



The Potter Shapes the Clay

(based on Jeremiah 18:1-6)

Jeremiah was a prophet. One day, God told him to go to the workshop where a potter was making some pots.

“When you get to the potter’s shop,” God explained, “I will give you a message for the people.”

So Jeremiah went and watched the potter make pots out of clay.

Jeremiah watched as the potter took a lump of clay and rolled it. He used his hands to squeeze the clay until it was ready to be worked. It had to be just right.

And God said, “I am like the potter.”

Jeremiah continued to watch as the potter put that ball of clay onto the potter’s wheel and began to turn it. The potter used his hands to mold and shape the clay until suddenly, a pot appeared under the potter’s hands. It was incredible.

And God said, “I am like the potter.”

Suddenly something went wrong. The pot began to shake under the potter’s hands. It wobbled and then it crumbled.

“Oh, no!” thought Jeremiah. “The pot is ruined.”

But the potter didn’t throw away the clay. He gathered it up and started over. He rolled and pressed the clay into a ball again.

And God said, “I am like the potter.”

Then Jeremiah watched as the potter made an entirely new pot from the clay. Once again, the clay was shaped into a beautiful little pot. This time, it was just right.

And God gave Jeremiah this message for the people: “I am like the potter. You are like clay. I will shape your life. When things go wrong, I can help you start over.”

And Jeremiah gave thanks for God’s love.



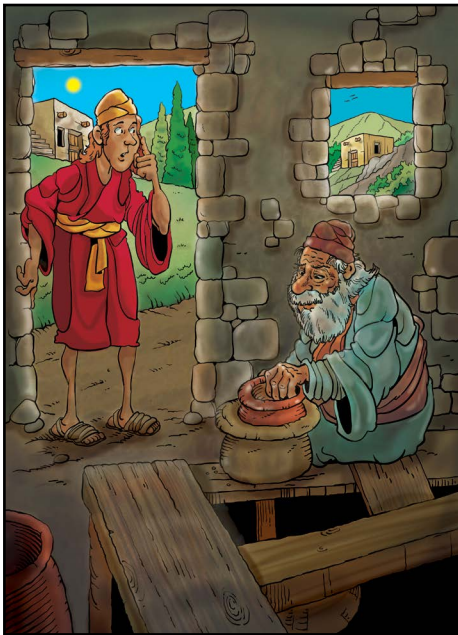
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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- Talk together about a time when things went wrong and you had to start over. Invite them to share about a time like that also.
- Talk together about things that can change shape. Discuss how some changes are temporary, and some are part of a long process of growing.



Responding to God's Grace

- Sing “Spirit of the Living God,” *Glory to God* 388, or sing along with the YouTube video “Spirit of the Living God” (bit.ly/SpiritOfTheLivingGod).
- Visit a pottery studio to see a real potter in action, and to see handmade pottery items.
- Make foil sculptures. Use a length of aluminum foil to make a person in your family or someone you all know. Guess who it is. Take turns reshaping the foil into another person and guessing.

Celebrating in Gratitude

- Make rolled sugar cookies using cookie dough from scratch or purchased in the refrigerator case at the grocery store. Use cookie cutters. Remember that we are all being shaped by God.
- Make homemade play dough. See bit.ly/UltimatePlayDough for a recipe. Make play dough together and enjoy shaping and reshaping the dough.
- Pray:

God, you are the potter. I am the clay. Shape me into the person you want me to be. Amen.

Note: bit.ly web addresses are case sensitive.