

The Always God: Always Restoring **Jeremiah 18:1-6**

The eternal, self-existent, all-powerful God has not changed over time. He is still “The Great I AM” ...and He is still restoring.

Just like Chip and Joanna Gains from the HGTV show called *Fixer Upper*, who restore old, dilapidated homes, so God Himself is a restorer of our lives. In Jeremiah 18:1-6, God compares Himself to a potter who takes marred clay (our lives) and fashions, forms, and molds it into something special.

Point One: We Are All Broken

“Marred” in v. 4 is a synonym for “broken.” It’s the same word Jeremiah used to describe a belt God commanded him to bury and later dig up in Chapter 13.

We are all spiritually broken. This is what sin does to us. It corrupts us...it mars us. It breaks the relationship between God and humanity. Romans 3:23

The only solution to sin...to the brokenness in our lives is the gospel. When we submit our life to the Potter’s hands, He begins to form, fashion, and make us into what 2 Cor. 5 calls, “A new creation.”

Jeremiah is a prophet who proclaimed for 40 years judgement was coming to Judah. He’s called the weeping prophet...because the reality of what he prophesied broke his heart. It’s important to note the object lesson God gives him refers to a people God was in a covenant relationship with...the people of Israel. Jeremiah 18:6

Once we have been remade by God and entered a relationship with Him, that doesn’t mean we have arrived. It’s the beginning. Clay that is marred...clay that is broken – can be (v. 4) “reworked” and remade! It can still be restored.

Point Two: Only God Can Restore the Broken

Like the potter, only God has the power to restore.

So, you have professed faith in Christ and have trusted Him for the forgiveness of your sins; you have trusted Him for your salvation, but you’ve gotten away from God. Why?

Sin has taken you away from God. (Your relationship is not broken, but your fellowship with Him is broken.) *Sin leads to a hardening of the heart.* Hebrews 3:7-14

The heart is *hardened by sin’s deceitfulness*...and the harder the clay gets, the less moldable it becomes.

If we don’t keep our hearts soft before God...take care of our personal relationship with Jesus through abiding in Him (John 14), our hearts will harden.

It is possible to start out well—just like the Israelites who were liberated from bondage in Egypt—but then to fall short of God’s glory and not inherit salvation. Now, the point here is not that those who have been redeemed can lose their salvation, as John 10:30 tells us. The author of Hebrews in this passage is not trying to explain if one can lose or not lose their salvation, *but he is stressing the importance of perseverance.* He does not want us to be like those who were never really rooted in Christ and thus fall away as seen in the Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13:1-23.

Now, for the child of God, when his or her heart becomes the hardest, *God must break them to bring them back to Him.*

You may be in this position right now. You are screaming, “Help, I’m broken!”

Don’t keep running from God—run towards Him. You are in the Potter’s hand. God can and will restore what’s broken in your life, but, child of God, you need to confess your sin and repent, and do it every day, and ask for His strength to overcome the sin...., and He will restore you because He’s still in the business of restoring!

An example from the Scriptures of God restoring one of His own is Peter.

During the last supper before His crucifixion, Jesus told Peter that before the rooster crowed the next morning, he would deny knowing Jesus three times. Peter told Jesus that he would never deny knowing Jesus. On the night Jesus was arrested, however, Peter denied knowing Jesus three times and then the rooster crowed.

Peter is broken, the Bible says he went out and wept bitterly. The next time he sees Jesus after the resurrection. Can you imagine the grief...the embarrassment...the shame when Peter first saw Jesus?

Sometime after Jesus first appears to the disciples, some of them go to Galilee. One night they decide to fish. They fish all night and catch nothing. Failure upon failure is stacking up against Peter. For Peter, the sting of knowing he had denied and failed Jesus, must have torn at the fabric of his being. It seems that everything he tries is a failure. In his mind, he is sinking lower and lower...

"Everything I do is a failure!"

Then Jesus appears on the shore. Jesus tells them to cast their net on the right side of their boat. They obeyed the man..., and the net was so full of fish, that they struggled to get the fish into the boat.^[1]_{SEP} It was then, that they knew the man on the shore was Jesus. And Peter got out of the boat and waked to shore. What did Peter see? He saw Jesus, and a fire with fish cooking over it and bread.

After they ate, Jesus asked a marred, broken Peter – three times, "Do you love me?" Each time he answered, "Yes, Lord. I love you." Jesus doesn't shame Peter. Jesus doesn't lecture Him. Instead, Jesus gently restores Peter. Jesus took this pliable lump of clay and reworked him, giving him a new mission to go and "tend my sheep".

Peter who would preach on the day of Pentecost, as recorded in Acts 2... and on that day three thousand people came to know Christ. Only God could do that!

A.W. Tozer – "It is doubtful whether God can bless a man greatly until He has hurt him deeply." It's called the "blessing of brokenness".

Point Three: God Wants to Restore You

God longs to remake...remold...restore...YOU.

God...can take your life – a simple lump of clay and in a moment with his touch as you remain pliable and soft in his hands, he will form you...remake you...restore you into something that he can use for his glory.

We should rejoice at how God is restoring us! God takes us...works on us...and as He does, we get excited at what He is doing! He is the Great Fixer Upper!