay. The following video will help: <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/220/potter-27s-hands-2c-the>. In this simple illustration are many rich lessons.

1. At the Potter’s house, we are never out of God’s sight. (See 1 Pet. 3:12.) Once the work has begun, the Potter never takes his eye off the clay and God never takes His eye off us. You and I have His undivided attention.

2. The potter has a plan for the clay and God has a plan for you. His plan is not just to save you but to use you for His glory. The potter makes pots. His occupation defines his craft. As the potter makes pots, so the Redeemer redeems, the Savior saves, and the Creator creates. It’s what He does. He can’t help Himself. If you’re clay in the hand of the Potter you’re going to be a pot. **If you’re in the hand of the Redeemer, you’re going to be redeemed!** That’s His plan for you today—a redeemed vessel of honor. “O LORD, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.” (Isa. 64:8)

3. At the Potter’s house, failure is not final. God will make you over again. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

We are not rejected because of failure, but because of refusing to yield ourselves to be made over again by the divine Potter. If we fail, it is because we do not let God remake us and restore His ideal in and for and through us. We may have a thousand pebbles or bubbles of resistance in our characters that cause us to break over and over again. But **as long as we stay in His hands, and consent to His remodeling process, we will be made into vessels of honor.**

4. Reformation is guaranteed as long as the clay remains in the hands of the potter. In His hands, under His control, guided by the vision He has for your life, you have a future and a purpose. Outside of His hands, you are broken, unfulfilled, unsatisfied, empty, and must ultimately be returned to the scrap heap. Not because God rejects you, but because you ultimately fire Him as your maker, and want to retain your own broken shape. (See Isa. 29:16; Rev. 2:27; Ps. 2:9; Jer. 19:11)

5. Stay in the Potter’s hands! (Even if it hurts.) Re-formation hurts. The Potter has to crush the clay to start over. “Sometimes God has to break up the whole foundation of a person’s life—break up the old associations, crush the old ambitions, and sever the old ties through affliction, failure, suffering, and sorrow—so that He can begin a new life for him, with new opportunities, associations, etc.”

6. God gets His hands dirty in the remodel of our lives. God doesn’t stand aloof. He’s got our earthiness all over Him and He isn’t repulsed. We have His fingerprints all over us and He has our filthiness all over Him. And this is what it means to know Go—to be so intimately acquainted with Him that His thoughts become my thoughts, His ways become my ways, my attitudes and choices and actions and words are shaped by His skillful hands.

The lesson of the Potter is that nothing is too hard for God. But that doesn't mean our second chance came easy. **It took the nail-marred hands of the potter to re-form the sin-marred heart of the sinner.**

Where are you in the Potter's house today? Whether you are in the cutting phase, the weighing, the mashing, the rolling, the throwing onto the wheel, the wetting, the spinning, the shaping, the marring, the re-forming, the refining, the trimming away of the excess, or the firing. . . . remember that the whole time, through it all, *you're always in His hands.* –Pastor Randy

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2 Chron. 7:14

"The need is great. The key is prayer. The time is now."