

Ash Wednesday Service
Lessons From the Potter: *The Potter and the Clay*
February 10, 2016

Do you sometimes feel like you're spinning around and around?
There are so many things in our lives
that pull us this way and that way;
so many distractions every day.

Sometimes my mind feels like it is racing
my brain feels full
my body is tired, yet can't stop moving

I'm on a roll
I'm spinning fast now
I can't slow down
I can't think
I have no balance

Like clay on a potter's wheel we spin and spin.
The thing with throwing clay on the wheel
is that it is really important for the clay to be centered.

If the clay is not centered,
it doesn't take long before it begins to fall apart.
It leans this way and that way and
it finally collapses on the spinning wheel.

And if the potter doesn't scoop it up and rework it;
Reform it;
Eventually, that clay would dry up
and return to the dust that it came from.

The Bible has many places where it uses the metaphor of
God as the potter and us, God's people, as the clay.

Just like this clay on the spinning wheel
our lives become fast moving.
Around and around in circles we go
Wanting to stop, but not sure how to do it.

Yet, if we are ready to be reshaped, reformed,
the Potter is eager to do just that!
If we will put ourselves into the potters hands
we will find that the spinning slows down
and the Potter begins doing new things with us.

It might mean that we have to be flattened out,
rolled up and thrown into a new heap.
But we can trust the Potter, for

He has a perfect vision of the
image He wants to make us into.
He is always creating
always molding,
always reshaping.

This Lent, I invite you to yield your whole self
into the Potters Hands.
Trust in him to do whatever He needs to do
to make you a new creation;
a new vessel for his use, and his enjoyment.

The first question of the Shorter Catechism in our
Book of Confessions is:

What is the chief end of man?
What is our main purpose for existing?
Why did the Great, Loving Potter God create us?

And the answer comes: Man's chief end is to glorify God,
And to enjoy Him forever.

God, the Potter made us, created us for many good things,
But the main purpose is for us to glorify Him in all we do,
and to enjoy Him forever. To enjoy God!

The clay is made to give glory to the Potter and
to enjoy Him by yielding and trusting in
the perfect relationship we have in his skilled hands.

This Lent, I invite you to give up your endless, senseless spinning.
Allow God, the Potter to work your surrendered spirit
Into the image he wants you to be.
You might still spin, but slower now, and with purpose.

Someday, all of us will return to the dust that we are made from.
We are mortal. We are not God.

But that is a very, very good thing!
Because God can take even the driest dust
And breathe life into it again.

Through Lent, we remember our mortality,
but we never, ever forget
that even death is not the end,
because of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ –
the ultimate gift of love given to us
by God, the Gracious Potter.