

NEWSLETTER

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Dear Rekindled Church Family,

Happy New Year! As we stand on the threshold of a brand new year, we extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to each and every one of you. We trust that the holiday season brought you joy, love, and the warmth of family and friends.

The start of a new year is a time of reflection, gratitude, and anticipation. It's a chance for us to look back at the blessings and challenges of the past year and to look forward with hope and renewed faith. As we gather together as a church community, we are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead and the journey we will undertake together.

In the spirit of new beginnings, let us take a moment to express our gratitude for the unwavering support and commitment that each member of our church family has shown throughout the past year. Your dedication to our shared mission has made a positive impact on our community and beyond.

As we enter this new chapter, let us be guided by the lessons of the past and the hope of the future. The challenges we face may be great, but our faith is greater. Together, with God's grace, we can overcome any obstacle and continue to grow spiritually, individually, and as a congregation.



HAPPY NEW YEARS! (Cont.)

Embracing the New Year with Hope and Faith

In the coming weeks and months, we have exciting plans and events to strengthen our bonds and deepen our connection with each other and with God. Whether it's through worship, fellowship, or service, there are countless ways for each of us to contribute to the vibrancy and vitality of our church community.

As we embark on this journey into the new year, let us hold onto the promise of Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." With this assurance, let us face the challenges and joys of the upcoming year with confidence and trust in God's divine plan for each of us and for our church.

May 2024 be a year of spiritual growth, love, and unity for our church family. Together, let us embrace the opportunities that lie ahead and make this year a testimony to the goodness and grace of our Lord.

Wishing you a blessed and joyous New Year!

In Christ's love,
Doyle Rowan





LESSONS FROM THE POTTERY SHOPPE

From The Traveling Pulpit (WINTER 2024 EDITION)

By: [Burley W. Moore](#)

“The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel. At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.”
(Jer. 18:1-10)

Introduction

If you've never been to Seagrove, NC, and visited the pottery shoppes, then I would suggest that it's a trip worth taking. You probably are not aware of this, but Seagrove is the capital of hand-crafted pottery in the United States. Pottery making was a familiar sight during biblical days and is believed to be one of the oldest biblical crafts. The prophet “Jeremiah” was sent by God to the “potter's house” not just to preach a sermon, but to use what he saw as an object lesson in preparing a sermon for the nation of “Israel” (v.1-2). The message from the pottery shop is most often rejected because it illustrates God's great Sovereignty over man. As we study about the “potter” and the “clay,” we can see a picture of our lives as we stand before a Sovereign God. I want you to take a trip with me as we study this portion of God's Word and visit a pottery shoppe where we'll learn some valuable spiritual lessons. Jeremiah's visit to the “potter's house” teaches three great truths in these first ten verses. Being the Divine Potter that He is, God is not only the “Potter,” but the very Creator of the “clay” itself.

God is Pictured as the Divine Potter Who has Power to Make v.3

“Jeremiah” pictures God as a “Potter” Who does a “work on the wheels” as he describes the typical work that a “potter” does. Herein, we're reminded that our lives don't exist by chance or by an accident of nature, but as a result of God's work of creation as recorded in the book of Genesis. In spite of today's modern philosophy of evolution, the Bible emphatically declares that God made man in His own “image” and in His own “likeness” (Gen. 1:26-27). Humanism seeks to remove God as Creator and make man accountable unto himself. But, just as surely as a watch has a watchmaker, this world has a Creator and man has a Maker to Whom he is accountable.



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With man being made after the “image” of God, he was created a Trinity like unto the Creator Himself (I Thess. 5:23). Man’s “spirit” is his spiritual consciousness. Man’s “soul” is his eternal consciousness. Man’s “body” is his “clay” house that enables him to live and function while upon this earth. The Christian is a person who not only recognizes God as His Creator, but as his loving Heavenly “father” (Isa. 64:8). Not only does the New Testament believer recognize God has his Heavenly “father,” but so did the Old Testament believer. While everyone is a product of God’s physical act of creation, not everyone has a proper spiritual relationship with Him. Even though a person may acknowledge a Creator, it doesn’t mean that they know Him as “father” (Matt. 6:9) through repentance and faith in Christ (Gal. 4:6-7).

Jeremiah’s descriptive words give a graphic picture of God’s absolute Sovereign authority over all His creation. The difference between the ugly goopy blob of “clay” and the beautiful piece of pottery is the “potter.” It’s as foolish for us to dispute the Sovereignty of God as it is for a piece of “clay” to quarrel with the “potter.” “Clay” cannot make itself nor can it mold itself into a finished “vessel.” Therefore, the power of the “clay” lies in the hands of the “potter” alone (Rom. 9:20-23). Being the Creator and Ruler of the universe, nothing can come to pass apart from His Sovereign will (Isa. 45:9-12).

By virtue of the fact that God has created everything in existence, makes Him the absolute Owner and final Disposer of all that He has made. Sitting upon His throne of dominion, God knows the end from the beginning and the means to be used in attaining that end. God’s Sovereignty is coupled with infinite wisdom, holiness, and love which gives comfort and assurance to the redeemed. Our modern-day trend is to exclude the Sovereignty of God and exalt the pride of human accomplishment. However, Christians need to take heart because God is still on the throne and is in charge of running the affairs of our universe and He’ll do with it as He pleases.

The reason for putting the “clay” on the “wheels” is to bear down on the “clay” and make something useful out of it by applying pressure. God is not playing with us like a child would play with toy figures, but He is at “work” giving us purpose and meaning to life. This business of creation is no hobby with God, but it is His divine “work” in our daily lives. God has a purpose for your life and to live without discovering that purpose is to live an unfulfilled life. Just as the “potter” has a perfect plan for the “clay,” God has a perfect plan for our lives (Eph. 2:10). As patiently as the “potter” works the “clay,” God works in the lives of His own to conform us into His “image” (Rom. 8:29). As we think back to “Joseph” (Gen. 37-42) in the Old Testament, there is no doubt that it was hard for him to understand at the time how he could be in the center of God’s will having been sold as a slave and imprisoned unjustly, but yet God was molding him on the “wheel” of life (Rom. 8:28). The longer we live the more we learn how God brings us to the point of our highest potential for His Glory through the painful and difficult “work” of His design on the “wheel” of life.



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God is Pictured as the Divine Potter Who has Power to Remake v.4

The “vessel” of “clay” that became “marred” reminds us of Adam and Eve that became “marred” by their original sin. That is when God “made it again another vessel, as seemed good to” Him, by providing a plan of redemption that ultimately included the promise of a new body after death. The material which God chose to illustrate His “vessel” was not a piece of wood or metal or rock, but a pliable piece of “clay” from the earth that could be molded. Originally, man was made from the “dust of the ground” and became a “living soul” when God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life” (Gen. 2:7). God saves His people in order to make us a “vessel” to contain His Gospel “treasure” (II Cor. 4:7). “Clay” alone is a raw natural material of no great value because it cannot do anything on its own. There is nothing we can do to make ourselves pleasing and acceptable to God. Only God’s “grace” and not our “works” can win us favor with the Master Potter (Eph. 2:8-9).

It would be ideal if the “clay” was always yielded, but such is not the case because we’re sinful creatures living in a fallen world. It’s true that God made man with a will, but we learn from the story of Adam and Eve that when given a choice, apart from God’s intervention, they chose a path of depravity. In the beginning, Adam and Eve were created in perfection, but disobedience “marred” their relationship with God and introduced the entire human race into a world of sin. It wasn’t “Adam” that went looking for “God,” but “God” that went looking for “Adam” and exchanged his “fig leaves” for the “coats of skins” in an act of grace and mercy (Gen. 3:7, 21).

God’s best for His people is often rejected just like Adam and Eve’s rejection of God’s plan in the Garden of Eden. Like a foreign object will “mar” the “clay,” so will worldliness “mar” a believer’s testimony (II Cor. 6:17). As Christians, our purpose in life is to serve and glorify God; however, if we’re not fulfilling that purpose then God has the right to chastise us. God will never disown (Jh. 10:28-29) one of His chosen “vessels,” but He does promise to deal with His people when they resist and disobey His will. God, in “grace” is willing to forgive His sinful people and make them anew through repentance and faith (Mk. 1:15). However, that doesn’t excuse any believer for failing to yield and become submissive to His Master. Only the regenerating Spirit of God is able to restore a “marred ... vessel” into something useful for God’s glory.

God is Pictured as the Divine Potter Who has Power to Judge that which He Has Made v.5-10

The “clay was marred” not because of the imperfections of the “Potter,” but because the “clay” wanted to have its own “evil way” (v.11-12). It’s generally believed that Jeremiah’s reference at that given time in history, represented the “nation” of “Israel.” However, it can be applicable to every Christian who is referred to by the apostle Paul as “the Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16) who also explained the difference between national “Israel” and spiritual “Israel” (Rom. 9:4-8). Often, believers mar their lives by making plans and bad choices outside of God’s will that produces God’s “chastisement” (Heb. 9:5-11). To disobey God is the same as saying that we can do a better job planning and managing our lives than He can.



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No mention is made in our text of the potter's furnace, but there had to be one because a piece of pottery cannot be made without it. Likewise, we cannot become what God wants us to be without going through His refining fires (Jam. 1:2-4). A "vessel" is of no value until it has gone through the heat of the furnace. The heat of the furnace is what gives the pottery its strength, meaning, purpose, and beauty. Likewise, life must have its furnaces of affliction, although they are not necessarily enjoyed nor welcomed (I Pet. 4:12-13).

What a "potter" does with a lump of "clay" depends on the Sovereign control of the "potter." "Jeremiah" had preached to "Israel" that destruction was certain if they didn't "repent" (Lk 13:3) of their sin. This reminds us that the Hand of God can create as well as protect and destroy. "Nineveh" (Jonah 1-4) is a prime example of this in the fact that it was doomed, but their destruction was postponed because the people repented and turned to God. When left to himself, man finds that he is on a one-way course to destruction; therefore, we need God's direction to escape His judgment (Isa. 30:14). Man acts and thinks like he is in charge of his own destiny, but a rude awakening is in store for such a person.

Scripture declares that it is God Who has the power to "pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy." In His Sovereignty, God has the choice of whom to judge ("pluck up") and whom to bless ("build"). Preaching the kind of sermon that "Jeremiah" preached is one that can get a preacher in trouble with a fallen people. He had already been imprisoned and threatened with death and it was just a matter of time before he was beaten and fastened in stocks (20:1-2). Unfortunately, the nation of "Israel" didn't repent and suffered the consequences when they resisted the ministry of the prophet "Jeremiah" (v.18).

Closing

After receiving his message from the "potter's house," which was probably located near the "valley of the son of Hinnon" (19:2), "Jeremiah" delivered it there. The "valley of the son of Hinnon" was a place dedicated to the worship of idols. It was such a terribly wicked place that King Josiah turned it into Jerusalem's garbage dump. The name "son of Hinnon" eventually became known as GeHinnom (Gehenna) in the Hebrew and translated "death" or "hell" in the New Testament, where it's used numerous times referring to the eternal torment of all lost sinners in the "lake of fire" (Mk. 9:44-48, II Pet. 2:4, Rev. 1:18, 6:8, 20:13-14).

In breaking a "potter's earthen bottle" (19:1) before the eyes of "Israel," this God-anointed prophet declared that they had passed the point of no return with God (19:10-11). Don't ever let anyone tell you that God doesn't have His limits in dealing with sinners. The only time to yield to Christ is when God makes one tender to His mercies (Jh. 6:44, 16:7-15). Once the "clay" becomes hardened, the only thing left to do is to "break" it which reminds us that we don't come to God on our terms when we get ready, but on His terms and in His timing. "Felix" told Paul that he wanted to wait for a more



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“convenient season,” but there is no record of that ever happening (Acts. 24:24-27). Scripture teaches a wayward believer, that there is “sin unto death” (1 Jh. 5:16) when God says enough is enough (Acts 5:1-11).

From the very beginning of man, God has been calling out a people unto Himself in “repentance” (Rom. 2:4) and “faith” (Rom 3:22) and dealing with His disobedient children. It’s God’s desire for us to be a “vessel” available for service, morally clean, and filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18). At this point, we need to always remember that a “vessel” doesn’t manufacture anything, but only receives, contains, and shares. May our prayer be that God will help us to be a “vessel” unto “honor” and fit for the Master’s use.

In closing, let’s ask ourselves if we are a soft, pliable, refined piece of “clay” in the Hand of God, or a resistant, obstinate, defiant, unyielding “vessel” that refuses to give Him His rightful place in our life? When we see God for Who He is and ourselves for who we are, then we should join the songwriter in saying and singing:

Have thine own way, Lord! Have thine own way!
Thou art the “potter,” I am the “clay”.
Mold me and make me after Thy will,
While I am waiting, yielded, and still.

Covenant of Grace Ministries
24504A Ridgecrest Road
Locust, NC 28097
Burley W. Moore-Bible Teacher
Phone 704-485-5337, (cell) 336-543-5364
e-mail: burleymoore@att.net

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A WORD FROM PASTOR WILSON

Hi Church Family,

New Year, Same God

Yes it's a new year! I am so excited to see what God has in store for Rekindled, and all of you! Wow! Our church this past Sunday had people on all sides! I am so grateful at what He is doing to reach our area through our people. I want to keep that goal in mind for 2024. Let's keep our focus on SOULS. I want growth, who wouldn't? But I want souls won to Jesus Christ more. I want to see change in our area! I want to see our members grow in the Bible. I just want to see God do a work in our community, and if He allows us to help, that is what I want.

There is no other body of believers I would want to be with than you all. You all bring me as a Pastor so much joy! I appreciate all of your Christmas kindness, and I hope you felt the same love and kindness from myself and our church body! As your pastor can I encourage you to do one thing: discipline yourselves for the Word. Please read it daily, and feast upon its nourishment. It's rich, y'all. Please find a good reading plan, and devotional to go along with it. Tessa and I have many to choose from if you need help. Please read your Bibles, and then share with others what you have learned. It's so good to share, and too good to keep to yourselves.

I look forward to this New Year! I love you all, and you all bring something so special to this church! Let's go after our community this year in 2024!

Pastor Wilson & Tess Moore

***If you have any ideas or would like to contribute an article, insight, good news or anything to the monthly newsletter, please let Doyle or Tessa know! We welcome your ideas and your help.**

If anyone is interested in taking over sending out the cards and welcome cards, it is welcomed. The church provides the cards and stamps, you just have to write an encouraging note and send to people.



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6:30PM

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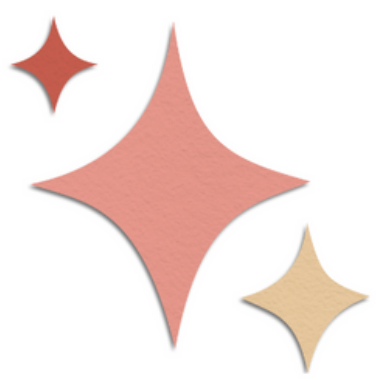
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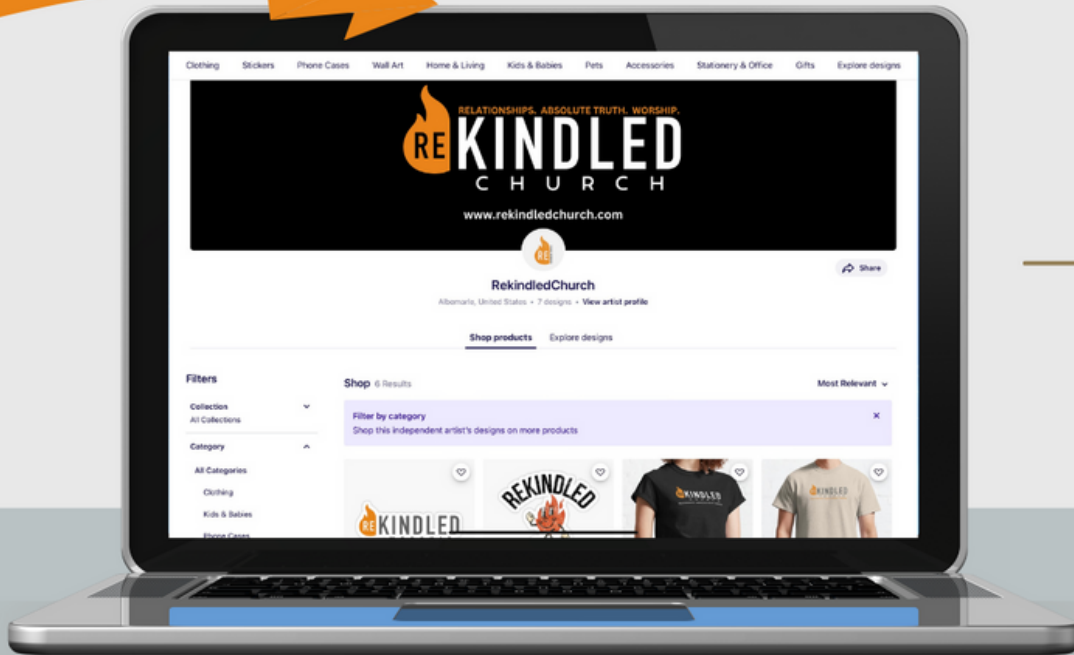
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