Trust the Process
He is the Potter
by
Debbie Locklin
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Introduction

This book is a compilation of the Bible lessons that I teach as I demonstrate on the potter’s wheel. The lessons from the potter and the clay are so much more meaningful when you can watch a potter at work!

As I demonstrate on the potter's wheel, I explain the process of pottery. Using Scripture, the Christian life is symbolized in the process of pottery. God is the potter, we are the clay, the potter's wheel is Jesus and the water is the Word of God. A clear Gospel message is presented.

This demonstration/Bible lesson is interesting to all ages, from 3 year olds to adults! It makes a great lesson for family fellowships, ladies meetings, homeschool meetings, vacation Bible schools, youth meetings, senior luncheons, etc... This demonstration/Bible lesson can be adapted to your time schedule. Allowing 45 minutes to one hour is ideal, but more or less time is workable.

At a ladies retreat, three Bible lessons are demonstrated with the potter's wheel and pottery. The first lesson is about the
The process of pottery. The second lesson continues the process of pottery into the firing stage and likens this stage to the trials and tribulations of our lives. The last lesson about the many uses of clay and pottery illustrates how God has many plans and purposes for each of His children. Those who see themselves as weak or cracked vessels will be encouraged by the Word of God. Through much prayer and planning, these retreats have been a wonderful time of fellowship and growth.

I also teach handbuilding and potter's wheel classes in my home. You will learn the many techniques of working with clay, including glazing and firing your finished stoneware pieces. The classes are small and held in the afternoons or evenings. A monthly tuition and the cost of your clay are required.

Five day "Clay Camps" are available in the summer for children of all ages. Children will complete several hand-built clay projects and observe potter's wheel demonstrations. Clay vessels will be finished with acrylic paint or a pit firing. Camp will last for two hours per day. Camps are designed to be held at my home, but I can also bring the clay to your location! Give me a call if you or your child is interested in having fun in the mud!
God uses the symbolism of God as the Potter and people as clay in Isaiah 64:8. "Yet, O Lord, you are the Father. We are the clay, You are the Potter, we are all the work of Your Hand." The process of creating pottery can be used as an illustration of human life and many lessons may be learned. In Bible times, the potter and the process of his work was very familiar to most people. In those times, people bought all of their vessels from a potter; therefore they could easily understand the illustrations that God used. Today, not many people have seen a potter at work; but the illustrations still apply to today and can be learned from.

God formed Adam from clay as told in Genesis 2:7, “And the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being.” Our bodies, today, are made up of the same components as clay; dirt and water. We know this because when our bodies die, they return to dust and water when decomposed. I, as a potter, am in awe of a God who can create living, breathing, totally unique human beings from the
same materials that I create only a vessel with on the potter’s wheel. He is a wonderful, compassionate God, “for He knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.” (Psalm 103:14)

Clay is an interesting natural material that can be dug directly out of the ground. To most people, it is useless and only gets stuck on shovels when gardening. To the potter, clay is a wonderful material that can be used to create many forms, both artistic and functional. We are the same way; without God we are useless. Isaiah 29:16 states, “You turn things upside down, as if the potter were thought to be like the clay! Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, ‘He did not make me.’? Can the pot say to the potter, ‘He knows nothing.’?” God created us to be useful to Him, just as clay is useful to the potter. We cannot tell God what to do or how to do it, He does as He chooses.

The clay must be prepared by the potter before it can be used on the potter’s wheel. If it contains pebbles, grass and other objects, the vessel will be weak and marred. Before the advent of machinery, the process of preparing clay was very time-
consuming. The clay was dug out of the ground and allowed to dry in a potter’s field. It was then pounded into a dust, placed in a trough and covered with salt water. The slimy mud, called slip, was stirred and then allowed to settle. The impurities would sink to the bottom of the trough and the slip could be drawn off and leave the impurities behind. The slip is allowed to settle again and then the excess water is drawn off. The clay is then treaded with feet to improve its consistency. The clay was then stored for six months to improve its plasticity.

Just as the clay must be prepared for the potter’s wheel, we must be prepared by God to begin our relationship with Jesus. Not only does God create our physical being, he develops our spiritual being also. I found it interesting the salt water is preferred to cure clay, as God calls believers to be the salt of the earth. God places many believers and situations in our lives, before we trust in Jesus, to teach us about Him and prepare us for the moment of our salvation.
Chapter 2-Centering on the Potter’s Wheel

After the clay is prepared, it is ready to be placed on the potter’s wheel. The potter throws the clay onto the center of the wheel so that it sticks firmly and will not slide off. In ancient times, the potter’s wheel was a round flat rock that the potter turned by hand as he formed the vessel. In this illustration of God, the potter, and we, the clay; the potter’s wheel could symbolize Jesus. Just as the potter places the clay on the wheel, at just the right time in a person’s life, God gives him the faith to believe that Jesus came to earth to live as a man, to die as punishment for the sins of man and to be resurrected to life. At that point in time, the person's name is placed in God’s Book of Life and will live eternally in heaven. Just as the clay is stuck to the wheel, he is stuck to Jesus.

Psalm 40:1-3 states, “He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord.” This verse illustrates how God lifts us out of a life of sin and death
to make us into a new creation. Thinking of being in a slimy pit, there is no way to climb out by yourself; you’ll keep sliding back down. It is not until someone standing on firm ground reaches into the pit to lift you out can you get out of the pit. What a beautiful illustration of how God sent His Son down to earth in order to lift us up into heaven! We do not do it ourselves, but it is something that God does to and for us. Just as the clay cannot place itself on the wheel and make itself into a vessel, we cannot do anything, but believe and receive his hand, to be created into an eternal vessel.

Once the clay is stuck to the wheel, the potter begins to center the clay on the wheel. The ball of clay must be smooth and in the perfect center of the wheel in order to be formed into a vessel. The centering process takes the most speed of the wheel, the most strength of the potter and the most water. Centering is a difficult part of the process for a potter to learn, because he must learn to keep his hands still, while the wheel does the work of centering the clay. The clay tends to be bumpy and the potter has to press against those bumps to make the clay smooth and
centered. Once the clay is centered on the wheel, it looks like it’s not spinning. I heard another potter once say, “God wants to take us to a place of stillness, while we are still moving.” God says, “Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10) Once we are centered in Christ, we come to a place of stillness or peace, knowing that our eternal destiny is taken care of. This time of centering in Christ in the beginning of our Christian life, requires much work on God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit’s (water) part in order for us to learn how to live in the speed of earthly life. God expects us to learn to center our lives around Him as illustrated in 1 Peter 1:13, “Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.”
Chapter 3-Opening the Clay

Once the clay is centered on the wheel, it is ready to be opened up. A hole is pressed into the center of the ball of clay by pressing the thumbs gently down until about ¼ inch of clay is left at the bottom. This hole is then pulled open by pulling the clay from the base to the outside of the wheel. This process forms the inside of the vessel.

We often think of the center of something as the heart. The heart of this ball of clay was full of clay, until it was opened up. We could say that it was full of itself! Isn’t this how we are until God comes into our hearts through Jesus Christ? He fills us with His Holy Spirit and we are no longer full of ourselves. As we open up to God’s will for our lives, our hearts are able to love others more than ourselves. Romans 5:5 states, “And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.”
Chapter 4-Thinning the Walls

The next part of the process involves thinning the walls of the vessel. As the walls are thinned, the vessel becomes taller. The clay is pressed on both the inside and outside of the vessel with the tips of the fingers and slowly moved upward. As the clay is pressed, a ridge forms and this ridge is pulled up. This process is completed slowly and several times in order to created a wall of even thickness. A cylinder begins to form and this vessel is no longer just a ball of clay.

Just as the clay is beginning to change, the Christian will begin to change his lifestyle. “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is —his good, pleasing and perfect will.” (Romans 12:2) I once heard a potter say, “We must never be satisfied with small hearts and thick walls.” A potter would not want to make a vessel with walls that are too thick or the vessel would be too heavy to be useful. The same is true for the Christian; God wants us to have big, loving hearts toward others and not to form walls around ourselves to keep others away. God wants us to be transparent and be willing to share our weaknesses with others. It is through our weaknesses
and our struggles that others will see God in our lives. If we were perfect, we wouldn’t need God.

Chapter 5-Impurities in the Clay
Sometimes, as the potter is forming the vessel, he will feel impurities or air pockets in the clay. It is interesting to note that these impurities are often not visible on the outside of the vessel and sometimes not visible at all, but can be felt by the potter. These impurities will cause the vessel to be thrown off-center or have cracks later. The potter must remove these impurities in order to complete the vessel. If the impurities cannot be removed, the potter must smash his vessel and begin again. He can take the same clay back to the wedging board and use it again, if necessary. The reused clay is often more difficult to work with because of additional air pockets and inconsistencies in the clay. This is the illustration that God used in Jeremiah 18:4 to show Jeremiah that He could destroy the nation of Israel for its disobedience and then rebuilt it, “But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him.”

These impurities remind me of sin in the Christian’s life. Most often the sin in our lives is not visible to other people, but we know that it is there and God can see and feel it! A sin can be a poor attitude of the heart or impure thoughts. If we allow sin to continue in our lives, we will not be useful to God. A life of sin in the Christian will impair our fellowship with God, but God gives us a means to restore this relationship with Him. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify
us from all unrighteousness. I John 1:9” We are most useful and easily molded for God when we don’t sin in the first place, but God will continue to use us after we have confessed our sins to Him.

Chapter 6-Shaping the Vessel
After the walls of the vessel are thinned to about ¼ inch and are an even thickness throughout the wall, the vessel is ready to be shaped. When the inside of the walls are pressed on, the vessel becomes larger in diameter. When the outside of the walls are squeezed, the vessel becomes smaller in diameter. This is the fun part of the process! You can shape the vessel quickly into a planned shape or play with the shape until you like it.

Once the vessel is shaped; the excess water is sponged off and the excess clay at the base is trimmed away to reveal the beauty of the shape. The excess clay at the base was necessary for support of the vessel as it was being shaped. Once the shaping is complete, the excess clay can be removed. The vessel is then cut from the wheel with a wire tool and removed to allow it to dry. Although the vessel looks complete now, it must be allowed to dry completely and fired before it can be used for its planned purpose. If it were filled with water and flowers now, it would make a very bad impression!
As Christians, the time in our lives when God is molding and shaping us can be an interesting and exciting time. God can use His Word and other Christians to teach us how to live a life for Him. It is great fun to learn from His Word and apply it to our lives. God wants us to continue to grow and learn from Him throughout our lives, but this is not an end in itself. God wants us to become tools that He can use to complete His plans. If we are just sitting in a pew and soaking up His Word, but never using our gifts and serving Him; we are not a useful vessel! It is important for us to get off the wheel and complete the process, in order to fulfill His plan for our lives. Although the molding process can be like a good massage, the purpose of a massage is to make the muscles useful and not just to feel good. The next part of the process often doesn’t feel good to us, but it is still required for us to become complete, useful vessels for God.
Chapter 7-The Trimming Process

After the vessel has dried for a short time, it becomes what potters call “leather hard.” In this state, the clay can be trimmed and carved without distorting its shape. It is at this time that the potter will trim away the excess clay at the bottom of the vessel, form a “foot” for the vessel to stand on and sign his work. Once the excess clay, that once supported the vessel as it was formed on the wheel, is trimmed away; the beauty of the shape of the vessel is revealed.

God wants us to stand on His Word and His promises only. We have a tendency to rely heavily on others and things for our support. God often has to trim away from our lives the people or things that we don’t want to let go of. When these things are trimmed away, our beauty in Christ is revealed. John 15:1 states, “He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does not bear fruit he trims clean so that it will be even more fruitful.” This trimming process is necessary for our lives, as well as for the pottery, so that we might be more useful or fruitful for God.
Chapter 8-The Drying Process

When the forming on the wheel is complete, the vessel is cut from the wheel and placed on a shelf to dry. The drying process can take a day or a week, depending on the humidity of the surrounding air and the thickness of the vessel. All moisture must be dried from the vessel to prevent any cracking or breakage when the vessel is fired. As it is fired, any remaining moisture trapped in the vessel will become steam and can cause the vessel to crack or even explode in the kiln. Although the vessel looks usable at this stage; it is still very fragile and will return to soft clay if it is mixed with water.

Sometimes, in the Christian life, God wants us to go through a drying process. He wants us to remove ourselves from the world and sit on a shelf for a while. This can be a time of reflection and examination of what plans God may have for our lives. We often busy ourselves with Christian service without asking and waiting for God’s direction. When our service is ineffective, we don’t understand why. There are many demands on our lives and it is difficult at times to choose God’s best activities for ourselves. There is nothing wrong with saying “no” to opportunities that are offered to us when we don’t feel that God
has called us or gifted us in that area. Think of the story of Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-41. Jesus commended Mary for “sitting” at His feet and listening to what He said. To be useful to God, we must be sure that we are doing the work that He called us to do and we can only know this for sure, if we spend time with Him and in His Word.
Chapter 9-The Firing Process

After the vessel is completely dry, it is ready to be placed in the kiln. A kiln is an oven that is specially designed to heat pottery. When clay is heated, it changes its form and becomes harder, stronger and can no longer return to its clay state. The first firing is for the purpose of making the clay easier to paint with the glaze. Depending on the type of clay used, the bisque firing temperature is about 1800 degrees. The clay is then painted with a glaze, which is a paint that contains silica and other chemicals to adhere to the vessel and make a glassy, waterproof surface. The glaze firing temperature is hotter than the bisque firing, often more than 2000 degrees. Once the firing process is complete, the vessel is strong, beautiful and ready to be used according to the purpose that the potter planned.

The trials and tribulations that we must endure in this life are likened to the firing process. These trials are necessary for us to become more useful to God. James 1:2-4 states, “Consider it pure
joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”  God tests our faith in Him in the trials of our lives. Proverbs 17:3 says, “The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold, but the Lord tests the heart.” It is easy for us to be kind to someone who is kind to us, but the test comes when we are able to be kind to someone who does evil to us. We must learn to continue to trust that God loves us and wants the best for us, even when our lives are a struggle. “In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.” (1 Peter 1:6-7) Trials are not always punishment, but often for the purpose of proving if our faith in Jesus is genuine.

As a potter fires his pottery, he stands on the outside of the kiln and away from the heat to observe how his vessels are holding up to the fire. We have a God who stands with us in the kiln of life’s trials. We know this is true from the story of three men whose faith was proved genuine, even though they were thrown into a furnace. Daniel Chapter Three tells the story of these three men; Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. These men were the noblest, brightest and strongest of Israelite men, who were chosen
by King Nebuchadnezzar to be trained in the Babylonian culture for three years and prepared for the King’s service. Although these men were immersed in the Babylonian culture, they never lost their faith in God. Their faith was soon to be tested.

The king built a ninety foot tall gold statue of himself. He required that everyone bow down and worship it. The king said “Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace.” (Daniel 3:6) When the time came to worship the statue, everyone bowed down except these three men. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego told 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. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold that you have set up.” (Daniel 3:16-18)

This made the king very angry and he ordered the fire to be heated seven times hotter than usual and the strongest soldiers to throw them into the fire. The fire was so hot that the soldiers were killed when they threw the three bound men into the furnace. Then the most amazing thing happened! The king said, “Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed and the fourth looks like a son of the gods.” (Daniel 2:25) ‘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!” So Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the fire, and the satraps, prefects, governors and royal advisers crowded around them. They saw that the fire had not harmed their bodies, nor was a hair of their heads singed; their robes were not scorched and there was no smell of fire on them.’ (Daniel 3:26-27) King Nebuchadnezzar praised God and promoted Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. He said that “they trusted in (God) and defied the king’s command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God.” (Daniel 3:28)

God went into the blazing furnace with these three men and He will do the same for us. He is a God who is with us, not just sitting on a throne in Heaven looking down at us and lamenting over our trials. Jesus experienced all of the same trials that we have to suffer while here on earth. He sent His Holy Spirit, the Comforter, to be with us in the fiery trials of our lives. “’Because he loves me”, says the Lord, “I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation.” (Psalm 91:14-16) Just as the vessel in the kiln cannot see the potter, sometimes we cannot see God during our trials. Even though we cannot see Him, His Word promises us that He will be with us in times of trouble. The firing only lasts for a while and then the vessel is complete; and the same is true for the length
of trials in our lives. 2 Corinthians 4:17 states, “For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.” When a vessel is fired, the clay is changed into something like a rock and can never become dusty clay again. Fired vessels have withstood thousands of years of time, while items made of wood or metal erode back into dirt in that time frame. A Christian who has been proven faithful to God following a life trial is one step closer to eternal glory!
Chapter 10-A Plan for the Vessel

Even before the potter sits at the potter’s wheel, he has a plan for the vessel that he is about to create. Sometimes he will weigh the clay ball in order to create several vessels of the same size and shape. After centering the clay, the way that the ball is opened up will determine the shape of a vessel. If a small hole is created straight into the ball, a cylinder or vase shape is planned. If the hole is given a large, curve shaped opening, a bowl is planned. If the ball is simply flattened, the vessel will become a plate. The potter has a plan for each vessel that he creates on the potter’s wheel.

God has plans for each of His children. He told Jeremiah, “Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you; before you were born I set you apart.” (Jeremiah 1:5) God has plans for us even before we are born. He gives us a free will and it is our role to be clay in His hand and be obedient to his will for our lives. God loves us and has wonderful, exciting plans for our lives! As the palmist said, “Many, O Lord my God, are the wonders you have done. The things you planned for us no one can recount to you; were I to speak and tell of them, they would be too many to declare.” (Psalm 40:5)
Chapter 11-Noble or Common Use

There are many possible vessels that a potter can create and many uses for clay. The potter can create vases, pitchers, cups, bowls, plates, platters, baking dishes, etc… Clay is also used to make bricks, engine parts, sculptures, and even toilets. Special vessels can be made of porcelain clay as used in fine china. Porcelain is very flexible clay when it is in its plastic state and extremely strong after it has been fired. This is why it is used for machinery parts and toilets. So the same clay can be used for special decorative purposes and also for more common utilitarian purposes.

People are all made of the same material, but our creative God makes each as a distinct individual with a unique purpose in life. II Timothy 2:20-21 states, “In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble. If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy and useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.” We are cleansed by the blood of Christ when we put our faith and
trust in Him for our salvation from the consequences of our sin. Once we are cleansed, we become of vessel of noble purposes and useful to God.

We must be careful in determining what a noble purpose is. Sometimes we seek after more visible gifts, such as speaking or teaching, because they seem nobler in our humanly thinking.

Just as clay can be used to create a very useful item, such as a toilet, which is not displayed in the front of the house and it tends to get dirty; many of the purposes that God has for us are necessary, but not as visible to others. Quietly serving others is a noble purpose of God. It is important to be realistic about our strengths, weaknesses and gifts. When we understand exactly how God created us as an individual, we can feel confident that we are a vessel of noble use for Him.
Chapter 12- Treasure in a Clay Jar

In ancient times, it was customary to conceal treasure in clay jars, which had little value or beauty and did not attract attention to themselves or their contents. The Dead Sea Scrolls were hidden in jars of clay for thousands of years. The boy who found them actually kicked and broke one of the jars before discovering the precious contents. At Mesa Verde in Colorado, a large clay jar of corn is displayed in the museum. The corn looks just like dried corn and yet it is over 2000 years old.

Paul spoke of a heavenly treasure that is concealed in a human jar of clay in II Corinthians 4:6-7: “For God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.” The treasure that God gave us is the Gospel message, which He wants us to reveal to those around us. He didn’t give us perfect, beautiful vessels to live in, because He wants people to see His message working in our imperfect lives.

When I first read this Scripture passage, it reminded me of the translucent qualities of porcelain clay. Although I had never worked with porcelain, I decided to try to make a beautiful porcelain vessel and place a light inside to illustrate this verse. I
pictured the light setting the vessel aglow! I bought a bag of porcelain clay and sat down at the wheel to make my vessel. Porcelain clay is very flexible and pliable in its clay state. This makes it very difficult to work with on the wheel. I made the vessel as thin as I was able. I had to wait until after the firing to see if the light would show through. It didn’t! I then decided to carve a cross on the inside of the vessel, so that you could only see it from the outside when the light was shining in the vessel. I made several more vessels that didn’t work!

One of the cylinders that I created flopped onto its side as I cut it off the wheel. I decided to stand it back up and try carving the cross into it any way. My hand print was left on the side. It was not perfectly round any more. When I removed it from the kiln and put the flashlight inside, the entire cross glowed on the outside! I then realized what God wanted to illustrate. This was not to be a beautiful vessel, because then you would notice the vessel and not the light glowing from the cross. It is the light that is important for others to see, not the vessel that contains it. The same is true for us. We are not perfect, sinless beings. If we were, we would not need God. God designed us to be earthen vessels, so that His glory could be seen in our lives.
Chapter 13-Broken Vessels

Most people see no value in broken pottery. Potters have many uses for the broken pieces of pottery that often result from the process of pottery. They can grind up the fired clay and mix it with plastic clay to provide more strength and stability. The broken glazed pieces are often used to create a mosaic. They will use a broken piece to rub or burnish the clay to make it shine without the use of a glaze. In ancient times, broken pieces of pottery were used to carry coals from a central fire to their hearth in their home and also to scoop water from a well. (Isaiah 30:14) Also in ancient times, peasants couldn’t afford parchment, so they wrote business transactions on broken pieces of pottery. Archeologists were naturally attracted to objects of large size and obvious impressiveness, but now even the tiniest pieces of broken pottery are recognized as having their own important story to tell.

God values everyone, no matter what weaknesses they have. He used Moses in a mighty way, even though Moses had a speech problem as revealed in Exodus 4:10-12. “Moses said to the Lord, ‘O Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to
your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue.’ The Lord said to him, ‘Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives his sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now go; I will help you speak and teach you what to say.” God doesn’t make mistakes when He creates us! He knows our weaknesses and will help us to fulfill His will for our lives.

Some say that we have sicknesses and disabilities because we don’t have a good relationship with the Lord. This is not always true. “Now a man named Lazarus was sick…when he heard of this Jesus said, ‘this sickness will not end in death, No; it is for God’s glory so that God’s son may be glorified through it.” (John 9:1, 4) God allowed Lazarus to become deathly ill, so the Jesus could raise him from the dead. It was all part of God’s plan. Some people asked Jesus why a man was born blind. “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, said Jesus, but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life.” (John 9:1,3) God often uses our human imperfections so that His work is evident in our lives to others. Joni Earikson Tada is a testimony of God’s work in a seemingly hopeless life. Although she is a quadriplegic due to a diving accident as a teenager; she now has a worldwide ministry for disabled individuals, paints beautiful creations holding a paintbrush in her mouth, and has a beautiful singing voice. Many quadriplegic individuals would see their lives as hopeless, but with God there is always hope!
Even Jesus understood brokenness. While on the cross dying, “Jesus said, ‘I am thirsty.’” (John 19:28) The word “thirsty” used here is the same as the word “potsherd” used in Psalm 22:15, “My strength is dried up like a potsherd and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death.” Jesus was in effect saying, “I am a broken piece of pottery.” Jesus was willing to undergo the ultimate brokenness, death, because He loved us. He does not want us to undergo this ultimate brokenness, death, or separation from God forever.

Jesus, God’s son, lived a perfect, sinless life in a human body. He died on the cross in our place and took the punishment for our sins in his own body. Three days later, God raised Jesus from the dead to show His power over death. Many witnessed Jesus alive after his crucifixion and His ascension into heaven.

We also can have the hope of an eternal life in heaven just by fully believing that Jesus was the son of God and that He took the punishment for our sins. Ephesians 2:8-10 states, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” All God asks of us is to be like clay in the potter’s hand, willing to be molded into His workmanship and prepared to do His work.
About the Author

I was enrolled in a summer clay class at the age of twelve, and it was then that I fell in love with the craft. As an artist, my mother encouraged me to continue this art form. However, she encountered difficulties locating a teacher for me. Later she did locate a teacher, who allowed me to join an all-adult class. As my skills developed, I sold my wares at art and craft shows.

While in college, I studied Occupational Therapy, because I could combine my love for pottery and crafts with therapy for my patients.

During my last year of college, I married my love, Gene. I had not been a regular church attendee in the past, so shortly after our wedding, my husband became interested in attending a Bible church near our home. After a year of struggling with the Lord, I realized that the resurrection was true, because many people had witnessed it. On Christmas Eve 1983, I placed my trust and hope in the salvation offered through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus.

As I began to study the Bible and realized that there were many references to pottery, I discovered that God used the potter
and clay as illustrations to teach important messages. In Bible
times, everyone was familiar with the potter's work, so they could
understand these illustrations. Today, many people have never seen
a potter work nor do they understand the process of pottery.

God called me to use my craft in illustrating the Gospel to
various groups. I have created presentations for Wednesday night
children's programs, ladies luncheons, and ladies weekend retreats.
My ministry has taken me to Birmingham AL, San Antonio TX
and many places in between. Where He leads me, I'll follow.

My husband and I have been married since 1982. We have
five children and three grandchildren. We home school our
children who are still at home at "The Potter's House Christian
School." We worship and serve the Lord at Reeves Bible Church.