

# KINGTON BAPTIST CHURCH ONLINE NOTICE BOARD - 46

*Have Thine own way, Lord,  
Have Thine own way;  
Thou art the Potter,  
I am the clay.  
Mould me and make me  
After Thy will,  
While I am waiting,  
Yielded and still.*

**W**e never ought to be apprehensive about asking for what we ask in this hymn. As if in asking the Lord to have his way in our lives we are exposing ourselves to a harsh regime under a harsh taskmaster. Nothing could be further from the truth, from the reality of inviting our Heavenly Father to mould and shape us into the people he longs for us to be; into the people that, in the depth of our renewed lives, we want to be. For those two are one and the same. In the renewed heart, or what Paul called 'the spirit of our minds', we find that our desires, our deepest and most real longings, correspond with those of our Heavenly Father. For our renewed desires are placed there by our Heavenly Father, through his Holy Spirit for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, his Son.

These thoughts were prompted as I listened on the radio a few days ago to a potter talk about his craft. It helped that as well as being a potter he was also a Christian believer.

We're familiar with similarities between a shepherd's work and the love of Jesus for his people – Jesus the good shepherd who leads us, feeds us, cares for us, loved us and died for us. There are similar links between the potter's work and craft and the Lord's care for us. There are lessons we may learn from the potter's skills and techniques – here are a few.

As the potter creates his pot there comes a moment when he must form a base for his pot and as he moulds the pot's base, upon which it will stand, he supports the pot so it doesn't lose its shape. That's a thought I find full of comfort. In his providence the Lord acts as a potter – and part of what he is doing in our lives is creating a 'base' upon which we will stand; he shapes us so that we will be stable. After all we're told that we are to 'stand, and having done all, to stand'. This process may involve us in passing through deeply trying and testing experiences. It's a great comfort to know that, just like the potter, the Lord will support us through this process so we don't 'lose our shape'.

The Lord Jesus has told us to consider the flowers in the field. One thing we'll never find in a flower of the field is a straight line! And, according to the potter I was listening to, a straight line is something you'll never find in a

pot he crafts. He put it like this: 'A straight line is a line of duty. A curved line is a line of beauty'. Of course our response to the Lord involves duty, but motivated by love those acts of duty are transformed into acts of beauty.

A further thought: before the pot goes into the furnace of the kiln it is fragile and vulnerable – at that stage it's of no real use. It is in the kiln that the pot is transformed into a vessel that is durable and useful. So it in the Christian life – it is the heat of struggle and perseverance that helps us grow and mature, so we will be better able to comfort and encourage others.

*We praise God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the fountain of every mercy, the God who comforts us. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When others are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. You can be sure that the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ. So when we are weighed down with troubles, it is for your benefit and salvation! For when God comforts us, it is so that we, in turn, can be an encouragement to you. Then you can patiently endure the same things we suffer. (2 Corinthians 1.3-6)*

Our weekly worship and fellowship is like a visit to the potter's house, where we, unfinished and earthen pots that we are, can be remade again and again, just as a potter remoulds the pot with which he is not yet satisfied. Without this remoulding our ugly mistakes would become calcified and set, instead of Jesus gradually and patiently transforming us into his likeness.

Before the potter begins work on his pot he must spend time 'wedging'. Wedging is the process of preparing the clay the potter will work with. It involves manipulating and kneading the clay with some vigour to get rid of any air bubbles in the clay. These air bubbles, if left in the clay, would explode in the heat of the kiln and shatter the pot. The Lord may well carry out some spiritual 'wedging' in our lives. Those hard times often seem to us to have no purpose. But the Lord knows what he's doing; he knows the 'air bubbles' that must be taken out of our lives so we will be ready to fulfil his glorious purpose: *He knows the way we take....*