

Treasures

in Gray Ports



A Lessons For Life Book
Keith Hammond

Treasures In Clay Pots

is based on several scriptures in Isaiah.

This book tells how God shaped and orchestrated the lives of people in the Old Testament, and still does today. It provides a brief look into the life of Brother Keith, the author, and the tragedies that God allowed to happen in his life and how over two decades, God molded him into the man and the minister he is today. Includes examples of how God takes cracked and marred vessels, and reworks them for His purpose.

Introduction



Chapter One

The Potter

The Process Of The Potter

Chapter Two

The Clay

The Process Of The Clay

Chapter Three

The Wheel

The Process Of The Wheel

Chapter Four

The Droppings

The Process Of The Droppings

Chapter Five

The Shaping

The Process Of The Shaping

Chapter Six

The Kiln

The Process Of The Kiln

Chapter Seven

The Glazing

The Process Of the Glazing

And more...

Contents



The Potter

“He saw a vessel, that had been broken by the wind and the rain. He saw it, and had so much compassion, to put it, to put it back together again. And I, was that broken vessel, that no one thought was any good. I cried Lord, you are the Potter, and I am the clay. Make me over, Lord make me over, this day. Jesus picked up the pieces, of my broken heart. He made me, a new vessel. He revived my soul.” The words to this song, which I listen to all the time, express and identify my life in God’s hands.

My name is Keith Hammond. In my life, from the very beginning, I was called to be a minister to others. Just by the mere fact that there were so many tragedies that God allowed to take place in my life at a very young age, that I believe He was conditioning me to be able to help others through such hardships. As a minister, God has transformed my life and molded me like clay, into and through one situation to the next, to the next, to give me the first-hand experience in order to be well seasoned to be able to handle any and mostly all circumstances that He would send my way through the people who would need help.

God is the Potter. Imagine if He left us as broken, marred, cracked vessels. Imagine if God never came into our lives to heal and deliver and set us free from the strongholds that keep us in bondage for so many years. Imagine if the man who had the legion of demons living within him had never been destined to meet Jesus on that path. Imagine if God didn’t take our broken lives, repair us, and put us back on the path to try serving Him all over again. I’m glad I serve a God who molds and shapes me into what He wants me to be. To describe what happens when we are touch by the potter’s hands, another songwriter says: “It’s gone. All the things your mother did, that your father did, that your brother or sister did, it’s gone. All gone.” No matter what happened in your past, it’s all gone. Things that you thought you’d never recover from, gone. Things you did in the past, no matter what it was, gone. All gone.

The Process of the Potter

From the moment we surrender our life to Jesus Christ, and accept the free gift of salvation, we are in God's hands. It is the time in our life when we have been called to a higher standard of living, of thinking, of treating others, of acting and reacting. It is the point where God steps in and begins to mold us into what He sees for our life and wants it to be; and shapes us into something that can be useful to Him in church and in ministry, starting locally, then branching nationally, then reaching internationally.

Spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all the world by any means necessary so that every person on the planet has an opportunity to be saved from sin and death and spend eternal life in Heaven is the end result. But the process is not quite that easy. As a new creature, just giving our lives to Christ, there are some things we must go through in order to be useful to God. First, God's holy spirit has to come and dwell within us, so it can start to transform us from the inside out. There are some things in us that are unGodly, and some strongholds that have been with us so long, we don't even fight them anymore.

God's process of changing us into a vessel that He can use starts with us making a complete surrender. We have to want to be living sacrifices. We have to submit to the process. We have to place our lives in the Potter's hands. That means no more club hopping on weekends; no more dating or even fornicating; no more drinking or doing drugs; and that's just the beginning. Further on in the process we have to stop lying, cheating, stealing, and chasing money as if it rules our lives. We have to accept God's process for forgiveness, meaning that we treat someone who has done something wrong to us...as if it never happened. We have to commit to reading God's Word, learning about His grace and mercy, love and kindness, faithfulness and forgiveness. We have to start being useful in church by using our gifts and we should be well into the process of regularly going into our prayer closet.

In God's hands, when He is in the process of molding and shaping us into what He wants us to be, because of the diversity of God's creativity, the broadness of spectrum, and the infinite things He can use, no two finishes are alike. My church isn't like yours; your church isn't like mine; my ministry isn't like yours, your ministry isn't like mine; my gifts aren't like yours; your gifts aren't like mine; you don't look like me; I don't look like you. Each of us is divinely and uniquely created like no one else.

Part of the process requires us to be shaped in a way that removes any hot air from our speech and attitude. Things that shouldn't be in us such as jealousy, envy, hatred, and other evil thoughts have to be vacuumed out. The Potter washes us through a Baptism of water and the Holy Spirit so the outward sign of an inward change becomes evident. People we used to fornicate with, get in trouble with, get drunk with, smoke dope with, party with, need to see that we've relocated from wrong street to righteous avenue. They need to know from our actions and words that we're no longer part of the crowd of people that don't care if they go to Hell. And get ready, because even some of your best friends won't treat you like they used to.

The Potter's process of transforming us leaves no stone unturned. Everything in our life will become transparent to God and should be to others. God wants us to step out from behind the layers of secrecy that plagues many church members who are afraid to stand up and get busy. They are afraid that people won't see us how God sees us, which is going from holier than thou to if only they could see me now. God's clay shaping process becomes evident to others once our speech goes from the gutter to butter; and God's words roll off our tongue as easy as the curse words and the street trash that used to come out of our mouth. At this stage in the process we are extremely fragile and can be easily broken because once we've been cleaned and prepared for the next phase, we cannot allow the demons that were evicted from our house, to return with 7 more so we must watch who we associate with.

The next step takes us into the fire. Jesus Himself had to endure the dry heat of the desert to be tempted by satan and tested by God. This is not easy because it comes with fasting, and turns up the heat to see if we're able to handle some of life's tests that God will throw at us. God wants us to see how heated situation can get, to see if we will rely upon Him while we're in the fire, and have faith that He places an angel around us so we don't get burned. And it's all so we can help others get through the fire.

Just like on the pottery wheel, turning up the heat induces reactions that lead to permanent changes. It increases our strength, toughens us up, hardens what was once a weak shell able to be easily broken or penetrated and shapes us into something that is needed on the front line in the battle against satan and his army. This shell is not just any shell. It is God's Armor. It contains the helmet of salvation, which identifies us as a member of God's Army; and is our crown of life; the breastplate of righteousness, which guards our heart from stress, mess, distress and unrest; the belt of truth that when fastened around our waist, is there to always set us free; the shield of faith to use for blocking attacks of fear; and the sword of the Spirit, which

is the Word of God and is useful for teaching others how we made it over, rebuking the devourer for His name's sake, correcting those who are in opposition but need to hear the truth, and training that is essential to us becoming righteous. Let's not forget the shoes, which help us to walk in love and spread peace, joy, happiness and hope to a lost and dying world who need to hear the good news of the Gospel and Jesus Christ. Once we're through the process of getting this kind of a new shell from the Potter, he's still not finished working on us yet because the battle has yet to begin. He only gave us the Armor to get prepared for the fight. He still has to put us back on the potter's wheel, spin us around a couple more times to marvel at His work, and to begin laying over the top of our shell, a glaze that's so shiny, it shows His light in us, so we begin to look and act like what He shaped us to be.

You know what it's like when you put on a new outfit. You feel like a new creature. From inside out. You walk different. Your back is a little straighter and a lot stronger. Your brain isn't as cloudy and confused as it was before you put the outfit on. But you never put on a new outfit just for you to stare in the mirror at yourself. You want everyone else to see it too. Only the Potter isn't done yet. This is the part of the process where he can put you out on display so that those who knew you back then, can

see you now. God will take what you used to be and turn you into what He wants people to see. This is the part of the process where the Potter steps away from the wheel, spins you around, and marvels to Himself again by saying, "there is no secret to what God can do!" With the touch of the Potter's divine and creative hand, what started as a lump of clay, once the Potter stepped in and placed you in his hand, lumps of anger started to fall off; lumps of lust dropped off; bumps and bruises were healed, guilt and shame from past sins fell off; the parts of your flesh the devil was using for bad, God put them on the Potter's wheel and turned them into something good, useful and new in His eyes and now others can marvel at it too.

You started as a lump of clay, surrendered to the Potter's hand, submitted to the Potter's process, got washed with water and Spirit, gave up dope and picked up hope, went through the fire and got lifted higher, but you're not done yet. The Potter never leaves the outside of the clay, undecorated. You have on the armor, but it's not decorated. This decoration will put stripes on your outside to remind you of what you've been through on the inside. It will give you a stripe for every storm you've been through; a stripe for every tear you had to cry; a stripe for how many tests you had to pass; a stripe for all the hills you had to climb; a stripe for all the fires that didn't burn you; a stripe for getting through everything satan threw at you. These stripes remind you that you are healed, and instead of sinning for satan, you're now singing for the Lord, and though you started as a lump of clay...God used Christ's stripes to reshape you into what He wanted you to be.



Brother Keith Hammond

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Brother Keith is a born again Christian. He is a Spirit-led man of God, teacher and author. His life has been transformed from things such as pride and prison to passion and purpose.

God is the author of the Bible. It is meant to be our instruction manual, our roadmap home. Without it, we are lost. Use the information in these books to help you and others.

God destroys the darkness behind us, to direct us toward our destiny ahead. So whatever you do on your journey, never turn back. God bless you in your walk with Christ. Amen.

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