

Fashioned in His Hands

“Should the thing that was created say to the one who made it, ‘Why have you made me like this?’ ” (Romans 9:20b, NLT).

Have you ever questioned why the Lord allowed certain events to transpire? Have you ever questioned His intentions in making you the way you are? Discuss these with your group.

When a lump of clay is placed on the wheel, the Potter sees the completed work in His mind; its design and features, uses, strengths and delicacies. Only He knows the methods He must use to make it into the vessel of His desire. At times His plan and purpose to bring about our transformation will include painful circumstances much like that of Mephibosheth. But whatever His plan, we can be assured of His purpose: to transform us into a vessel that not only bears His image, but displays His mercy and grace.

Read Philippians 1:6. **“He who has begun a good work...will complete it”** (NKJV). Is there anything that keeps you from accepting this promise of the Lord?

In the Beginning

Read Ephesians 2:10.

The Greek word for “workmanship” is *poiema* which denotes the result of a work; that which is **produced**, rather than that which is made.¹ From this word we get our English word “poetry.” Picture now the story (or poem) of your life, penned by the hand of the Lord. The verse above states that you are *His* workmanship, *His* masterpiece. It is He who created you; it is He who has molded and shaped your life up until this very moment. It is He who holds your beginning and end in His hands.

Read John 1:1-3 and Colossians 1:16,17. You were made with great care and meticulousness. The word “consist” denotes the idea of composition; to put together, unite parts into one whole.

Psalm 139:15-16 tells us that our frame was skillfully fashioned. As you look upon your external characteristics what do you see? _____

The Psalm goes on to say that His eyes saw our “substance.” The word “substance” reminds us of our innermost being. Psalm 139:13 says, **“For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb”** (NKJV).

¹ Zodhiates, Spiros, ed. The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament. Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 1992. G4161.

What does “inward parts” include? _____

With this question in mind, read Psalm 139:1-3.

He knows the depths of your heart. He understands where you are going and He knows why you stay away. He is also acquainted with your ways—your reactions, behaviors, tendencies, and habits. He understands your inclination to view yourself through your own eyes.

But maybe you noticed the psalm began in the past tense: **“You have...known me...”** Likewise, in verse 16 it said, **“All the days *ordained* for me were written in your book before one of them came to be”** (NIV). Just like the clay, the Lord fashioned you together (inside and out) and prepared the days of your life with very specific intentions.

The Days Fashioned for Me

According to Acts 17:26, what did God determine and preappoint?

Continue reading Acts 17, verses 27-28. Why has He orchestrated your life the way He has?

In whom do you **“live and move and have your being?”**

Molded and Shaped

What does it mean to be self-made?

Read Psalm 100:3.

Mephibosheth allowed his external circumstances and views of himself to define him. Sometimes it is easier to fall down in defeat than it is to stand with confidence and belief in the Potter’s plan. We become trapped by believing that *we are* our faults and failures, and by resisting change when the Potter’s hands are at work.

In Christ you are no longer...

- How you feel about yourself.
- Your greatest weakness.
- Your biggest mistake or greatest sin.
- Your greatest physical flaw.

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- Your family association.
- Your performance.
- Who your critics (or the adversary) say you are.

Do you allow these things to define you? Which ones? _____

Read Jeremiah 18:1-4. Describe the vessel made by the potter. _____

The word “**marred**” describes an object that is in a ruined state. Although it may seem as if the potter is at fault, it is the “clay” that is resisting his hands. How have you resisted taking the shape the Potter desires for you? Read Isaiah 45:9.

As the potter continues to patiently knead the clay, it becomes useful once again. Thanks be to God that He will continue to work towards His purpose!

Bearing His Image

According to Genesis 1:27, when God looks upon you, whom does He see? _____

Record Isaiah 64:8. _____

In the beginning, the Potter had a plan; the Workman set out to produce His masterpiece in you. Although you may not understand the methods used to transform you, in the end you will be a vessel that bears His image and displays His mercy and grace. The painful circumstances He allows in your life, even the qualities you may consider to be your worst, He can, *and will*, use for good.

Read Romans 8:28.

In closing, Jeremiah 29:11-14 says, “**For I know the thoughts I think towards you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back from your captivity...**” (NKJV).