

"Just like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand…"

You were created for a purpose, formed into something spectacular–not just created, but re-created again and again. Ready to be stretched? It's time to be re-shaped!

"Change is good… you go first!" Our brains were designed to be suspicious of change, and for good reason–homeostasis in good measure helps us thrive, protecting us from danger. But if we look closely at what the Creator set in motion, we find that change is actually the most constant part of life and necessary for animating our spirits as we find renewed purpose throughout life. Jesus advocated for changes that would keep us moving toward greater goodness!

Week 1
“We Were Made for This”

God told Jeremiah, “Up on your feet! Go to the potter’s house. When you get there, I’ll tell you what I have to say.” So I went to the potter’s house, and sure enough, the potter was there, working away at his wheel. Whenever the pot the potter was working on turned out badly, as sometimes happens when you are working with clay, the potter would simply start over and use the same clay to make another pot. Then God’s Message came to me: “Can’t I do just as this potter does, people of Israel?” God’s Decree! “Watch this potter. In the same way that this potter works his clay, I work on you, people of Israel. - Jeremiah 18: 1-6 (The Message)

God’s creative activity is described as an ongoing active force for good. Rather than fashioning us of something that could not change, the biblical metaphor is that we are fashioned of clay, a malleable substance that can be reshaped again and again. When life requires change of us, let us embrace our ability to roll with it, for we were made for this!



Step One for Change: believe we are created for change

Week 2:
“Inside Out”

John the Baptizer appeared in the wild, preaching a baptism of life-change that leads to forgiveness of sins. People thronged to him from Judea and Jerusalem and, as they confessed their sins, were baptized by him in the Jordan River into a changed life. John wore a camel-hair habit, tied at the waist with a leather belt. He ate locusts and wild field honey. As he preached he said, “The real action comes next: The star in this drama, to whom I’m a mere stagehand, will change your life. I’m baptizing you here in the river, turning your old life in for a kingdom life. His baptism—a holy baptism by the Holy Spirit—will change you from the inside out.” - Mark 1: 1-15 (The Message)

Our Scripture this week invites us to remember the baptism of Jesus and the message that we, as followers of Jesus, are changed constantly “from the inside out.” Transformation does not start with the action of change itself, but a willingness within our own spirits to “lean into” the life path that is calling to us.



Step Two for Change: start with inner change

Week 3
“Everything Changes”

“Listen carefully: Unless a grain of wheat is buried in the ground, dead to the world, it is never any more than a grain of wheat. But if it is buried, it sprouts and reproduces itself many times over. In the same way, anyone who holds on to life just as it is destroys that life. But if you let it go, reckless in your love, you’ll have it forever, real and eternal. If any of you wants to serve me, then follow me. Then you’ll be where I am, ready to serve at a moment’s notice. The Holy One, Parent of Us All, will honor and reward anyone who serves me.” - John 12: 20-26 (The Message)

In our scripture today, Jesus asks us to let go of life “as it is” in order to create and multiply the love that is eternal. What feels like the chaos, or recklessness, of change is the breaking-open of possibility and the sprouting of new life. This is what it means to follow the change-maker Jesus and serve his purpose of more love in the world.



Step Three for Change: be willing to let old expectations fall away

Week 4
“Be En-Couraged”

…the boat was far out to sea when the wind came up against them and they were battered by the waves. At about four o’clock in the morning, Jesus came toward them walking on the water. They were scared to death. “A ghost!” they said, crying out in terror. But Jesus was quick to comfort them. “Courage, it’s me. Don’t be afraid.” Peter, suddenly bold, said, “Master, if it’s really you, call me to come to you on the water.” He said, “Come ahead.” Jumping out of the boat, Peter walked on the water to Jesus. But when he looked down at the waves churning beneath his feet, he lost his nerve and started to sink. He cried, “Master, save me!” Jesus didn’t hesitate. He reached down and grabbed his hand. - Matthew 14: 22-31a (The Message)

It takes courage to change, to break out of whatever narrow paths we might find ourselves in. Just like Peter, if we are going to change, we have to take the first uncertain steps out of the boat onto the water and into the unknown. Luckily, we too have Jesus’ redeeming help and support, his hand reaching out to us, if we start to sink or lose our way.



Step Four for Change: courage to take the first step