

CALVARY CHAPEL OF PHILADELPHIA

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

4 YEAR OLDS

TEACHER'S PACKET

SUNDAY MORNING

Study 3

The Potter



The Potter

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective This lesson will teach the students that like clay to a potter, we belong to God and are His to do as He pleases, yet He is a good and loving Potter.

Key Verses

Jeremiah 18:1-6—Main Teaching Passage
Romans 9:20-21

Memory Verse - Psalm 97:9 (July Memory Verse)

"For You, LORD, are most high above all the earth; You are exalted far above all gods."

Hook

Ask the students to pull out an object that belongs to them. Have the students lift their objects up and show them to the class. Ask a student if it is OK for you to take their object and do whatever you want with it. Tell them you might put it in the mud or something else that would ruin it.

Point out that when something belongs to you, only you can decide what is done with it. Just like we can do what we want with what belongs to us, we belong to God and He can do with us as He wants.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

Back in Jeremiah's day, Judah (the southern kingdom of Israel) had become exceedingly sinful and wicked. They were so bad that God told them he would send the Babylonians to capture them as punishment. Many claimed that this was not fair, since Israel was God's chosen people, so God taught Jeremiah a lesson at a potter's house. Jeremiah saw that the clay belonged to the potter and the potter could do with it as he wanted. When the clay was not forming correctly, he broke down the pot. Then, the potter rebuilt the pot in a way that pleased Him.

The same way, all people belong to the Lord. We are His to do as He pleases. When there is something in a person's life that does not please Him, He can take it away in order to do as He sees fit with us. Like the clay, it is not up to us to determine what the Potter does to us. In fact, Romans 9:20-21 points this very thing out. It is up to the potter to determine what he will make out of each piece of clay. The potter has every right to do what he wants, but the clay cannot tell the potter what to do with it. Likewise, God can do whatever He wants with our lives. We have no right to tell Him what to do in our lives. We are His to do as He desires.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK

When we think of potters and pottery, we often think of the end result: the beautiful vases, bowls, pots, plates, and cups the potter makes. It is rare, however, that we think of the process which brought the pottery to that point. In the story of Jeremiah and the potter, Jeremiah saw how in the process of making beautiful pottery, the potter sometimes had to break or remold the clay. God uses this illustration to show a beautiful truth about our relationship with Him.

The potter's clay belongs to him. He can do whatever he wants with it. He can use his clay to make a cup, a vase, a plate, or anything else he can sculpt. In fact, a skilled potter will know how the clay can be used best. The same is true of us and God. We belong to Him. He can do with our lives what He likes. He can make us into teachers, police officers, missionaries, doctors, or whatever else He desires. He makes us fast or slow, tall or short, talkative or quiet. He makes us the way He thinks is best. Just as it would be ridiculous for a piece of clay to rebuke its potter for how he chooses to use the clay, so it is ridiculous to think we know better than God how He ought to make us or what He ought to do with us. He knows what is best for us.

LOOK (Continued)

We saw that sometimes the clay must be broken in order for the potter to make what he wants. Sometimes in our lives, God has to do something we don't like in order to make us into what He desires. We belong to God, and that means that He can do with us what He wants. That might sound scary, especially because we know that people often misuse power like that. However, this is one reason why last week's lesson is so important. While God can do whatever He wants with us, He loves us and wants to see us made into beautiful pottery.

All this means that our lives are not our own. We do not belong to ourselves, but to God. Therefore, we must be willing to act as He desires, not as we want. We ought to obey His commands. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 says that as believers, we are not our own, but were bought with a price. At the same time, we can take hope in the fact that our Potter is the loving Potter who wants only the best and most beautiful for His clay.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

Review the lesson by asking the students how God is like a potter. Encourage them that even though we might not know what God is doing with our lives, they can trust that He knows best.

Pray: Thank God for making our lives into something beautiful. Ask Him for help in trusting Him as the Potter and recognizing that we belong to Him.

Parent Question: If God is the Potter, who do we belong to? Is that a good thing or a bad thing?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Jeremiah 18 by David Guzik

Jeremiah 18 - Lessons at the Potter's House

A. The lesson at the potter's house and the response to it.

1. (1-4) Jeremiah visits the potter's house.

The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying: "Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause you to hear My words." Then I went down to the potter's house, and there he was, making something at the wheel. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make.

a. **Arise and go down to the potter's house:** As God sometimes did with His prophets, He instructed Jeremiah to learn a lesson through a living lesson, something from daily life.

b. **The vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter, so he made it again into another vessel:** Watching the potter at work, Jeremiah noticed a lump of clay that seemed uncooperative. The potter decided to start again, making something that **seemed good to the potter to make**.

i. "Power was manifested in his manipulation of the clay, and pity in his remaking of the marred vessel....The clay was suddenly marred, twisted; it failed to express the potter's thought....He saw that the potter did not abandon it." (Morgan)

2. (5-6) God's right to deal with His people as He pleases.

Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying: "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?" says the LORD. "Look, as the clay *is* in the potter's hand, so *are* you in My hand, O house of Israel!"

a. **O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?** Through the visit to the potter's house God spoke to Jeremiah and to all of Israel, reminding them of His sovereign right to do what He pleased with a marred or seemingly uncooperative vessel.

i. Like any analogy, this figure cannot be applied at every point. In this illustration the clay has no moral choice or dimension, whereas Israel's disobedience was chosen again and again. The vessel at the potter's house was *marred* (Jeremiah 18:4); Israel marred themselves morally and spiritually before God.

ii. **O house of Israel:** Notably God called the southern kingdom - which technically was not the kingdom of all 12 tribes - the **house of Israel**. One reason was because there were truly representatives from all 12 tribes among the people of Judah from the migration of the godly from the tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel to Judah in the days of Jeroboam (2 Chronicles 11:13-16).