

A close-up photograph of a potter's hands working on a pottery wheel. The potter is shaping a dark-colored clay cup. The background is blurred, showing a workshop setting with natural light coming from a window.

THE POTTER
wants to put you
BACK TOGETHER

S E R M O N G U I D E

The Potter Wants To Put You Back Together

Jeremiah 18:1-6

INTRODUCTION

As we travel through life, we hit potholes and rough patches that impact what holds us together. Disappointments, betrayals, tragedies, and loss can throw us out of spiritual alignment. We stop trusting, stop believing, stop praying, and drift away from God. But just as a car needs realignment to drive straight, we need to realign our lives with God's purpose and plan. Jeremiah 18 shows us how. The nation of Israel was broken politically, socially, and spiritually, and God sent Jeremiah to the potter's house to teach him (and us) that what's broken doesn't have to stay broken. Everything that's not working doesn't have to remain a mess. God is the potter, and we are the clay. Through this image, God teaches us how He realigns and restores our lives.

KEY POINTS

1. Alignment Happens During Difficult Seasons

God sends Jeremiah down to the potter's house, not to a palace or mountaintop, but down into the low places. There's something spiritually significant about that direction. The potter's shop is in the dim, dark, hidden corners of town. That means when you are down, that's when you need to start looking for God.

True spiritual formation happens in the dark, beneath the surface, away from public view. God develops us when we're down: when the economy is down, when our spirits are down, when life seems to be going down. The shaping happens in the shadows. The molding happens in the dark.

Just like film is developed in the dark, God does His best work in dark seasons when we're lonely, hurting, or out of options. The darkness isn't a sign that God has abandoned you; it's a sign that He's developing you. Seeds grow underground before they bloom. So don't despise your season of difficulty. It's there that God builds your character, sharpens your discernment, and strengthens your faith.

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2. Alignment Happens Despite Our Flaws

When Jeremiah sees the potter at work, the clay is marred. It has cracks, flaws, and imperfections. Yet instead of discarding it, the potter leans in, gets his hands dirty, and begins to reshape and remake it. That's God's message to Israel and to us. We may be broken, but we're not beyond repair. Damaged, but not discarded.

The potter doesn't walk away from the clay; he "made it again another vessel." God refuses to give up on what He started. People may cancel you, friends may walk away, but the Potter never leaves the wheel.

3. Be Open to the Process of Alignment

Once the clay is chosen, it has to be prepared. The potter uses three tools: the mallet, the wheel, and the kiln. The mallet beats out the lumps and air pockets. The wheel shapes the clay from the inside out. And the kiln, a furnace of intense heat, refines the clay.

We often resist this process because it's painful and uncomfortable. The pressure is heavy, the inner work takes time, and the fire feels unbearable. But don't abandon the process too soon. God is not through with you yet.

Even when the clay is marred, even when the process is tough, the good news is that the clay is still in the potter's hand. No matter what you're going through, God never takes His hand off you. You may have lost a job, gone through a divorce, or faced deep grief, but you went through it in His hands. The potter keeps turning the wheel until he sees his reflection in the clay. God does the same with us. He keeps shaping, molding, and refining until He can see His image in us.

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What “potholes” or “rough roads” in your life have caused you to drift out of spiritual alignment?
2. How have you seen God work in your life during a “dark” or difficult season?
3. What part of the refining process (pressure, shaping, or fire) do you most resist, and how can you trust God’s hands in it this week?
