

The Potter

by Peggy Lively

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THE POTTER

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As we look in Jeremiah 18:1-4 at the potter molding and shaping the clay, it is a little uncomfortable to identify ourselves with that lump of clay. The clay is totally subject to the Potter's hands, his control and his design. We recognize that Jesus is the Potter, and sometimes it can be a frightening experience turning our lives over to His hands. Why is it that we resist Him when we imagine those hands molding and shaping us? I think there are three primary reasons that we hesitate yielding our lives to the Potter's will:

1. We don't want to submit the control of our lives to someone else.
2. The process of being re-shaped is often painful.
3. We fear what He may do. What will my life look like when He is finished?

Now, let's look at some reasons why we *can* trust our lives in The Potter's hands. He is:

Prosperous

He loves us and wants to bless us as His children. As we place ourselves in His hands, He shapes us and our lives in order to *prosper* us, not to harm us. (**Jeremiah 29:11**)

“Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night...whatever he does *prosper*.” (**Psalms 1:1-3**)

“...he who trusts in the Lord will *prosper*.” (**Proverbs 28:25**)

“...*prosperity* is the reward of the righteous.” (**Proverbs 13:21**)

“If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!”
(**Matthew 7:11**)

When we give our lives to Jesus and accept Him as our Savior and Lord, we receive spiritual riches through His life that was sacrificed for us.

“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.”
(**II Corinthians 8:9**)

“The power in your life and mine that results in blessing is in direct proportion to the extent that you are willing to die to...your own will, your own goals, your own dreams, your own rights...If blessing is in direct proportion to a willingness to die to self, how blessed are you?” -Anne Graham Lotz, The Joy of My Heart, p. 332

Omniscient

God's thoughts and ways are much higher than our own (**Isaiah 55:9**), even regarding our own lives. He knows us and what is best for us better than we know ourselves.

"...for your Father knows what you need before you ask him." (**Matthew 6:8**)

"I am the good Shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me...and I lay down my life for the sheep." (**John 10:14**)

"...The Lord knows those who are his..." (**II Timothy 2:19**)

"Since no man knows the future, who can tell him what is to come?" (**Ecclesiastes 8:7**)

No man knows the future, but our God *does* and He leads us and guides us through this life according to His wisdom and knowledge.

"You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand." (**Psalms 16:11**)

"I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please. From the east I summon a bird of prey; from a far-off land, a man to fulfill my purpose. What I have said, that will I bring about; what I have planned, that will I do." (**Isaiah 46:10-11**)

The Potter in his omniscience is the most capable for shaping us and molding us according to our needs and circumstances. Trust Him to equip and prepare you for your future.

"Jesus Christ is the One by Whom, for Whom, through Whom everything was made. Therefore He knows what's wrong in your life and how to fix it. Let Him take charge. Give Him the authority to put it right." -Anne Graham Lotz, The Joy of My Heart, p.327

Trustworthy

Because our Redeemer loves us so much, we can trust our lives in His hands. He is going to shape us with a heart of love, working all things together for the good of those who love him. (**Romans 8:28**) He has our best interest in mind as He molds and shapes us.

"...so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him."
(**Jeremiah 18:4**)

"Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge... One thing God has spoken, two things have I heard: that you, O God are strong, and that you, O Lord, are loving." (**Psalms 62:8 and 11**)

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.” (**Proverbs 3:5-6**)

“...the Lord’s unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in him.” (**Psalm 32:10**)

“In you our fathers put their trust; they trusted and you delivered them. They cried to you and were saved; in you they trusted and were not disappointed.” (**Psalm 22:4-5**)

Tested

The faithfulness of God has stood the test of time...over 2000 years. We can look in the Bible over and over and see how God protected and provided for his people. Here are some examples from scripture of those who experienced God’s faithfulness and power in their lives:

David “I was young and now I am old, yet I have *never* seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread.” (**Psalm 37:25**)

Noah “Noah did everything just as God commanded him...God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and the livestock that were with him in the ark, and he sent a wind over the earth , and the waters receded...Then God blessed Noah and his sons...”
(**Genesis 6:22, 8:1, 9:1**)

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied to the king, ‘O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king’... Nebuchadnezzar then approached the opening of the blazing furnace and shouted, ‘Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!’ ...the fire had not harmed their bodies, nor was a hair of their heads singed...Then Nebuchadnezzar said, ‘Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants!’”
(**Daniel 3:16-17, 26-28**)

Daniel “‘Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?’ Daniel answered, ‘O king, live forever! My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight.’” (**Daniel 6:20-22**)

The Disciples “A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped... [Jesus] got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, ‘Quiet! Be still!’ Then the wind died down and it was completely calm... [The disciples] were terrified and asked each other, ‘Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!’”
(**Mark 4:35-41**)

Then there are those who literally tested Jesus as He walked this earth:

The Pharisees “Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words... ‘Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?’...But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, ‘You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me?’... ‘Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.’ When they heard this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away.” (**Matthew 22:15-22**)

Experts of the law “On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. ‘Teacher,’ he asked, ‘what must I do to inherit eternal life?’... He answered: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’...But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbor?’... ‘The one who had mercy on him’...Jesus told him, ‘Go and do likewise.’” (**Luke 10:25-37**, the Good Samaritan)

Pilate and Herod “Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers and the people, and said to them, ‘You brought me this man as one who was inciting the people to rebellion. I have examined him in your presence and have found no basis for your charges against him. Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us; as you can see, he has done nothing to deserve death.’” (**Luke 23:14-15**)

We are so privileged to have the Bible and be able to witness how God has demonstrated His power and faithfulness to His people over thousands of years. If our God can conquer the floods, quench the fiery furnace, shut the mouths of lions and calm the stormy seas, don't you think He is capable of ruling your life? He is Almighty God, Everlasting Father, Gracious Redeemer and Loving Friend. I can't think of a better place for my life to be than in His hands.

Eternal

God will never leave us nor forsake us (**Joshua 1:5**) because he has always been and always will be. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. (**Hebrews 13:8**)

“Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord, is the Rock eternal.” (**Isaiah 26:4**)

“Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.” (**I Timothy 1:17**)

As we accept Jesus into our lives as our Savior, we receive eternal life with Him: “God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.” (**I John 5:11-12**)

“I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.” (**John 10:28**)

“He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.”

(Ecclesiastes 3:11)

“The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.” **(I John 2:17)**

Restoring

God in His mercy and grace desires to restore all things. He restores:

Comfort: “I have seen his ways, but I will heal him; I will guide him and restore comfort to him...” **(Isaiah 57:18)**

Peace: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives.” **(John 14:27)**

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” **(John 16:33)**

Health: “But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds, declares the Lord...”
(Jeremiah 30:17)

Joy: “Restore to me the Joy of my salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.”
(Psalm 51:12)

Strength: “But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me...For when I am weak, then I am strong.”
(II Corinthians 12:9-10)

My soul: “He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul.” **(Psalm 23:2-3)**

My being: “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old is gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ...”
(II Corinthians 5:17-18)

My righteousness: “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” **(II Corinthians 5:21)**
“ ‘Come now, let us reason together,’ says the Lord, ‘Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.’”
(Isaiah 1:17)

And one day He will restore

Heaven and earth: “Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind.” (**Isaiah 65:17**)

“But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.” (**II Peter 3:13**)

As the Potter works in your life, trust Him to shape you for the exact purposes He has designed for you. “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (**Ephesians 2:10**)

So as you commit your heart and life fully to the will of the Potter, do not fear. Instead remember that He is:

Prosperous
Omniscient
Trustworthy
Tested
Eternal and
Restoring!!

“The Hammer Holds”

This hammer pounds to give me form,
This flame, it melts my dreams.
I glow with fire and fury
As I'm twisted like a vine.
My final shape, my final form
I'm sure I'm bound to find.

Chorus

So dream a little dream for me
in hopes that I'll remain.
And cry a little cry for me
So I can bear the flames.
And hurt a little hurt for me
My future is untold.
But my dreams are not the issue here
For they, the hammer holds.

And the water, it cools me gray
And the hurt subdued somehow.
I have my shape this sharpened point,
What is my purpose now?
And the question, it still remains,
What am I to be?
Perhaps some perfect piece of art
Displayed for all to see

Chorus

And a hammer pounds again
But flames I do not feel.
This force that drives me helplessly
Through flesh and wood reveals
A burn that burns much deeper,
It's more than I can stand.
The reason for my life was to take the life
of a guiltless man.

So dream a little dream for me
In hopes that I'll remain.
And cry a little cry for me
So I can bear the pain.
And hurt a little hurt for me
My future is so bold.
But my dreams are not the issue here
For they, the hammer holds.
This task before me may seem unclear
But it, my Maker holds.

Lyrics from “The Hammer Holds” by Bebo Norman