

# STAY AWAKE GOOD ENOUGH

## **In the Potter's Hand**

Andrea Adams

A wet glob of clay becomes an intricate vase or a lovely bowl. A potter has the incredible job of transforming, of taking an ordinary substance and creating something beautiful and useful. Jeremiah 18:6 says that we are like clay in God's hands. God shapes us and transforms us.

### **Centered**

After preparing the clay, the potter centers it on the wheel, applying pressure to make the wobbling clay settle down. The clay is centered when it is still, resting in the potter's hands, even as the wheel turns.

How do we become centered and still in God's hands, even when everything around us is spinning? With school, sports, friends, and activities, we rarely slow down. Yet it is moments of quiet reflection and times of prayer that make us clay God can mold. We need times of stillness so that the Potter can center us.

### **Shaped**

Once the clay is centered on the wheel, the potter uses a thumb or fingers to create an opening and to hollow out the base of the pot. Then, by pinching and lifting the clay, the potter gives the clay shape. Walls form, and the cylinder stretches upward.

Our lives grow and take shape as the Potter works with us. God's hands form us through the daily challenges of life: the test we've been dreading all week, the friend who needs our encouragement, the sister who borrowed a favorite sweater again. We can harden our hearts in frustration, or we can let God mold us with hands of love. As we learn to look to God for grace and strength, we are stretched and shaped into the people we were created to be.

### **Fired**

Going through fire is part of becoming. The hours of firing at high temperatures in a kiln make the piece durable. Without this step, the pot doesn't hold water. Intense heat transforms the clay so that the pot can be used.

The heat gets turned up in our lives too. Intense pressure and difficult struggles test our faith. We are tempted to follow the crowd or to doubt God's presence. We find ourselves in troubled relationships. Going through the fire isn't easy. Given a choice, we would probably say, "No, thanks." Yet just as the firing process makes the clay strong and useful, our times of testing strengthen us and prepare us for God's purposes.

### **Ready**

Once the potter has fired the piece, glazed it, and fired it again, the creation is ready to be used. It is beautiful and strong, a unique reflection of the potter's creativity. As we are molded by God, lovingly stretched and shaped, strengthened by the fire of testing, and filled with God's Spirit, we too become unique, beautiful creations, designed for good purposes.

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Ordinary people in the hands of the Potter become vessels that hold the precious treasure of God's Spirit (2 Corinthians 4:7). Amazing, isn't it?

## Dig Deeper

Which part of the process describes your life right now?

Is God asking you to be still and centered?

Are you being stretched and shaped or put through the fire?

Can you imagine yourself being filled with God's Spirit and used for good purposes?

Spend a few minutes writing in your journal. Then rest in the Potter's hands, knowing that you are God's beautiful creation.

## Remember Who You Are

- Created in God's image. **Genesis 1:26-31**
- Knit together by God's hands. **Psalms 139:13-18**
- Nurtured by God's love. **Hosea 11:1-4**
- Molded by obedience. **Luke 2:21-24, 39-52**
- Strengthened by the Body of Christ. **Ephesians 4:1-16, 22-24**
- Nourished in faith. **1 Timothy 4:6-16**



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HAPPILY SINGLE

WEEKEND!

See what great love the Father has lavished on us,  
that we should be called children of God!  
And that is what we are!  
**1 John 3:1 (NIV)**

RELATIONSHIP STATUS:

## 16 **child of God**

DYLAN WHITE

All my life I have struggled to answer the question, "Who am I?" Whether I'm filling out job applications or creating social media bios, this question is tough to answer. Am I a student? an artist? an employee? Am I a lover of Nashville hot chicken and bad dad jokes? Yes, I am all of those things. But which ones do I use to fill in the blank?

We often define ourselves by our relationships to other people: I am a son, a brother, a boyfriend, a nephew, or a friend. Some relationships are facts that cannot be changed. Others are aspirations to live up to or work toward—and at any given moment, may or may not be true.



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## HAPPILY SINGLE

### WEEKEND!



In high school, I learned from my first serious relationship what it was like to let someone else define who I was. In this season of my life, I felt it was important that the first—and in some situations, only—answer to the question “Who am I?” be “I am she-who-must-not-be-named’s boyfriend.” I often felt pressure to make sure our relational bliss was constantly on display, in real life and online. Soon I lost sight of myself as anything but a boyfriend.

That relationship lasted about three years. Now I have now been out of a serious relationship nearly as long. At times I’ve been happy about my status of singleness; at other times, dissatisfied—but the whole time God has been teaching me an important lesson about how to answer the question “Who am I?”

No matter who I am to someone else, knowing who I am to God is crucial for me. First John 3:1 reminds us that we are children of God, who loves us lavishly and unconditionally. God pours love into me so that I can love others in the same way. Though my relationships with others may change, God’s relationship with me will never end. Though I may stray, God will never stop loving me. Though at times I may feel independent, I am created to be dependent on God and God alone.

This knowledge is key to being happily single. Each day, I discover new ways that I am dependent on God’s steadfast love. Knowing that I am loved beyond comprehension gives me peace and even joy during this season of singleness. As a Christian, my identity comes first and foremost from the One who created me. Living with that perspective will help me be a better boyfriend and husband someday and also enables me to be a better son, brother, and friend now.

When we live as God’s children, it shows. People can look at us and know that we are in relationship with God by the words we say and the way we treat others. When we know *whose* we are, others can tell that we are children of God—for that is who we are! <

**Dylan White** is a child of God, the youth leader at Matthews Memorial UMC in Madison, Tennessee, and the Marketing Manager for Children, Youth, and Young Adult resources at The Upper Room.



## 17 NEXT DAY STRETCH

We often think of time with God as time spent reading the Bible or with heads bowed in prayer. But God is with us wherever we go! Make a date with God today. Go to the park, the mall, or a favorite restaurant. Have conversations along the way, and let God be your #1 companion.

**CHALLENGE:** Are you serious about your relationship with God? Add “Child of God” to your bios on social media!

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