

# TRANSFORMATION



## *Fingerprints of God* *Small Group and Individual Study Guide*

### Week 5

*The Potter: His shaping your form.....His Plan*

#### **Week 5 The Potter will shape us how He wants us**

“God's people have their trials. It was never designed by God, when He chose His people, that they should be an untried people. They were chosen in the furnace of affliction; they were never chosen to worldly peace and earthly joy. Freedom from sickness and the pains of mortality was never promised them; but when their Lord drew up the charter of privileges, He included chastisements amongst the things to which they should inevitably be heirs. Trials are a part of our lot; they were predestinated for us in Christ's last legacy. So surely as the stars are fashioned by his hands, and their orbits fixed by Him, so surely are our trials allotted to us: He has ordained their season and their place, their intensity and the effect they shall have upon us. Good men must never expect to escape troubles; if they do, they will be disappointed, for none of their predecessors have been without them. Mark the patience of Job; remember Abraham, for he had his trials, and by his faith under them, he became the "Father of the faithful." Note well the biographies of all the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and you shall discover none of those whom God made vessels of mercy, who were not made to pass through the fire of affliction. It is ordained of old that the cross of trouble should be engraved on every vessel of mercy, as the royal mark whereby the King's vessels of honour are distinguished. But although tribulation is thus the path of God's children, they have the comfort of knowing that their Master has traversed it before them; they have His presence and sympathy to cheer them, His grace to support them, and His example to teach them how to endure; and when they reach "the kingdom," it will more than make amends for the "much tribulation" through which they passed to enter it.”

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#### **Based on Spurgeon's “Morning and Evening” excerpt, discuss the following:**

What do you think Spurgeon means by “vessels of mercy?” Why would they be required to go through the “fire of affliction?”

Explain the difference between merely “enduring” trials or afflictions in contrast to allowing God to use them to actually shape our lives for the better.

What trial or affliction or refining has the God taken you through recently and what was the growth and/or results in transforming your life closer to Christ?

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**Isaiah 64:8**

**Isaiah 45:5-9**

**The Potter had freedom to rework with respects to his plans for us**

**Jeremiah 18: 1-6**

**The Potter is determined to complete the work He started in us**

**Philippians 1:6**

**The Potter's Love and Care in contrast to our state and condition**

**Psalms 78:38-40**

**Psalms 103:11-17**

We are but mud and vapor

We are not our own (either of light or darkness)

#### **Based on the Scripture passages, discuss the following:**

Why do we as humans often struggle with the idea that we are just clay in God's hands to do with exactly as he pleases?

Look up Isaiah 45:9 in both the NIV and ESV versions of the Bible. The quote in the last sentence reads quite differently in the two. Explain why the translations are different and what the two meanings imply. **(Group leader should do a little research on this and have copies of each ready.)**

Based on the Jeremiah passage, describe what the prophet observes. Why the visual illustration and what is its impact on you?

In Philippians 1:6 what is meant by the "good work" in us being "carried on to completion?" How have you experienced this process in your life?

In both the passages in the Psalms, we are described as "dust" and "flesh." How do you react to this?

In the Psalms 103 passage, describe the source of comfort to you that God recognizes our weakness? How do the parents in your small group react to the promises given in these verses?

Close your session again in prayer. Focus on a recommitment to give all to the Potter so He can remake and do His good and perfect work in your life. May the vessel form be used anew for 'noble purposes.'

*Going Deeper*  
*Tweener Time*  
**WEEK 5**

For your personal devotion time. Read then write your reflection

*The Potter: His shaping your form.....His Plan*

**Week 5 The Potter will shape us how He wants us**

Day 1 Read Isaiah 29:13-21, then go back and reflect on v.16

Day 2 Read Isaiah 45:1-13, then go back and reflect on v.9

Day 3 Read Psalms 103:1-14, then go back and reflect on v.14

Day 4 Read Isaiah 57:14-21, then go back and reflect on v.16

Day 5 Read Romans 9:19-26, then go back and reflect on v.21