

The Potter and The Clay

I am going to talk to you about something that is very familiar to all of us because the Lord took me there this morning. Not to tell you, or to change your or to push you forth in any manner or in any way, but I think it is to encourage you, from what I see. Were going to talk about the Potter and the Clay in Jeremiah. **Jeremiah Chapter 18** is very familiar to us; I had spoken it once during Prophetic Ministry. It was a message that God used to deliver a message to a young woman. But we are not going to take the whole thing; we are going to take only the first 6 verses. Verses 1 through 6 only because God is making a point for you. What God is saying is that you are a work in progress. What God is doing is to prepare you for what is about to come. You are the work in progress for His glory, a work in progress for His image, for other people. You are a work in progress, pretty much for everybody else but you. He shapes us and molds us for His glory and His good purpose and not our own. The work in progress is to bring us close to Him and to have a greater understanding, but its going to be for other people because of what they see upon you; what's inside of you. So lets start at verse number one.

v.1 *The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying:*

v.2 *“Arise and go to the potter’s house, and there I will cause you to hear My words.”*

v.3 *Then I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was, making something at the wheel.*

v.4 *And the vessel that he had 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.*

v.5 *Then the word of the Lord came saying:*

v.6 *: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!”*

Now this isn't about, we are not talking about you being wicked and becoming good, or about being good and going down your lost way, or about you being wicked and coming back. That's not what we're talking about today. Today were talking about understanding why you're being shaped, and why you're going through what you're going through. Why – because God is shaping, reshaping, and reshaping again. As the clay in the potter's hand, he didn't like what he had created. So, while it was still soft, pliable, and moldable, he took the clay and he crushed it down, and he created a new vessel, a different vessel. Not like the first one that he made, do you think he sits there and makes bowls everyday? He doesn't make bowls all day. Once in awhile he will make an ashtray, once in awhile he shall make a watering pot, and once in awhile he shall make a vase. It doesn't matter what the potter makes at the time, he does what is pleasing to him at the moment while he is shaping and molding.

So if we are set, and have a mindset that God has a purpose and a plan, and we stick to that one purpose and plan, and we're going that way because we say, “God has made me like this”. Then you will become un-moldable, because you have to be willing to change for the day, for the purpose, and for the understanding. Because someone will come to you on a day and you may have he gift of prophecy, and they may come before you seeking a word, but the next day someone else may come who does not need a word of prophecy, but may need understanding of the word of God. You're going to have to be pliable enough to become a teacher. But if you cannot go from prophet to teacher, and you cannot go from teacher to preacher, and you cannot go from preacher to toilet scrubber, then you are not pliable. We have to be able to be changeable in the hands of God, for that moment in time that you are needed.

As the clay was in the potter's hand, he was not please that day with what he had made, so he crushed it, and he reshaped it, and he made a new vessel. And God says, “*O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?*” Are we so set in a direction and in a purpose that we cannot serve God anywhere else and in a different purpose? You see, our shaping and our molding is to make us sensitive to God. When He shapes us, then reshapes us and remolds us, we have to be willing to say, “I want this, and I want to go this way, and I want to do that!” But if we continue to focus only on what we know, and continue to follow that path not being willing to give up anything else and stay right there, then we won't be nothing more then that water pot, noting more then that bowl, nothing more! The earthen vessel that has been dried in the sun cannot go any further from there. That's what it will be, and it will always be that. Once it goes into the kiln and gets baked, it cannot be anything else. It will stay what it is! This is what happens when we harden ourselves, and refuse to go beyond the four corners; we end up staying in a box. We have to be pliable and moldable always, not confining ourselves to a purpose and a plan that we think God wants.

Because I tell you what, Everyday God wants something different. God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow, but for you, He wants you to be different tomorrow. Today is not what you are going to be tomorrow. And tomorrow will not be the same that we will be on Wednesday. For we don't have preaching on Sunday, preaching on Wednesday, and preaching on Friday, no, we don't do that! Wednesday we have bible study and we learn from the Teacher, On Friday we have prophetic ministry and we talk about the gifts and we learn from the Prophet But on Sunday we hear from the Preacher, and the preacher preaches a message from God to tell us, this is what God is saying. But if the prophet wants to be a preacher and stays a preacher, she cannot preach on Friday during prophetic ministry, because

people are not there to hear the preacher, but to receive a word from God through the prophet. And I cannot preach the word on Wednesday because people come to understand the revelation and mysteries of the word of God. Preaching is not going to help. We have to be able to change at the whim of God at the moment He says that it is time to change. But we don't want to. We're comfortable. I like being a bowl, I don't want to be a water pot, I want to be exactly what I am right now because that is what God has made of me and I don't want to go any further. But if you choose to stay that way, then that is all you will be used for. Nothing more. Don't you want the greater? Don't you want to do greater things and be moldable and shapeable? You don't know what God's going to do. I have no idea what God is going to do today, but I am excited already! I don't know what God is going to talk about, at bible study because we are talking about the book of revelation, I am not preaching, I am so excited about the unveiling of what's going on that this is a completely different person doing this study. Because my heart is moved by God's unfolding!

But if I hinder Him, by saying, "okay, it's unfolding", and then I start preaching, I hinder God. Just go with the flow because you don't know who is going to come before you and what they are going to say. You don't know whom God is going to send to you tomorrow or tonight. You don't know! You don't know if you're going to have to go to the hospital and pray for somebody tonight. And if you do have to go there, you cannot go as one who is afraid to pray! Can't He change you for that moment in time and become the minister and minister to the people and pray for them? Or are you afraid? Because only fear will hold you back from being changeable. Fear will stop us from being moldable; because we want to stay in comfort zones and comfort zones is not what God wants! God is not about comfort, as you folks have noticed by now, by all the trials we go through. God is not one about keeping us where we are God is about pushing! Pushing us up, pushing us out, but not pushing us down! If there is anything God is going to do, it will always be for the greater. But we have to be willing. If we refuse, then down you shall go!

We are becoming a society that is getting to familiar with the ways and understanding of men. But not in this house! I just want you folks to understand something, because it is not so here. But I do see it in the world where people come looking for a word from God, and they receive a word from God, but it doesn't change them. Many people have come; let's use Prophetic Ministry as an example, Husbands and wives; they other day I ran into a lady friend of mine, and she was telling me about these three couples that she had brought herself, to the church to get a word. The wives received everything that was spoken, and it moved them to want to change, but the husbands were like, "I respect her ministry, she's bold, she's honest, but! And the "but" was; women shouldn't be preaching, how come she is behind the pulpit if she's divorced? They had all these issues against me. They could not receive at the magnitude that the wife received. Because at their churches that they go to, it is taught that women as supposed to be submitted to men. They can't go any further. They will stay exactly where they are and it's going to be a sad day. We were talking about Mary Magdalene, because there are 12 thrones, 12 thrones for the 12 disciples, who is number 12? It ain't Judas! It's going to be a sad day when all these pastors and ministers go to the throne of God and see that it just might be Mary Magdalene sitting there! It's going to be SAD day for them! That one of those seats belongs to a woman.

See, we don't know. We don't know the end from the beginning. We only know that were going this way. So why are we trying to control the direction of the Spirit of God? Why are we trying to tell the Holy Spirit where we want to go? But the Holy Spirit says, "No, I want you to go here and there! I want you to go to them and I want you to say this, I want you to go there and I want you to preach that! I want you to go here and I want you to deliver a message!" God moves us we don't move God! The potter shapes the vessel the clay doesn't shape itself. It needs hands to mold it and shape it. So right now God's hands are upon you, molding and shaping you, changing you for purpose. And that purpose is for your brothers and sisters for the people who are in Christ with you and for those who are not. God said, "I form the light and I form the darkness."

In Isaiah 45:7 "I form the light and I create darkness, I make peace and create calamity, I, the Lord, do all these things."

If He can form light and He can create darkness, let me tell you, He can form you! But see, light was willing to come forth and darkness was willing to be dark. What if the dark fought against God and said, "No, I want to be light", and the light said, "No, this is to bright, I want to be dark"? They cannot say that because He is in total control. When He says, "Let there be light" light came forth, when there was darkness it fell upon the earth. And we tend to tell God that no we don't want to. We don't want to be the light; we want to be the dark. And we want to stay exactly where we are, but we cannot! We just cannot! If mankind starts dictating to God what we want to be and how we want our ministries to be, and go in the direction that we want to go, even after God has told you where He wants you to go and how He wants you to do it. And you change His words and say, "He said", let me tell you, what did He say in the beginning? Was He wrong? That's why you're changing now? God gave a direction and a plan and said you were called to do this, why all of a sudden are you making your own plans and saying it's God? Did God change His mind or did you? Did you become unmovable and unchangeable now? Are you back to your old vessel? God is getting ready to put you into the fire and make you stay that way! And the only way that He'll be able to change you, after you've been through the fire, and you've become hardened, is break you! Pick you up, throw you down, and shatter you to reshape you, and remold you

again. I don't want that for anyone. We have to be pliable in God's hands. Purpose and plan of God, not the calls, not the gifts, but for the purpose and the plan. The purpose and the plan is what keeps you moldable and shapeable in God's hands. Go to **Romans chapter 9:14**. It is a continuation of what I'm talking about. Look at what Paul says;

v.14 "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not!"

v.15 "For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I have compassion."

v.16 So then, it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy."

See, so he's making a distinction that it is not the one who wills for us to go that way, and it's not the one who's running the race, it is not us, but it is the one. It is God who is showing the mercy to lead you, yeah? And he goes on to say;

v.17 For the scripture says to the Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth."

v.18 Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.

Just like with Pharaoh and Moses, remember? He hardened Pharaoh's heart on purpose to teach Moses and for Moses to become stronger. Whenever Pharaoh's heart became hardened, Moses became bolder. Every time, delivering one more plague, delivering one more message from God, you know Moses couldn't do that on his own! Because after three plagues; if I was Pharaoh I would have given up. How many times did God have to send a plague before Pharaoh finally submitted and let His people go? You see, He had to harden Pharaoh so Moses would learn to be bold enough to step out again, and do it again, and do it again. But Moses had to be willing to go, but if you look in the beginning at the burning bush, he didn't want to go. He didn't want to talk; he didn't want to do nothing. So God said, well since you don't want to go, your brother Aaron is waiting for you. He'll speak for you, and you will be God to him, and he will be Moses to Pharaoh. But in the end, after one plague, Moses was talking for Himself. He got bolder and bolder. He changed. He changed because God kept doing mightier and mightier. But He hardened Pharaoh's heart so Moses could change. So God used both of them for His purpose. Therefore Paul goes on to say from 18,

v.18 Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.

v.19 You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?"

v.20 But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God?

Telling God that He has faults? Who is God to find faults in us when He is just in all that He does? Isn't that what Paul is saying? "You will say to me, "Why does He (GOD) still find fault? For who has resisted His will?" That's who He finds fault in! The one who resists His will!

v.20 But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, "Why have you made me like this?" For look what he says,

v.21 Does not the potter have the power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

In other words, God molded both of them, Moses and Pharaoh, for His purpose. Both of them! For His purpose! And He guided them, and He lead them, and He hardened them, and He did what He needed to do to strengthen both of them for God's good will to come forth for His purpose and the plan. Pharaoh didn't harden himself of his own, He was already hard, and God hardened what was already there, God did it on purpose. And Moses, a vessel for honor, had to keep going back, back, back, to try to break the vessel, and break the vessel, but the vessel would not break. God broke the vessel by the last plague, which took his son. That's what broke Pharaoh, not anything else, but his son being taken from him, his hardness broke! That broke him. Is that what God has to do to change you and make you moldable? To take your family, take your children, take your husband, and take your wife, before you will finally become moldable? Does He have to take YOUR life? Put you at that door before you will change? Is that what God has to do? Because He's done that, and you still not changing. So now what does God have to do? He let's you walk in your iniquity and let's you go. And you still think you in God's will! Then the plan starts changing in your life, and you start to walk in a way and in a manner saying it's God, but it's really not!

It's just that you went back to your old man and you've hardened your vessel and you don't want to change. You forgot what it was like to be, you forgot what it was like to be chastened, and you forgotten what it was like to be at a place of surrender! You forgot what it was that brought you to the cross in the first place. When we forget our life changes, and it will go in the direction that we want it to go, not the way God wants you to go. But when you remember you start to have reverence because you are grateful that He pulled you out, and He saved your life, and He gave you that. Now you are changeable and pliable. Without that, without remembering you will never be able to change. Remembrance is a valuable thing. Now, if your memory should go, pray to God. Don't let your memory leave you. Remember what God is doing He shall give you a clear mind. But in

v.21 Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

v.22 What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction,

Did you see that? What if God, what if God, wanting to show His wrath, or His anger, or His disappointment, to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering. In other words, they didn't go through it alone, He went through it with them. Endured with much longsuffering, the vessel of wrath prepared for destruction. See, God prepared that vessel for that very purpose. And He guided them and went with them through all of that destruction. Nebuchadnezzar was a perfect example. Though he was a wicked man God said that he was going to be His chastening rod on Israel. That He was going to put them into bondage. He used Nebuchadnezzar for the wrath that He was about to show on His people to correct them. But even in bondage they still didn't change. Even after all of that they still didn't change. But you see, if Nebuchadnezzar would have continued to walk with God, and be changeable, because in the beginning he knew God had His hand upon him. But in the end, because of his pride, he refused to listen to God and became like the beast of the earth. You see, we cannot continue saying its God when it's no longer God. Why don't you just say it's you and be prideful? Cause I listen sometimes and I hear the words and my heart witnesses about you, or my spirit witnesses against you. And your words come out of your mouth and inside of me I am thinking you are so deceived! But I have to let you go. Then one day you come back and say, "You know what? I was wrong!" I thought it was this way and I thought it was that way, but I was wrong. I thought it was you, Pastor Shirley, but its not you, it's actually me. Because I was hurt, because I was sorry for myself, because I wasn't bold enough to be honest with you.

You understand? God will do His will through you if you are willing to move and be moldable and shapeable. We are the clay in His hand. And if He chooses to poke the clay, He's going to poke the clay. And trials will come. If He chooses to slam it down and shape it and throw some water on it, He will do that. But at the same time, when the clay cannot be molded anymore, He will shape it into something and bake it, or He will cast it away as worthless and no good. He does that to. Because we refuse to change! And he goes on to say in v.22;

v.22 What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction,

v.23 and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory,

v.24 even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles?

Look at this. Because isn't that what was happening? One thing I got to give credit for is how He understood. Paul speaks here and he understands what it means to be shapeable and moldable and understands what you are there for. That purpose! Some will be there for a day of wrath and some will be there for the day of glory. Each was created for a purpose, and let me tell you, everyday is for a different purpose! It is not the same purpose because I know, because I will go and preach one day for God and bring glory, glory, glory, but at the same time He will bring wrath because we are a wicked generation. Do you understand? It will be for His purpose for that day, and for that time, for whomever He needs to speak to. But we have to be changeable and moldable for that moment, we cannot stay the same. We cannot stay the same! That's what the Jews were doing saying that they were the only ones, but Paul was the one who came forward and said it is for the Gentiles to. You got to change that. You got to change that. The Gentiles too! We are all one in Christ and we all go in the same direction by the hand of God. Shooting for one purpose, the glory of God. I don't see anything else. I don't see any plans along the way, I don't see the huge ministry, that's all the things God desires, and He will give it along the way. That's along the way! But the bottom line is that we are shooting for the glory, were shooting for Him and the here after! Were shooting for the relationship, that's it, and whatever comes along the way, be ready! Be ready to change, be ready to be moldable, be ready in season and out! Be ready! Be ready and give glory where glory is due.

Isaiah 64:8 says, "But now, O Lord, You are our Father; we are the clay, and You our potter; and all we are the work of your hand." That's what it says, "we are the work of Your hand". We are the work of your hand Father. Can we not understand that? Is that hard? Is that saying to hard for some of us? Is anybody struggling with what I just said? It is not hard it is easy to understand. What's hard is being pliable in it. Taking it for self. It's easy to understand with the mind, it's just hard to live it, and it's hard to walk it. It's hard to walk in a way that you can be moldable and shapeable, it is, because it takes surrender. It does take a leading of His Spirit; to have open eyes, and open ears to His voice. To know His touch and to feel the pull of His Spirit towards Himself; It does take that. But the only way you can get that is to become surrendered enough to change. To change is good. I like change. I think that everyone who has walked into this place changed! Some may have not, but almost everyone has changed. And let me tell you, I am blown away sometimes after everybody leaves and ministry is over and I pray before I go to bed, I point it out to God and I say, "did you see that?" "Did you hear what he said or she said?" I point it out to God and say, "remember when they first came?"

And I start to cry in my spirit, because I see that. I can see how you folks have changed. You all should take a long look in the mirror and see how you have changed to. Don't you want to continue to change? I don't want to be the same person I am today, tomorrow I'm going to be a different person. I don't want to be the same person I was eight years ago, I was a retched, wicked women! I want to be where I am now and I want to stay here because I am better today.

Tomorrow I will be even better! Because I still know that God is working on me. I am work in progress and I will be changing daily, but the one thing that will always stay the same for me and for you is the hand that is upon me that strengthens us to change. That hand will never change, that hand of God will never leave me or forsake me. That hand will not let me fall after He lifted me up, that hand will not push me down if I pray unto Him and repent. That hand of God will not leave me! As long I as I don't leave Him first! Yeah? O it's a good day today in the Lord! It is! And those who could not make it missed out. Because I tell you what, If you cannot see with your eyes open, and you are in this building, right now as you see your brothers and sisters; this is not a dream, this is real. Guess what? You are alive! You are breathing the air that God has created, your seeing with the eyes that He has given you, your hearing with the ears that He put upon your head, the voice of God speaking to you, changing you and asking you to be moldable. You are alive today because His hand was upon you last night. So today we change, and because of that don't you love Him all the more? Don't you ant to be there with Him in the ever after? You can't get there if you harden you vessel, you can't get there if the clay isn't moldable in the potters hand, you cannot mold yourself, and you will never be able to. But the tools and the things that God has given you through the word of God being ministered on Wednesday nights, through the prophetic gifts on prophetic ministry on Friday nights, and through the mighty word of the Lord given on Sunday, God is giving you ways to be strong and to be firm and everything else in between is between you and God. And He uses people, and He uses your family, and He will use your job, and everything in your life to teach you the lessons about being moldable and changeable. Can you see it? Or do you get upset and harden yourself? It is not an easy place, but I tell you what, Paul understood. Look in **Colossians chapter 1:24**, and it says;

v.24 I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church,

v.25 of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God,

v.26 the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints.

v.27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

v.28 Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

v.29 To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

You see this? Paul totally understood that everything that he was doing and the direction that he was going, the service that he was performing was totally all God. That God was guiding him that way, that when he knew that his life was one of servitude, and that whatever came, he was willing to do it all for the glory of God! All for the word of God, all that he preached was all for the glory of God! He understood that it was a sacrifice, a sacrificial service for Christ. Aren't we there too? Isn't that what "Christianity" is all about? Isn't that why you're called a "Christian"? Many people call themselves Christians, but they're far from Christian life. They're far from Christ likeness! That's what "Christian means; "Christ-like"! And when people say they are Christians, yet don't believe in the things of God when God moves through men and women, it is not Christ like at all! And you're a liar! We need to come to a place in our walk with God and understand that what you are doing, God is doing through this day, to shape you into the ministry that He is guiding you into. It's your service to Him by His hand. By His hand He put you there, by His hand He called you out. By His footprints He laid your path, and everything He has done is for His own glory, not for your! Take not His glory away or He shall harden you! It's not about the things we do upon this earth; this day at this moment, it's not! It's not about the person you laid your hand upon who once was blind and now sees, it's not! It's not about the lame walking or the dead being raised, it's not! It's not about the revelations of the bibles mysteries; it's not! It's not about any of that! Those are all the things along the way. What Christianity is about is servitude to the one who has His hand upon you. Period! Surrender yourself to the hand of God, if you haven't already, and stop battling with Him. If you are wondering rather to go to the left or to the right, all you have to do is ask yourself one question, "God? Is this what You want?" Simple yeah? But how many of us don't get answers so we come up with our own conclusions. It's because we are not close and we're trying to lead and mold ourselves.

AMEN?!