

# How Is God Shaping Your Faith?

Sermon Notes for Dec 3, 2017 at Brentwood

Ps 80:1-7 (529) & Isaiah 64:1-9 (680)



**Yet, O Lord, you are our Father;  
we are the clay, and you the potter;  
we are all the work of your hand.  
(Isaiah 64:8)**

## Provocative Ponderings that Call Forth Our Potential in Christ

- There's a lot more going on in a potter's studio than I ever imagined – this is the guy that taught me that – he's Bob Kingsmill – he's the one who took the clay and crafted the feet that have collected so much money for our sock program – you've got to find the right clay, have a creative imagination, know how to shape the clay, put on the glaze, carve out the contours, fire it in the kiln at the right temperature and for the right time – and I've sure I've left out a bunch of steps I didn't even notice – complex work with complicated materials full of mysterious moments when things happen that you did not expect – I think that makes it a powerful image for how God shapes human beings
- It's important to remember that this is God's work – we, all of us, are the work of God's hands – our dignity and worth lies in that fact – we are created with a purpose by the Love that launched this whole enterprise we call the heavens and the earth - in a secular age like ours, where many have lost any sense of God's presence and power, we are tempted to think that we can do lots of things that only God can do, especially when it comes to our growth into authentic human being – but God is continually pestering us with hints this is his world and we are the work of his hands
- Let's just touch on one of the most powerful ways that God is seeking your attention and cooperation in shaping a flourishing faith in which you are freed to contribute your unique gifts to God's Commonwealth – because that's what 'salvation' is really about – from the Hebrew roots of that word, it is the removal on constraints to allow for full flourishing – the way I want to mention briefly this morning, this first Sunday in Advent with its focus on faith, is worship
- It's what most of us in the church do most often together – Jesus Christ welcomes us, inspires wonder in us, imparts wisdom to us, and shapes a witness to his Commonwealth through us – we can imagine this space as the potter's studio – where God shapes us, week by week, to take our unique place in God's world for God's purposes

*Notes for a sermon preached by Brian Fraser,  
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## **So, what are we going to do with this ...**

I hope what we do with these brief reflections on God as the potter of our lives (and like any metaphor, it only contains part of the truth) is pay greater attention to the touch and feel of the Spirit shaping our lives for God's purposes – how do we take the sensitivities we find so powerfully in our worship services and keep them in mind throughout the week? – where, outside of this space, do we experience the welcome of God? – what, outside of the elements of our worship, do we experience the inspiration of wonder at God's pervasive love? – how, apart from our reading of and reflection on the Scriptures in worship, do we experience the Spirit forming in us the mind of Christ?

- when, in the opportunities God creates all around us, do we give an account of the faith, hope, and love that God is nourishing within us for the flourishing of God's world? – I pray that at least one of these questions this week, and eventually all of them as we practice this over the course of our lives, draws us into a deeper faith in our Creator, Redeemer, and Reformer

## **Your Notes ...**