

Life Group Notes

Sunday 9th July 2023

Speaker: Andy McCullough

Title: Jeremiah: Go to the Potter's House

Passage: Jeremiah 18:1-18

"Go down to the potter's house," God tells Jeremiah. If we have ears to hear, God can speak to us through mundane, everyday experiences with his profound, life-shaping words. The potter made a vessel, but it spoiled. It rebelled. So he smooched it down and began again (4), re-working it into something different. In the same way, God predicts endings and beginnings for Jerusalem. There will be an end to the Old Covenant, the Jerusalem-centred work of God, and then a new beginning, the New Covenant open to all nations of the earth.

God's work is continuous and discontinuous – the same lump of clay is used, but a different vessel is formed. In the same way, the same worship of the One True God is consistent throughout Old and New Testaments, but the shape of the work of God is very different (Jer 31:31-33). To be born again is to be re-purposed into a new creation, although with the same raw materials (2 Cor 5:17). And on the last day, all creation will be deconstructed and then reconstructed (2 Pet 3:13).

So often, for God to do something new in your life, all it costs is everything you have built up until that time.

Your responsiveness can change God's mind (7-10). The potter is working, but the responsiveness of the clay in his hand is something he takes his cues from. Relent: (Hebr) Nacham... like a sigh of regret. Artists do dialogue with the art.

Resistance of the status quo (18). Jerusalem is not repentant. Those who are content with the status quo have the most to lose and the least to gain from change. This is where being prophetic is dangerous.

Jesus had a similar message to Jeremiah; God will tear down the temple and do something new. The status quo resisted him, even put him to death.

Suggested Questions:

1. Do you like the idea of God as potter? Why or why not?
2. Have you got any examples of God shaping your life?
3. In what ways is God shaping you at the moment? How responsive are you?
4. Why was it important that the old covenant ended and the new covenant started? What is the difference between then two?
5. Why did the Jerusalem elite resist change? Why do those who are content with the status quo resist the prophetic so often?