



Grace Church Elementary

# Camp Grace

## Pottery Lesson

All Grades

**Principle:** God's sovereignty, humility, submission and trusting God with your life.

**Bible Character(s):** Jeremiah and Paul

**Scripture Reference:** Jeremiah 18:1-6, 2 Corinthians 4:6-7



### PERSONAL PREPARATION:

Before this weekend, read Jeremiah 18:1-6 and 2 Corinthians 4:6-7. The Bible uses many different object lessons to teach us about God and His character. Jesus taught in parables and used many everyday items to make His points clear. In these passages above, we are taught about the attributes and character of God through the view in a potter's shop. These scriptures show us the parallel between the Creator and His creation, and the potter and the clay. They illustrate God's sovereignty and His plan for us, and they are a comfort to us. Being clear on our role as the clay, as the creation, we can take comfort and rest knowing we are in the hands of the Father. We are not at the mercy of what the day brings, but rather, in the active plan of the Father, our Potter. As we feel the push and pull of life's challenging circumstances, we can be reminded that they are His tools. He is shaping and forming us into the masterpieces He desires; for us to be more like His Son and reflect His glory. Our weaknesses, our fragile, clay jars make way for His glory and power to be displayed. As we humbly yield to Him, His molding and forming, we are shaped into His masterpieces. Take time to pray for teachable, moldable hearts in the campers this week. Ask God to bring campers to class this week that need to see His goodness, sovereignty and learn to be humble clay in His mighty hands. Pray, too, that we would remain moldable and teachable as adults and leaders.

### PLUG IN TIME - 5-10 minutes as the kids begin to arrive

Arrive early to check the supplies in the bin and review the lesson. Write today's principle on the whiteboard. Remember to greet all campers upon arrival; meet their parents; welcome and introduce all visitors. Create a welcoming cabin for all campers!

### Lump of Clay

#### Supplies:

Play-Doh (2-3 cans per bin)

Bible (Isaiah 64:8)

Pass out the Play-Doh and tell the campers that they'll be making creations with their "lump" of Play-Doh. Ask them to share what they plan on doing with it. As the campers create, explain that in the Bible God calls himself the *Potter* and He refers to us as the *clay*. Read Isaiah 64:8. Continue having fun creating.

We will have a unique Big Group session today. As you get ready to go to Big Group, prepare the campers by telling them that they'll be seeing something different than what they're used to in Big Group. They should sit quietly as they listen to and watch the leader and the demonstration.

## **BIG GROUP TIME - 35-40 minutes**

As you line up, remind campers we are going to have fun as an entire Camp Grace group! We are going to live out GRACE by **Glorifying God** through worship, **Respecting All leaders**, and **Accepting Responsibility** to listen with attentive ears, minds, and hearts - fully **Celebrating Christ** with passion! We should **Encourage Others** to do the same, by not distracting them from their worship of God.

### **The Bridge to Small Group**

Today we will see how God works in our lives and molds and shapes us throughout our life just as the potter created and molded the bowl in Big Group.

## **Small Group Time - 25-30 minutes**

### **Getting Started**

If your cabin did well in Big Group, acknowledge it. If not, take a couple of minutes to talk about how they can do better next time.

**What did you learn about in Big Group?** (Allow answers.) **What did you think about the potter and her work?** (Allow answers.) **Was there a difference in the two types of clay?** (One was shaped and made into a useful jar/bowl. The other was hard and had to be set aside.) **Did the clay or the potter have the plan for what the clay would end up being?** (The potter.) **Are you more like the clay or the potter?** (Allow responses.)

We are going to read verses from both the OLD TESTAMENT (the first 39 books of the Bible) and the NEW TESTAMENT books and letters written to the early Church and see what the Bible says about who we are and who God is.

### **Jeremiah 18:1-6**

*The Lord gave another message to Jeremiah. He said, <sup>2</sup> "Go down to the potter's shop, and I will speak to you there." <sup>3</sup> So I did as he told me and found the potter working at his wheel. <sup>4</sup> But the jar he was making did not turn out as he had hoped, so he crushed it into a lump of clay again and started over.*

*<sup>5</sup> Then the Lord gave me this message: <sup>6</sup> "O Israel, can I not do to you as this potter has done to his clay? As the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand."*

We will see through all our reading that God is in control; He is the potter and He has a plan for us.

We are the clay that He is molding and shaping – we are to be teachable and display His work. Often we find ourselves being more like the tough, dried piece of clay and aren't teachable or moldable.

Jeremiah was a prophet of the Old Testament. Can someone tell me what a prophet does? (Allow responses.) A prophet was a spokesman for God, one who spoke for Him. Jeremiah was a prophet, along with Isaiah, Elijah, and many others. When God chose Jeremiah to be a prophet, the Lord said “Look, I have put my words in your mouth!” In other words, Jeremiah spoke for God; he was His representative. In the verses we just read, God gave Jeremiah instruction to go somewhere. Where did God tell him to go? (The potter’s shop.) When Jeremiah gets to the potter’s shop, Jeremiah watched what we just watched in Big Group. Jeremiah watched a potter working on his wheel. In verse 4 it says the jar he was making did not turn out as he had hoped. Did your clay from this morning turn out the way you had hoped? (Allow answers.) By learning that the jar didn’t turn out the way the potter wanted, we learn that the potter had a plan for the jar to begin with. He knew what he wanted to make and the clay wasn’t forming to his plan so he crushed it all back up and started over. That is when the Lord gave Jeremiah the message for Israel and for us. The Lord says “As the clay is in the potter’s hand, so are you in my hand.”

**What characteristic or attribute of God do we see here?** (Discuss the attributes of God that are being displayed here. Sovereign, he has a plan for us just as the potter has a plan. Could also discuss: Creator – God created the earth and all that is in it but is continuing to create in us; Life Changer – He is shaping and forming our lives as the potter is shaping the clay; etc.)

Through all this we see how God is the like the potter in this story.

Now we need to find what the Bible says about us. What does it say we are in this passage? (Allow responses). Let’s read the end of verse 6 again. “As the clay is in the potter’s hand, so are you in my hand.” Another way to say that would be “You are like the clay in the potter’s hands, and I am the potter” (ERV).

## The Potter’s Plan



The purpose is to help the campers understand it is God with the plan for their lives.

### Supplies:

Set of clay idea cards (1 set per bin)  
Timer (1 per bin)  
Play-Doh (2-3 cans per bin)

(Note that the small container of dried out dough in your bin is for the next activity.)

Choose one camper to be the “potter.” Have the potter choose one of the clay idea cards. He or she will have 30 seconds to shape the “clay” (the Play-Doh) into whatever is on the card while the other campers try to guess what he or she is creating. Repeat for four or five times.

## Tie It Together



We didn't always know what the "potter" was making. We were just guessing – sometimes we were right and many times we were wrong. Only the "potter" knew the end goal of the molding. It is like that with God. He has a plan for us and is shaping us.

Let's play again but this time, I want us to use my favorite color of clay. (Play again in the next activity, but this time, use the old, dried dough or clay.)

## Unmoldable



The purpose is to help the campers identify the need to be teachable and moldable in God's hands.

### Supplies:

Set of clay idea cards from earlier (1 set per bin)

Clump or container of dried clay or Play-Doh (1 per bin)

Choose one camper to be the "potter" again. Have the potter choose one of the clay idea cards. Play the game the same way as before, but this time, discreetly hand the camper the dried Play-Doh or clay. The camper should not be able to form the clay/Play-Doh because it is hardened. Move on to the Tie It Together below.

## Tie It Together



The clay was hard and resisted you making it into what you wanted it to be. We can be that way with God at times. We don't like the shaping or the way we are being formed. Remember when the potter in Big Group used the knife to shave off the top of the clay? That was cutting away part of the clay but it was for the final shape and good of the masterpiece. God does that with us. He molds, shapes, and even shaves away parts that are not for our best. Though molding and shaping may be uncomfortable, sometimes very uncomfortable, God loves us deeply and knows what is best for us.

The great thing is that when we allow God to mold and shape our lives, He will turn us into a wonderful work of art. Like the skilled potter makes a beautiful vase or bowl, so God makes a beautiful life and a useful life out of a person who is moldable or yielded to Him.

Let's read 2 Corinthians 4:6-7 in our Bibles

### 2 Corinthians 4:6-7

<sup>6</sup> For God, who said, "Let there be light in the darkness," has made this light shine in our hearts so we could know the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ.

<sup>7</sup> We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure. This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves.

Why do you think Paul says we are fragile clay jars? (Allow answers) Although we are fragile and breakable, God still chooses to use us for His purposes. Despite our weaknesses, He uses us and it shows how powerful He is.

## Fragile Masterpiece



The purpose is to have the campers make their own jar to take home and be reminded of that they are the clay.

### Supplies:

Palm-sized ball of Model Magic (1 ball per camper)

Instructions guides – How to Make a Pinch Pot & How to Make a Coil Pot (1 of each per bin)

Give each camper Model Magic or other air-dry clay to make a pinch or coil pot. See instruction guides for directions and options. As campers work on their masterpieces, ask them questions for comprehension and reflections.

- You are like a potter right now. You are shaping the clay! So if God is the Potter and we are the clay, who gets to decide how you are made? (God.)
- Is that clay arguing with you about what you are shaping it into? (No.)
- Should we argue with God over the way He made us? (No.)
- What do you like about what you've made?
- God calls you His masterpiece. (Read Ephesians 2:10 – “For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.”)
- How does that verse make you feel?
- What do you like best about how God made you?

## Prayer Time

Spend a few minutes in prayer to close small group time. Thank God for being a good, sovereign God who we can trust to mold us and make us more like Jesus. Ask for God to help us be humble, teachable, and moldable and guard against the hardening of His work in us.



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