

The Potter and the Clay

by Emanuel Esh

God's sovereignty and mercy are demonstrated through His ability to shape and mold us into vessels of clay, and surrendering to Him is essential for experiencing His love and guidance.

Duration: 1:04:20

Scripture: Exodus 8:9-10, Psalm 127:1, Matthew 6:33, Romans 12:1-2, 2 Timothy 2:24-26, 2 Timothy 4:2

Topics: "Humility"

Description

In this sermon, an old man shares his testimony of seeing Jesus while he was near death in a hospital bed. Despite his age and recent illness, the old man's message is still clear and powerful, encompassing the whole counsel of God. He emphasizes the responsibility of the servant of the Lord to reprove, rebuke, nurture, and encourage others. The sermon also highlights the mercy of God, who is able to take our marred lives and failures and remake us into the image of Christ.

Transcript

Father, we come in Jesus' name this morning as we've gathered together in the name of the Lord. You've promised that where two or three are gathered in that name, there you are in the midst. And though we cannot see you, and maybe we can't even feel you, yet we do believe it is true.

So we acknowledge your presence here this morning according to Your Word, and we thank You, Lord, for visiting Your people. We now ask You to minister more of Your life to us through Your Word and by Your Spirit into our hearts. We ask You, Father, to fill our cups as we hold our cups out this morning and we ask for living water.

As we hold out our plates this morning and we ask for that living bread. So, Father, would You feed the flock this morning. So would You give them water to drink, Lord, that they may have sustenance and that they may have strength to walk and courage to rise up and to go out and to live in this present evil world.

Day by day, we pray, Father, Your grace will abound with us. Your strength will flow through us. That we may be a blessing to the people around us.

Blessed now we ask in Jesus' name, Amen. You may be seated. Let's turn in our Bibles to Jeremiah 18 this morning.

Brother Aaron and I have been in the minister's week in Ohio this past week. A time with ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ, spending about five days together. And these are men from numerous church fellowships.

Quite a few of the German Baptist brothers were there. There was quite a few of Beachy people, other Mennonite conferences. And there was some from charity conferences, fellowships there.

And some from Manitoba, Texas, California. From many different places. About a hundred brothers, I think, were there.

It was very good for me to be there. I think Brother Aaron could say the same. So this morning my heart is a little... I'm not sure how to express it.

There's one side of me that is rejoicing and excited. But then there's the other side of me. Someone has a burden about the things that God has laid in our hearts there this week.

It was a very good time for me to be there with an open heart. Seeking God for direction. Seeking God for grace for my life, my personal life, for my family.

And also for the congregation. So I'm going to be sharing a few things from those meetings. Just kind of an overflow.

And pray that God will bless you with some of the thoughts that we heard. And that there may be courage rising up in your heart today. That no matter what situation that you're facing, that God would give you courage to press on and keep going.

That's my heart. I'd like to read this Scripture here in light of it. As I considered God and how He works with men.

This is the story of Jeremiah who was the prophet in Jerusalem at the time of the siege. Just prior to the captivity of Babylon. Israel had been a very high, prosperous nation in the time of David and Solomon.

But then had declined continually for many years. Until they came to this time where there was much wickedness and evil. There was a lot of idolatry going on.

And the nation of Israel had fallen to such a low place. That God was bringing in other nations to destroy them. And to take them captive.

And this is the time of Jerusalem just before that actually happened. Or during the time that it was happening. And then it says that the word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord saying, Arise, 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 behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hands of the potter.

So he made again another vessel as it seemed good to the potter. Then the word of the Lord came to me saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter, saith the Lord? Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel. So Jeremiah goes down to the house of the potter.

God is going to speak to him there. And when he arrives at the potter's house, he sees the potter working on the wheel. And I think they had like maybe some kind of a pedal that they would pedal.

And they would make this wheel go around. And on that wheel they would put a lump of clay. And the potter would take his hand and he would, as that wheel would spin around, he would form that pot and he would make it into a beautiful shape.

A vessel which could then be used. And as Jeremiah was watching, he saw the potter working with this lump of clay in his hands. And that vessel was marred.

Something was wrong with the vessel. So the potter takes the vessel and he mixes that clay back up again. And he throws on the wheel again.

And he makes another vessel as it seemed good to the potter. And then the Word of the Lord came to Jeremiah and said, Can I not do with this, with the house of Israel as the potter has done with the clay? And Jeremiah had to look at that situation that he faced that day of how Israel was, the nation, the whole nation of Israel, which he had been continually prophesying and preaching the Word of God again and again and again. And they were not listening to him.

They were not hearing him. They threw him into the prison and they threw him into the well. They didn't want to hear what he had to say.

But Jeremiah had this word from the Lord. And the Lord said, Can I not do with Israel as this potter has done with the clay? And the Lord says, He says these very clear, powerful words. As the clay is in the potter's hands, so are you in My hands.

And so we have a very clear picture here of God is the potter and He has that vessel of clay in His hand and He can make it whatever He wants. And He does. And we know, according to history, that God was able to make Israel a new vessel again.

Bringing them back out of captivity and setting up a kingdom there which still stands today. And He said, I will bring people from all over the world to come together to Israel again. And that is what God is still doing in the nation of Israel.

And so we can look at this type this morning and we also can learn from this lesson here in knowing that we also are vessels of clay. And one thing that stood out to me is that this lump of clay was in the hand of the potter. And it was marred.

So I being in the hand of God can be marred. So He takes that clay and He makes another vessel which seemingly is good. Which He makes it according as it seems good to Him.

He is able to do that. It was very encouraging to my heart this week as we were taught, as we sat there with open hearts as God ministered to our needs and showed me my needs, showed me my failures, showed me the mistakes that I have made or am still making in a sense. And I just, yeah, really was humbled.

It has been a number of years since I have been at a minister's conference like that or a leadership conference. And I have been a man that has been full of self-confidence and lots of pride and arrogance. And many times in years past when someone would get up and preach and they would get someone to

have a series of messages there and I would be there, I would think myself so high that I would have something to say at a meeting like that.

But I can say in this past week, there was no desire to be a preacher there left in me. I had no desire to be seen. I had no desire to speak or to be known as a preacher in that place.

I so felt my needs there. And I was so grateful to have lots of older men who have much more experience and grace to sit there and listen to them. One of the first things that was put on the board there that stuck with me and probably all of us the rest of the whole week was that Brother Dale Hinds, he went up and he wrote on the board.

On the one side he wrote, The Sowing. And the other side of the board he wrote, The Reaping. And then in the center he wrote these words.

He wrote, The Mercy of God. And all through the week that shone as a light of hope for me that except for the mercy of God, the reaping that I would have to endure would be too painful. And it just gave such hope as the Word of God came to my heart.

Every day, every session that I thought of the pot or the clay, I thought, yes, God is able to take us in our marred positions, in our marred lives and our failures. And He can take us and He wants to make us again. He wants to make us into the image and He wants to conform us into the image of Christ, His blessed Son.

And all during these meetings it was such a joy to be taught. Every session was just a great blessing. From Tuesday morning to Friday noon we were going and from the song leading to those who made the meals to the very last speaker, an old 80-year-old man standing up there full of passion and an evangelistic heart to reach souls.

And he shared story after story. Aaron and I had hoped we could head home by around 12 o'clock and get out of there, come home and see our families. He began to preach, I think it was around 10.45, this old 80-year-old man began to preach.

And he kept on going, he kept on telling stories. And it was 11.30 and it was 11.45 and it was 12 o'clock and it was 12.15 and he just kept on going, just kept on telling stories. But it was such a joy to listen to this old man, to listen to his testimony of just recently this year and he had been sick and couldn't walk and couldn't talk and was laying in the hospital bed and there his family gathered around him that he was near to death.

He told the story that he fell into a trance, he looked up and he saw Jesus. And he talked about how he saw Jesus there. And he heard that singing and he hadn't been able to talk, but all of a sudden he was talking and he was sharing about, I see the Lord, I see Jesus.

And he just wanted to take hold of Jesus. And he said his wife was there, but that didn't really matter very much. And he said, the music, the singing, he said, I hear that beautiful singing.

His children were standing there around his hospital bed and he said, don't you hear the singing? And they said, no dad, we don't hear the singing. And he's like, he couldn't believe. Yeah, it's the most beautiful singing I've ever heard.

And those are some of the... And so that was the last message we were listening to and it just ministered to our hearts in many, many ways. I think Aaron could do a much better job of sharing our wheat there than I could, but Brother Cain Nolte was leading songs. I have, I guess I've never appreciated that gift of song leading and worship being like I have this week.

He was in tune in such a beautiful way. The songs he chose, he chose them out of the hymnary and we probably sung 50 hymns together and just time after time again, just a beautiful word of God just coming out. In every hymn it was just lovely.

Oh, I was so encouraged. And so as we look at our lives and we see some of the sowing that we've done, or we begin to realize that some of the sowing that we've done may be bringing difficulty. There may be terrors coming up there.

And we know that it says that whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap. But there's hope there that the mercy of God, that we can cry out to the God of mercy who wants to spare us. He doesn't want to force us to reap all those evil things that we've sown or done there.

Again and again, I just went back to that picture of God's mercy for me. Brother Dale Heisey was one of the main speakers and he's a missionary in Costa Rica. He comes back here once or twice a year.

And God has done a beautiful work of brokenness and anointing in that man's life. And he preached about full surrender. His theme the whole way through was to be totally surrendered and fully surrendered to God.

He began by talking about the blessed only potentate, the sovereignty of God. And just preached about how God is sovereign. God is almighty.

I just remember so well, he's talking about the creation. That God at creation, He made the heavens and He made the earth and He made the sun, the moon, the stars. And everything that He created here on the earth, it was made perfect and beautiful and good.

And the animals, the birds and the fish of the sea and every created thing is in submission to this sovereign God. And it obeys His will. And the stars and the universe and the sun and the moon, they all obey His will.

He's sovereign you see. He says it and they do it. And He said if God could go to the end of the universe, there is never a sign there that says no trespassing to God.

But when God comes to man, He finds this no trespassing sign. And God, the sovereign God Himself, has so ordained that He Himself cannot go there. Man, the only created being on the earth.

Wow. There's no trust. God will never find the no trespassing sign out there on the edge of the universe.

Now we live beside a nice beautiful pond there in our backyard. And at first when we lived there we were free to go over there and we went fishing, we walked around that pond. But later on they put a no trespassing sign there.

And now we are not allowed to trespass there. We are not allowed to go there. We have no right to that place.

And God has a right to every place in this whole universe except one place. And that's the heart of man. God has allowed man the right and the will to choose to lock God out in their lives.

Surrender to this blessed only potentate. And as He preached on this day after day, our hearts were drawn, our desire was drawn to that place where we desire. Lord, I want, I will give my life to You.

And so as we walk through that, as we think about yielding our everything to God, what are we thinking about? We are thinking about these things in life that I need to give up. It might be my money, it might be my farm, it might be my car, it might be the right to have it my way. It might be, it's the things that fill my life.

Those are the things that we're required to, in full surrender, we have to give it all up. And so we think about those things. But He led us to think in a different way.

Instead of thinking about all these things that I need to give up. He encouraged us to think about who we are surrendering to. Take our eyes off of what I'm giving up and put our eyes on the One that we're surrendering to.

This Sovereign, Almighty, Omnipotent, All-Knowing and All-Seeing God. And this is the God of mercy. This is the God of love.

This is the God of perfection. But the God of mercy really stood out to me. So I can, in full surrender, instead of looking at what I need to give up, I can look at who I'm giving it to.

Who I'm releasing myself to. This God of mercy wants to take complete and full control of my very life. What would happen if I would give my whole life to this kind of a God? To this God of the universe, who is a God of mercy, a God of love, a God of grace, a God of gentleness and kindness and peace and joy and mercy.

What would it be like to give myself to that kind of a God who would then rule and reign in my life out of His heart and life? And then Dale says something like this. He said, Why? Why would I choose to go one more day without fully surrendering to this God? Why would you choose one more day? And I thought of Pharaoh there when the frogs came up in the lands and were in their bed chambers and in their food and in their water and everywhere. And these frogs were so abundant and Pharaoh said, He called for Moses and he said, Come, he said.

And Moses came and he said, Please, take away these frogs. And Moses said, When should I take them away? And Pharaoh said, Tomorrow. I want to spend one more night with the frogs.

Oh, why would I choose to spend one more day without giving myself to this almighty, loving, heavenly Father completely and fully in every area? But this lump of clay says, No. No. No, Lord.

Peter, when he was in that upper room and that sheet was let down from heaven and the four corners and every unclean beast in there and this voice from heaven said, Peter, rise, kill and eat. And Peter said, No, Lord. How can I say that? Isn't that an oxymoron? To say, No, Lord.

No, Lord. Can you say, No, Lord, in the same sentence? In the same... You can't really say that in a right way. If Jesus Christ is Lord, if He is the Lord of my life, then I cannot say, No.

I can only say, Yes, Lord. I can only say, Yes, Lord. One more day with the frogs.

No, Lord, I'd rather spend another day doing it my own way. Some of the things that we were greatly challenged with. There was another thing that was written on the board that has really stood out to me.

Conviction, compromise, and confusion. That really hit home in my heart. What was shared there was that many times this happens.

There's a generation of parents that they rise up and they have maybe a time of revival from the Lord and they get revived and they go forward and their lives are lives of conviction. And they have convictions and they know why they do something and they do it with conviction. They do it because they love God and because they see it in His Word and they want to follow the Lord and they do surrender to Him and they do give Him their lives and they let Him guide them according to His Word.

And they hold fast to those things. They have convictions about those things. And so often the next generation comes up and somehow we fail to pass on the same convictions to our children and then the children end up compromising.

They live in a time of compromise from God's Word. And many times those children, they can look at their parents and they actually like what they've seen in their parents and they appreciate their parents and they appreciate the way their fathers and mothers have lived their convictions and they like what they've seen, but they compromise. And then the next generation is a generation of confusion.

That was so pertinent to my heart. And as I pondered that, I realized that it is true. So often that happens.

We are but one or two generations away from confusion and apostatizing and except for the mercy of God, what hope is there for our grandchildren or great-grandchildren or even our children? It seems like we're able to even see this in one generation. Sometimes the parents, when the older children grow up, the children have convictions. You can see that they follow their parents and there's conviction there.

Children that are in the middle of the family, there seems to be a lot of compromise there. And then when the last ones grow up, you can actually see confusion there also. This just really sobered my heart.

This is pretty scary, isn't it? Is there any hope for me? Is there any hope for us, the church? And I say, yes, there is. It's the mercy of God. It's the mercy of God.

It's not going to work to pound harder on the pulpit or the table. It's not going to work to make the laws stronger or higher. It's not going to work in my own strength whatsoever.

I must be fully dependent on the mercy of God. And how can I as a father be all that I need to be? Do all that needs to be done in the home except I give myself completely to this God of mercy? What hope do I have if I as a father do not give all to the Lord? But I'd like to go on one more day with the frogs. One more night with the frogs, right? We had some very good instruction given to us on the responsibility of shepherds and of ministers.

They spoke to us about caring for the flock, to teach, to instruct, to preach the whole counsel of God. I so appreciated that. There were several of those older brothers.

They'd get up and they just really preached about preaching the Word. David Ospoff preaching the evening messages. Preach the Word.

And some of you remember him preaching. He's just as fiery, just as strong, just as clear as he has been 20 years ago when I first heard him. His message is still clear.

It's the whole counsel of God. The responsibility to reprove and to rebuke, to nurture, to encourage. The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach and patient in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if peradventure, just maybe God would give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth and to deliver them out of the snare of the devil that took them captive at his will.

You see, brothers, when somebody gets captured, when the enemy captures a soul, he does it at his will. Not at the soul. Out there in the battle, if one of the soldiers gets captured by the enemy, it's at the enemy's will that he gets taken.

It's not his will. And when we see a brother or sister who has fallen into sin, we must realize that he has been captured, taken by the enemy at the enemy's will. I hear my grandson back there.

Maybe he wants to come up and join me. We had a good sermon preached there on brotherhood versus individualism. The value of brotherhood.

Oh, I so appreciated that message. So echoed in my heart. I could say, amen.

Yes, that is right. The difference between being a part of a brotherhood, being in a brotherhood, being committed to a brotherhood, the part of the body, that we are members one of another. And we do pray one for another.

We confess our sins one to another. We love one another. We are to honor one another.

And the gifts of the body, the functions of the body, and Paul uses our physical body as a type and a picture of how the body of Christ is to work together under the head, which is Christ the Lord. Just beautiful. And I would, listening to some of the ministers there, some of them are going through difficult times.

There's church splits, and there's difficulty, and there's lots of hurts, and so forth, but I feel very, very privileged to be part of a body for 25 years where I have been able to put my heart into the body. I've been able to pull with the rest of the team and be a part of that body. Oh, brothers and sisters, there is something very special about that.

When I need help, when I am failing, when I am stumbling, and I'm a part of this body, the rest of the body, it reaches out its hand, and it gives me a hand and helps to lift me up and pull me up and try to help my knees, strengthen my knees. And when my arms are hanging down, it will hold them up for me. To be a part of a body is so precious.

And I feel sorry for those whose hearts are not in, who don't know what it is to really be a part of a body. And it's brotherhood versus individualism. Me, myself, and I. It is the opposite.

It is the opposite. It is the opposing of the brotherhood. Individualism is that which opposes.

It stands against. It works against that body concept of brotherhood. Do you know what it is to be a brother in a body? Do you know what it is to be a sister in a body where you are a part of the body, and you know you're a part of that body, and the rest of the body recognizes the fact that you are a part of that body? I

want to encourage you to, if you can't be a part of this body, find one where you can be a part of.

Fathers and mothers, our children need to know that we are a part of this body. Our hearts are here. Someone mentioned God's Word, God's Commandments.

I've been pondering that one also. And they gave it from God's perspective. Someone once gave this about wisdom.

Wisdom is if you would know all the circumstances and all the outcome and all the responses of this certain thing that you do. Wisdom is knowing all of the outcome that's going to happen down the road in the future. That's wisdom in a sense.

And someone gave this thought this week that God's Commandments, God's Word to us from God's perspective is this way. God in a sense is saying, if you knew all that I know, then you would do this. If you knew all that I know, then you would do this.

That's God's perspective of His Commandments. So, God has given His Commandments, God has given His Word for us with a purpose. And in a sense, He's saying, my dear son, my dear child, I know what's best for you.

And if you would know all that I knew, then you would do what I tell you to do. Amen? But when we are not surrendered, what do we do? We challenge it. We question it.

We think it's not important. We wash it away. We use our own thoughts.

But God is a merciful God. He has given us His Word. One of His purposes is that we might know His will.

In a sense, He's saying, my son, my child, if you would know all that I know, you would simply do this. You like that? Oh, I like that. Let's go back to chapter 18 again.

I'm sure Aaron could have said much more. He took lots of good notes while I just listened. I took a few notes.

The Word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord saying, now I want you to listen very closely. In light of this brief message this morning, I want you to think as we go through this picture here. Look at this picture of what God is giving to Jeremiah.

Arise, go down to the potter's house. There I will cause you to hear My words. Have you ever heard God do that? Has God ever said that to you? Has God ever brought you to a place where you weren't even sure why you were there, but you sensed that God was going to speak to you.

And so, Jeremiah, he gets up and he goes down to the potter's house. He has the assurance that when he gets there, God is going to speak something to him. God is going to say some words to him.

I will cause you to hear My words. So, he went down to the potter's house. And behold, he wrought a work on the wheel.

And as Jeremiah watched that potter working that clay on that wheel, he saw that the vessel was marred. Something wasn't right. How often do we realize that something's not quite right? We know something's wrong.

We're not sure what it is. But this vessel is in the hand of the potter. And God says, I am the potter.

You're the clay. But could it be that while this lump of clay is in the hand of the potter that it was marred? Could it be that I, as a vessel of clay, in the hand of the potter, in the hand of God, the Almighty Sovereign God, that while I was in His hand, I was marred? Something went wrong. And it was not perfect.

And the picture here is that this potter takes this still soft clay pot, and he takes it, and he smashes it, and he makes it like dough again, until there's just the lump there. And he takes it, and again, he throws it on that wheel, and he begins to form it. And he makes it according as it pleases him.

According to what he thinks is good. How often, how often will the potter need to take that vessel of clay when he's finished making it and he sees that it's marred? How often will he have to take that vessel and remake it, and make it again, and again? But he's able. He's able to take you and make you again.

And in spite of the fact of the sowing and the reaping down the road, there is the mercy of God. There's a mercy of God for me. There's a mercy of God for you, my brother, my sister.

There's the mercy of God that's available. A God. This God is saying, I want you to yield your life completely to Me, and I will make you again according to what seems good.

I love the song this morning, nearer my God to Thee, even though it be a cross that raises me, still all my song shall be. In the midst of the difficulties, in the midst of pain, in the midst of heartache, in the midst of thoughts of giving up, God is saying, am I willing to say, though it be a cross that raises me, still all my song shall be nearer my God to Thee, though like a wonder, a daylight all gone. Darkness be over me, my rest a stone, yet in my dreams I'd rather be nearer my God to Thee.

There let the way appear, steps up to heaven. All that Thou sendest me in mercy given, in mercy given, yes, I'm not sure I can trust Him. I'm afraid of what He'll do to me.

I'm afraid of what He'll ask me to do. In mercy given, all that Thou givest me, all that Thou sendest me in mercy given, angels to beckon me nearer my God to Thee. Then with my waking thoughts, bright with Thy praise, out of my stony griefs, Bethel I'll raise, so by my woes to be nearer my God to Thee.

Or if on joyful wings cleaving the sky, caught up to meet my King, swiftly I fly. Still all my song shall be nearer my God to Thee. O Father, let's pray.

Just visit us, Lord, and give us a little glimpse of giving our lives in a surrender to this loving, merciful, heavenly Father. The Almighty God, why should I choose one more day, one more night with the frogs, when I could give my life to such a merciful, loving, help me Lord, to yield fully, completely, daily, moment by moment in every situation. I trust You in Jesus' name.

Amen. My dear brother Emmanuel, one of the treasures of this past week was as you shared, to sit and have the Lord pour into my life, washing with the water of the Word from these dear older brothers. I treasure and value that.

The other thing was to spend some time with my dear brother Emmanuel. Nine hours driving out, nine hours back. And brother Emmanuel, you have shared it so well.

Thank you. I couldn't have done any better. It's such a joy to be laborers together in the ministry of the Lord and to have that love that our brother Emmanuel talked about.

That whole meeting was just graced and baptized in grace and love. I didn't sense anyone exalting themselves or looking down and putting forth the finger on your church isn't as godly as ours. It was not there.

Because the Lord was there. Thank you, brother. So many things have ministered to my heart and just again reflecting this morning.

Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in my hand. I don't think I'll steer it in another direction. I think we'll just stay there.

A lot of things that the Lord spoke to my heart. But you know why was why was the vessel marred in the hands of the potter? I am not an experienced potter. I don't know what condition the clay needs to be in to make a beautiful vessel.

But I think perhaps if the clay has some lumps in there and as the vessel is being formed and molded and fashioned in the skillful, loving hands of the potter when there's a lump comes into play as that vessel is spinning on the potter's wheel and his gentle, skillful fingers that lump catches and just that quick the vessel is marred what might those lumps be? The hymn writer said it like this. Have thine own way, Lord. Have thine own way, Lord.

Thou art the potter, I am the clay. Mold me and make me after Thy will while I am waiting, yielded and still. Could it be that that lump is my will, my pride? And the loving potter he takes that same lump of clay.

He doesn't throw it out. He takes that same lump of clay and he works it and he kneads it and works out those lumps and then he starts again. God wants to do that in my life, in your life.

Let's sing that lovely hymn of invitation to surrender to Christ and if you need to surrender an area to God that the Lord has showed you this morning, you know Jesus is waiting. His arms are open. You can come today and surrender your will to God.

You don't have to spend one more night with the frogs. You can come today. Have thine own way, Lord.

Maybe just by way of acknowledgement maybe you want to stand or maybe you want to come forward and kneel and pray. 371. Have thine own way, Lord.

Have thine own way. Let's stand and sing that together and if the Lord has spoken to you and you want to acknowledge that and come to Jesus just as you are, surrendering to God, you just do that this morning. Have thine own way, Lord.

Have thine own way. Thou art the pot, mold me and bake me. Wounded, you may be seated.

Maybe someone has a testimony or a word of confession they would like to make here publicly. You can raise your hand. The ushers will get a microphone to you if you have something you'd like to share publicly with the congregation.

God bless you. God bless you, those who have responded. Remember the opening devotional to keep your eyes upon the Lord, to walk humbly with our God.

Don't beat yourself up, but just bring your cares, your sins to Jesus. He stands ready to heal, mighty to save and deliver. Amen.

Is there someone? There's a hand here on the brother's side. Brothers or sisters, give word of testimony or confession. God bless you.

We have the mic over here on the sister's side. You can go ahead. Go ahead.

This whole message was for me this morning. Yeah, just from the beginning to the end. This morning when Brother Jay spoke about the Christian life seeming too hard.

These last few weeks, I have been caught in that. Just not knowing where to turn and just feeling like it's impossible and how is it ever going to all work out. But for the mercy of God, I can praise Him yesterday.

He poured fresh oil upon my heart. And it's a blessing to come to church rejoicing and praising God. And I feel like I would like to ask for, as God brings me to your minds this week, that you would pray that I could live in that spirit because this week ahead of us looks humanly impossible.

But God has done so many miracles in the last two weeks for us. Why would He not do more this week? So I want to praise Him for His faithfulness and just trust God that He will guide us this week. Amen.

Let's pray right now for our dear brother Adam and Naomi and their family. Father, thank You for the testimony of our sister, of Your faithfulness, Lord, and her expectation and faith in You. Father, we just do pray a blessing upon our brother Adam and Naomi and their family as they look to moving.

And it's a big task. And Lord, we pray that You would bless them abundantly and cause us, Lord, to also be a blessing to them, helping them to bear their load. Thank You, Father, in Jesus' name, Amen, Amen.

Alright, there's another hand on the brother's side. I was very blessed this morning with the opening devotional and the message here. Just in reflecting when you asked the question, Aaron, what could mar, what would be here in this clay that would mar? It just came to me that for me, myself, it was pride.

God had to take it out of me. Amen. There's a hand up front on the sister's side.

I just wanted to share, hearing Brother Manuel's message today was really exciting for me. I guess it's something that God's been teaching me for the last maybe nine months or something. Just over and over again, He brings something to my mind and says, will you give this one up to me? This thing or this dream or this preference or whatever it is.

Are you willing to do this for me? Or are you willing to give up that? Are you going to trust me even if you don't understand? And I've just found that it brings such joy and freedom when I give it up to Him and decide not to spend the night with the frogs. I've spent plenty of nights with the frogs in my life and it's pretty miserable. And the more I give up to God, the more He just brings me joy.

And I was just thinking about it the other day and this little poem came to my mind. It says, I delight to do Your will, O God. I trust Your choice is best.

And sometimes I need to choose that because it doesn't look so obvious, but I trust Your choice is best. I give to You my right to choose. You give to me sweet rest.

And He does. I delight to do Your will, O God. No need for earthly fear because You're loving, powerful, and strong.

You bring my heart such cheer. And yeah, I delight to do God's will. And I don't know what it's going to be all, but I trust that it's going to be good.

And I just really rejoice to hear that again. Why would I want to spend one more night with this rock? I don't want to. Amen.

Thank you. There's a hand on the brother's side also. One of the things that I've been thinking about recently is some of these times when I get to hold my young son and have him sleep on my shoulder.

I was just meditating, particularly this past week, about how that is the rest that God wants to give to us. You know, my life doesn't feel that restful, but when I'm not sure what I should do, how I should feel, I can just turn to my Heavenly Father and say, okay, I need some rest. Praise God.

So many lovely pictures when we become as little children. Oh, yes. There's a hand on the sister's side toward the front, Brother Robert, on the sister's side.

Just keep your hand up, and Robert will know where to take the microphone. Thank you. I know I'm not a member here, and I know many of you have seen me here a lot, but I just would like to testify that I'm from a different congregation, a different conference, but I'm just always very blessed and spiritually fed when I come here.

I just want to encourage you, continue serving the Lord. I might just mention on Sunday mornings when I pray for the ministers in my congregation, I always name each of the ministers here to the Lord, too, that he would minister to them because this church means a lot to me. God bless you, dear sister.

Thank you for your prayers, and all praise and glory be to Jesus. Thank you for listening. We hope this message has blessed you.

If you would like additional messages, please visit our website at ccfsermons.org. Call us at 855-55-CHARITY or write to us at Charity Christian Fellowship, 59 South Groffdale Road, Leola, PA, 17540. This ministry is supported by your donations. May Jesus Christ be Lord of all.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/25/SID25963.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/emanuel-esh/the-potter-and-the-clay/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net