

GRACE CHAPEL CHURCH OF CHRIST

21 DAYS OF PRAYER — AND — FASTING FOR 2023

A Companion to the "Clay" Message Series

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WEEK ONE

Introduction



We're a week into the new year, 2023. In the time leading up to and following January first, there's no lack of encouragement to reflect on the past year and to set goals for the one we've just begun.

How do you want to be different?

How would you like to change?

How would you like to be better?

What would you like to accomplish this year?

This guide is not taking all of those ideas and putting a spiritual twist to them—hopefully. Those questions are all attempting to uncover your self-directed hopes. When we become Christians, we die to ourselves. We fully acknowledged that “there is a way that seems right (to us), but in the end it leads to death” (Proverbs 16:25, NIV).

This guide is an attempt to help you cry out to God for direction.

How does God want you to be different?

How would your Creator like you to change?

How would the Almighty push you to be better?

What would your Redeemer like to accomplish through you this year?

So we begin the year. We do not begin as trailblazers or kingdom conquerors or giant slayers, but as humble servants eagerly desiring to please our king. We do not begin as lone rangers, but as brothers and sisters in Christ, encouraging one another as we lean on the Lord.

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

WEEK ONE

Introduction



As you read the daily readings, deny yourself in some way for your fast, and pray daily, keep these things in mind:

1. Being shaped by God will happen more when we talk less in prayer and listen more.
2. The 21 days of fasting and praying is a church-wide endeavor, consider how God uses the church to shape you (and thus may be using you to shape those around you)
3. One benefit of fasting is that it reminds us of ways we must rely on God to sustain us. Try not to only take something away, add times and opportunities in your life to be filled by God.

DAY ONE

Isaiah 64:6-8



WE ARE THE CLAY; YOU ARE THE POTTER

God wants to mold you. Have you ever stopped to consider this truth? The God of the universe cares about the person you are now, and the person you will become. He has hopes and dreams for you. He wants to see His mission on this earth accomplished through you. The question is, will you allow Him? During the next twenty-one days, this is the question for you to ponder. You are clay. Something is shaping you. The best thing you can do is allow God to be the potter!

"All of us have become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags;
we all shrivel up like a leaf,
and like the wind our sins sweep us away.
No one calls on your name
or strives to lay hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us
and have given us over to our sins.
Yet you, LORD, are our Father.
We are the clay, you are the potter;
we are all the work of your hand."
(Isaiah 64:6-8, NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
3. What do you need to pray today as God seeks to form and shape you?

DAY TWO

Isaiah 55:8-11



MY THOUGHTS, MY WAYS

We often think we know best. “I don’t think that” you might be tempted to reply. Let me ask you a question: If we were to examine the last year of your life, what tale would your decisions and actions tell? Would we see a life surrendered to the wisdom and leading of God? Would we find someone who leans on his or her own understanding more often than not? The bottom line is, God tells us that He is worthy of our trust.

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways,’
declares the LORD.
‘As the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.
As the rain and the snow
come down from heaven,
and do not return to it
without watering the earth
and making it bud and flourish,
so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,
so is my word that goes out from my mouth:
It will not return to me empty,
but will accomplish what I desire
and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.’”
(Isaiah 55:8-11, NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
3. What do you need to pray today as God seeks to form and shape you?

DAY THREE

Romans 11:33-36



OH, THE DEPTH AND THE RICHES

Who is the wisest person you've ever met? What words would you use to describe this person? How do you know that he or she is truly wise? Is it the decisions this person makes? Is it the way he or she speaks? As we read today, we will see that God is rich in wisdom—so far beyond the kind of wisdom we as people possess that we often struggle to understand what He is doing, and many times can't explain how He did it! His wisdom should move us to both awe and praise.

"Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable his judgments,
and his paths beyond tracing out!
'Who has known the mind of the Lord?
Or who has been his counselor?'
'Who has ever given to God,
that God should repay them?'
For from him and through him and for him are all things.
To him be the glory forever! Amen."
(Romans 11:33-36, NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
3. What do you need to pray today as God seeks to form and shape you?

DAY FOUR

1 Corinthians 1:20-25



THE FOOLISHNESS OF GOD IS WISER THAN HUMAN WISDOM

What if I told you there were no wise people? No, not even the person you were thinking about yesterday. You might think that's a harsh judgment. What if I said it more like this: when comparing ourselves to God, none of us are wise. That, you'd likely find more acceptable. In the passage below, this is exactly what Paul says as he tells us that even God's foolishness—as if there was such a thing—is wiser than the wisdom of man.

“Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.”

(1 Corinthians 1:20-25, NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
3. What do you need to pray today as God seeks to form and shape you?

DAY FIVE

Job 38:1-7



TELL ME, IF YOU UNDERSTAND

With all of the modern advances in science, medicine, mathematics, computer sciences, and the like, it's amazing how much is still unknown. Last summer, as some of the first images from the recently launched James Webb telescope were being reviewed, scientists revealed that a number of earlier assumptions about the way universe works were probably wrong. Previously, some of these assumptions had been treated as near fact. The more we know, the more we discover that we don't know. But there is One who understands. Just as a builder of a house can tell you exactly how the house was built, He knows every detail about His creation.

"Then the LORD spoke to Job out of the storm. He said:
'Who is this that obscures my plans
with words without knowledge?
Brace yourself like a man;
I will question you,
and you shall answer me.
'Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation?
Tell me, if you understand.
Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know!
Who stretched a measuring line across it?
On what were its footings set,
or who laid its cornerstone—
while the morning stars sang together
and all the angels shouted for joy?'"
(Job 38:1-7, NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
3. What do you need to pray today as God seeks to form and shape you?

DAY SIX

Job 40:1-5



LET HIM WHO ACCUSES GOD ANSWER HIM

Today, we continue the theme we have been building upon this week. Take a moment to read and digest Job's response to God. I have experienced a number of moments in life that make me believe I understand Job's words. Maybe you'll find you, too, can relate. At times, we incorrectly believe that we know better than God. That belief may lead us to make decisions or speak words which we later come to regret. In moments such as these, we can double down, or we can choose—in humility—to surrender.

"The LORD said to Job:
'Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him?
Let him who accuses God answer him!'
Then Job answered the LORD:
'I am unworthy—how can I reply to you?
I put my hand over my mouth.
I spoke once, but I have no answer—
twice, but I will say no more.'"
(Job 40:1-5, NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
3. What do you need to pray today as God seeks to form and shape you?

DAY SEVEN

Job 42:1-6



SURELY, I SPOKE OF THINGS I DID NOT UNDERSTAND

So, what does humility before God look like? Can you remember the last time you found a quiet space to confess your inadequacies to God? This kind of confession is good for the soul, and even better for our relationship with the God who made us. As we close out this first week, allow Job's words below to help shape your personal time of confession to God.

"Then Job replied to the LORD:
'I know that you can do all things;
no purpose of yours can be thwarted.
You asked, "Who is this that obscures my plans without knowledge?"
Surely I spoke of things I did not understand,
things too wonderful for me to know.
'You said, "Listen now, and I will speak;
I will question you,
and you shall answer me."
My ears had heard of you
but now my eyes have seen you.'"
(Job 42:1-6, NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
3. What do you need to pray today as God seeks to form and shape you?

WEEK TWO

Introduction



The first week of this year's prayer and fasting journey was meant to remind us of our places. God is the potter and we are the clay. When we make attempts to form our own lives, forge our own paths, etc., things rarely work out very well. The first step to letting God take the lead is the mental acknowledgment that He really is the potter. He is the King of all kings. He is the Lord above all lords. He created man by forming him from the dust of the earth. He created woman by forming her from the rib of a man. God has the power and wisdom to form us into what we ought to be from whatever state in which we currently find ourselves.

The temptation would be to move on and get to work. That's the tension, most of the time. When is it time to stay, and when is it time to go?

When is it time for us to do the work with our hands, and when is it time to let God work supernaturally?

I love the way that *The Message* paraphrases the exchange between Jesus and His apostles in Acts chapter one. They're eager to know when certain significant events are going to occur, and Jesus says, "You don't get to know the time...you get the Holy Spirit."

They got the better deal, and so do we.

The verse we read this past week did not say that God was the potter and we were the clay. Those roles are part of an ongoing relationship, not a one-time exchange.

Let us dwell together this week in the peace-filling knowledge that we have a God who lovingly and purposefully shapes us.

DAY EIGHT

Genesis 1:26-27



IN HIS IMAGE HE CREATED THEM

In the beginning God created—not just the world, but human beings. God is still in the business of creating today. Every time a new child is conceived, God creates. Now, make this personal. God created you. In His image. Yes, that image has been distorted by sin and the brokenness of this world, but from the very beginning, the imprint of God has been upon you. No matter how many times you have reflected upon this truth, do so again.

“Then God said, ‘Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.’

So God created mankind in his own image,

in the image of God he created them;

male and female he created them.”

(Genesis 1:26-27, NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
3. What do you need to pray today as God seeks to form and shape you?

DAY NINE

Psalm 103:11-14



HE REMEMBERS THAT WE ARE DUST

It was early in my junior year of college that I earned the all-conference player of the week award as a soccer player. It was the high point of my college soccer career. Two weeks later I partially tore four ligaments in my left ankle, effectively ending my season. It was one of those moments in which I was able to identify with the Apostle Paul's words from Second Corinthians chapter four: "Outwardly we are wasting away." Our bodies, our accomplishments, our possessions—all of these exist in a temporal world. We fall short, but praise God, we have a Heavenly Father whose love for us is not conditional or based upon our abilities and accomplishments. He remembers that we were formed from dust, but He wants to shape that dust. As you surrender to Him, He will take the ingredients of your life and make something wonderful that brings Him glory!

For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his love for those who fear him;
as far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed our transgressions from us.
As a father has compassion on his children,
so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;
for he knows how we are formed,
he remembers that we are dust.
(Psalm 103:11-14, NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
3. What do you need to pray today as God seeks to form and shape you?

DAY TEN

Psalm 139:13-18



I PRAISE YOU BECAUSE I AM WONDERFULLY MADE

It's good to put words to wonder. You may be asking, "What do you mean by that?" Good, because I'd like to tell you. If you see an indescribably beautiful sunrise, it can still be helpful to try to describe it in words. If you've held a newborn baby—I mean one that has just been delivered—you know, as I do, that it is hard to put words to what you were feeling inside. But as we try to describe the indescribable, we often gain an even deeper appreciation for the wonders in this world. Reflecting on the wonder behind our creation gives us a deeper appreciation for all the potter has already done to shape us!

"For you created my inmost being;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.
My frame was not hidden from you
when I was made in the secret place,
when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes saw my unformed body;
all the days ordained for me were written in your book
before one of them came to be.
How precious to me are your thoughts, God!
How vast is the sum of them!
Were I to count them,
they would outnumber the grains of sand—
when I awake, I am still with you."
(Psalm 139:13-18, NIV)

DAY TEN

Psalm 139:13-18



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
3. What do you need to pray today as God seeks to form and shape you?

DAY ELEVEN

Jeremiah 17:5-6



CURSED IS THE ONE WHO TRUSTS IN MAN

Today begins a three-day journey through a few very powerful verses from Jeremiah chapter 17 that will bring together much of our prayer journey to this point. As you work through these next three days, pay attention to what Jeremiah acknowledges about people, about God, and about the human heart. Jeremiah tells us plainly that there are blessings and curses tied to the choices we make. In other words, every decision has a consequence. Today we see clearly what consequences lay ahead for those who place their ultimate trust in themselves.

"This is what the LORD says:

'Cursed is the one who trusts in man,
who draws strength from mere flesh
and whose heart turns away from the LORD.
That person will be like a bush in the wastelands;
they will not see prosperity when it comes.
They will dwell in the parched places of the desert,
in a salt land where no one lives.'"
(Jeremiah 17:5-6, NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
3. What do you need to pray today as God seeks to form and shape you?

DAY TWELVE

Jeremiah 17:7-8



BLESSED IS THE ONE WHO TRUSTS IN THE LORD

What does it look like to be truly blessed? Sometimes when driving down the road I'll see a car with a license plate, or even a bumper sticker, that says, "I'm blessed." Is having a nice car to drive around town what it looks like to be blessed? Is blessing tied to our material possessions, our current level of happiness, or the level of our perceived success? Maybe. But we can have all of these things and still not know God. Many do. Today, Jeremiah tells us what it looks like to be truly blessed—even better, he shows us the secret to living the blessed life.

"But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord,
whose confidence is in him.

They will be like a tree planted by the water
that sends out its roots by the stream.

It does not fear when heat comes;
its leaves are always green.

It has no worries in a year of drought
and never fails to bear fruit."

(Jeremiah 17:7-8, NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
3. What do you need to pray today as God seeks to form and shape you?

DAY THIRTEEN

Jeremiah 17:9-10



THE HEART IS DECEITFUL BEYOND ALL THINGS

"I can't trust my own judgment." As a counselor, I've heard people speak words like these on quite a few occasions. I've spent time with addicts who understand the depth of the struggle, and just how little trust they can place in their own abilities to stay clean. I've heard these words from those who wrestle with depression, anxiety, and other mental health conditions. But in my most honest moments, I have to admit that I know these words are true about me as well. I often can't trust my own judgment. With all that is trying to shape us in this world, we must return to the one we can trust.

"The heart is deceitful above all things
and beyond cure.
Who can understand it?
'I the Lord search the heart
and examine the mind,
to reward each person according to their conduct,
according to what their deeds deserve.'"
(Jeremiah 17:9-10, NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
3. What do you need to pray today as God seeks to form and shape you?

DAY FOURTEEN

Matthew 7:21-23



NOT EVERYONE WHO SAYS TO ME, “LORD, LORD”

As we conclude week two of our twenty-one-day journey, we finish with this question: What does it look like to be shaped by God? This is a question that Jesus wanted His audience to consider. Being shaped by God isn't just about the words we use. It's not only about the thoughts we think. Both of these things are important, but Jesus wants us to know there's more. God desires to form us into people who ask one question above all others: “God what do you want me to do?”

“Not everyone who says to me, “Lord, Lord,” will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?” Then I will tell them plainly, “I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!””

(Matthew 7:21-23, NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
3. What do you need to pray today as God seeks to form and shape you?

WEEK THREE

Introduction



How does God shape us? What is He shaping us into?

In a time and place in history in which the individual is so highly valued, it's easy for us to think first about how God is uniquely shaping "me."

Churches tend to fuel that fire. "We'll help you discover your Spiritual gift and identify your purpose in God's kingdom."

There's a lot of good in those things, but trouble comes when we either get too grandiose in our thinking or put too much pressure on ourselves to perform. On the one hand, a person could get a big head and become too self-sufficient; on the other, they become overwhelmed, give up, or freeze.

None of those are things God wants.

I'm not suggesting that we forget about the individual ways that God shapes us, but rather, to understand those things in light of the general ways God works and the communal ways He forms.

Ephesians 2:22 says, "And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit."

Later, the letter to the same church says, "That, however, is not the way of life you learned when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness" (Ephesians 4:20-24, NIV).

Ultimately God is shaping us to be like Him. His methodology is simple and familiar—trust and obey.

WEEK THREE

Introduction



Remember the words that the servants asked of Naaman when he was upset about Elisha's instructions to dip in the Jordan River seven times in order to be cleansed of his leprosy?

"My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, 'Wash and be cleansed'!"
(2 Kings 5:13, NIV)

Submission and obedience are not always our desire, but they are God's plan and bring good fruit. Encourage one another daily!

DAY FIFTEEN

Matthew 7:24-27



WISE AND FOOLISH BUILDERS

We ended week two by asking this question: What does it look like to be shaped by God? During this final week, we will embark on a quest to find some answers to this all-important question. We begin by picking up where we left off yesterday, reading Jesus' words to a listening crowd, as recorded in Matthew chapter seven. As you read these words, pay special attention to what makes one wise and what makes one foolish in the eyes of God.

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

(Matthew 7:24-27, NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
3. What do you need to pray today as God seeks to form and shape you?

DAY SIXTEEN

John 14:15, 21



WHOEVER LOVES ME KEEPS MY COMMANDS

Sometimes we need to be told what to do. It may not be fun to be told what to do, but that doesn't make it any less needed. When you go to the doctor and he or she tells you to take a break from your favorite food, it can be frustrating, even if it's necessary. The choice about what to do is still yours. You can choose to believe the doctor knows what is best, or you can choose to do things your own way. Imagine if you found yourself back in the doctor's office a month later, not feeling any better, and not having listened to the doctor's warning. How do you think the doctor would feel, knowing you ignored his or her orders?

Jesus is the ultimate doctor; in fact, He compares Himself to a physician who has come to heal humankind. Why? Because He loves us. Those who love him in return will make it their life's goal to follow his commands or, if you like, the doctor's orders.

"If you love me, keep my commands. ... Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them."

(John 14:15, 21, NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
3. What do you need to pray today as God seeks to form and shape you?

DAY SEVENTEEN

1 John 2:3-6



WHOEVER CLAIMS TO LIVE IN HIM MUST LIVE AS JESUS DID

If God is trying to shape us, just what is it that He is trying to shape us into? Does God want you to be a kinder person? Sure. Does He want you to be a gentler person? Yes. Does God want you to let go of the sin that entangles you and so often molds you in negative ways? Of course. But ultimately there is something that God wants more. He wants to shape you into someone who resembles Jesus. "In what ways?" you may be thinking. In every way imaginable.

"We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. Whoever says, 'I know him,' but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did."
(1 John 2:3-6, NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
3. What do you need to pray today as God seeks to form and shape you?

DAY EIGHTEEN

Jeremiah 18:1-6



LIKE CLAY IN THE HAND OF THE POTTER

If you've been walking this twenty-one-day journey with us to this point, you will remember the work we did early on to establish that God truly does know what's best. Does this mean we'll always agree with the direction in which we feel God moving us? Does it mean we'll always enjoy the process of being shaped, formed, and renewed? Probably not, and this is where trust comes in. The ultimate test of trust is when God forms us into what He knows is best, and we choose to submit; especially when we don't understand, and the process is uncomfortable.

"This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: 'Go down to the potter's house, and there I will give you my message.' So I went down to the potter's house, and I saw him working at the wheel. 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.

Then the word of the Lord came to me. He said, 'Can I not do with you, Israel, as this potter does?' declares the Lord. 'Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, Israel.'"

(Jeremiah 18:1-6, NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
3. What do you need to pray today as God seeks to form and shape you?

DAY NINETEEN

Romans 8:28-30



GOD WORKS FOR OUR ULTIMATE GOOD

Christians like to quote Romans 8:28, especially when things aren't going well. Who doesn't find reassurance in the knowledge that God is working for the good of those who love Him? The trouble is that we often interpret this verse to mean that God wants to give us stuff *we think* is good for us. So, you totaled your car? Don't worry, God wants you to have a better one. You lost your job? God is just working to give you the "scenic route" promotion. But as we read on in Romans chapter eight, we find that God may have something *different* in mind as He works for our good.

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified."

(Romans 8:28-30, NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
3. What do you need to pray today as God seeks to form and shape you?

DAY TWENTY

Romans 12:1-2



DO NOT CONFORM; BE TRANSFORMED

We're all being influenced. By people. By experiences. By the commercials we watch on television. By the thoughts we fill our minds with. By spiritual forces we're all too often unaware of. So many things are working to shape us. Many of the things that are trying to shape us appeal to our basest desires. We can choose to conform to those desires. We can allow them to shape us. But God wants us not to be conformed, but instead, to be transformed.

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform 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 12:1-2, NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
3. What do you need to pray today as God seeks to form and shape you?

DAY TWENTY-ONE

Isaiah 64:6-8



WE ARE THE CLAY, HE IS THE POTTER

So, we're back to the beginning. God is the potter. We are clay in His hands—if we choose to be. We can live life to satisfy our own desires. But God has something so much better for us. We can live like Jesus. We can look like Jesus. We can be transformed, instead of continuing to conform. We can trust, even when we don't understand. We can choose to be clay in the potter's hands, because in the end, there's nothing better any of us will ever do.

"All of us have become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags;
we all shrivel up like a leaf,
and like the wind our sins sweep us away.
No one calls on your name
or strives to lay hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us
and have given us over to our sins.
Yet you, Lord, are our Father.
We are the clay, you are the potter;
we are all the work of your hand."
(Isaiah 64:6-8, NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What do the words of these verses seem to communicate?
2. What do you hear God communicating to you through the words you have read?
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