

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> November Helen Baddeley  
It's time to put your life back in the hands of The Potter

Morning, everybody, I had a few technical issues here, so just a little bit late getting started. So welcome to this lovely sunny morning.

And just want to start by saying, two or three weeks ago, I shared for the first time and I shared about knowing who we are in God and knowing who He says we are. And I've thought about that quite a bit since then and just the other morning I woke up and I felt God show me a picture of a box, like a gift box, and it was just being lifted, the lid of the box was being opened up and there was just this amazing golden light coming out to this box. And I felt God saying to me; that is your inmost being that's the most precious part of you, that's the most important part of every human being that I've ever created, their inmost being and so often the lid stays shut on the box. And that inmost being part of us just doesn't come out in the way that He saw us before we were born.

And on that I want to reflect on that Psalm 139, because that is the verse, the scripture that we all think of when we think about those words, our inmost being. So I've tried to print out for myself to read here, the from the passion translation, some of the verses from that song. So I'm going to start from verse 13 it says 'You formed my innermost being shaping my delicate inside and my intricate outside and wove them all together in my mother's womb, I thank you God for making me so mysteriously complex. Everything you do'... I've lost a bit there, of verse 14, and then I'll jump to verse 15. And then it says, 'You even formed every bone in my body, when you created me in the secret place, carefully, skilfully, shaping me from nothing to something. You saw who You created me to be, before I became me, before I'd even seen the light of day, the number of days you planned for me were already recorded in your book, every single moment, you are thinking of me how precious and wonderful'.

And I just, I'll leave it there, you can go and read the whole Psalm yourself, it's long, obviously, as we know. It's just that whole concept of the fact that God created that inmost being part of us. And I think when we think about that, that Psalm, we often think about the physical, we think about the baby in the womb, and we think about the child being created in secret. And what I felt God was saying to me was, He didn't just create the physical person, He created, the soul, the spirit, the unique character in each person. And that we often, I think, in the world around us become, dulled down from being fully who God created us to be. And I think it's very easy with busyness of life and you know, just absorbing the world around you, to kind of almost disappear, and to become just like everybody else. And I think that's sort of a bit of a lie of this age, is that actually to become like everybody else, or to become like, the people we see in the media or in the world around us in films and so on, you can become so absorbed in that, that you, particularly for the younger generation, I think you can become very self absorbed, but in not being you but in being something else that isn't really who God created you to be. And taking time to actually find who He created us to be; is something that is difficult to do.

So also as I was thinking about this, I felt I was remembering, you know how incredible creation is, and that God created things like snowflakes, every single snowflake is different. I still find that extraordinary. And I remember as a child making paper snowflakes and cutting them differently and realising that you could create all these different patterns. But realising that God makes literally every single snowflake differently. And you think about all the trillions of snowflakes that fall around the world, every year and how each snowflake is different. And fingerprints, how every human being that's ever been born has got a completely unique set of fingerprints. It's just mind blowing.

And then you start to think about other areas of creation. You think about birds, and it's just the birds that you see around the world, I mean we get so used to the ones we see in our back garden that it can become normal. But if you travel, you see so many different birds. Our daughter who's living in California at the moment is often on the phone to me in the garden, and she'll say, 'Oh, look, there's a hummingbird', as if it's perfectly normal, like seeing a sparrow. And yet to us, it's just extraordinary to see these amazing

creatures. And God created each of these things. And if He created them so uniquely and so differently, and for what purpose other than to give Him joy and pleasure as a creator; then how much more than he wants us to be unique and to be different and to have our own identity as a person and to bring to the world and to Him a unique person.

So how do we connect to this? How can we come alive in Him? How can we find that way of coming back to who He created us to be? Well, I think there are two things we can do. I think one is, obviously spend time in His presence and allow Him to show us and reveal to us the different things that He's put on the inside of us, maybe the things that we've not allowed out, maybe the things that we've been afraid to show, maybe the things that we've hidden away. There are always things that He's hidden in us that we don't even know ourselves, I believe, and we can help each other by seeking out those things in each other and calling them out and celebrating each other and encouraging each other, to see the beauty that He's put on the inside of each of us. I think sometimes there can be a stubbornness in our hearts to allow God... as I'm speaking, I've just seen a Wren outside my window, it's just incredible, sorry, getting distracted here.

But sometimes there is a stubbornness on the inside of us, that can be a reluctance to allow change in our lives, and to allow God to change us, and to allow God to bring us alive. And it's almost a scepticism of well, you know, I've reached this age or whatever and nothing remarkable has happened from my life yet. It's very easy to be like that. And just to think, well, how can God use me in a beautiful way or a creative way or in a remarkable way. And so I think it's time for some of us to go back to trusting Him again, and remembering that He was the one who created us. And if He chose to make us unique, then we need to put our lives back in His hands so that He can truly create in us the person He wanted us to be again, so that the world around us can benefit from that person. In Jeremiah, in verse 18 it talks about going to the potter's house. And I've always loved this passage because I grew up at home with my dad being a potter and one of the things I still love to do was just play with clay and mess about with it and create different things. And just the joy of pushing your thumb into a piece of clay, it's so nice. And just that scripture where it talks about being moulded by Potter, is so beautiful. And then yesterday as I was thinking about all of this, I remembered that I had got some clay out here in my workroom and I went and found it. And I was quite surprised, so I'm going to show you what I found.

So I found this lump of clay that is completely utterly solid, it's immovable. You can't do anything with it. You can try, I literally had to get a huge knife and put all my force on it to cut it in half because it was so, so solid and you can't move it at all. You can't get anything into it. It's completely solid.



So I did manage to cut it in half. And what I did was I put the other piece in a tub of water overnight; my family think I'm slightly strange sometimes, but I wanted to show you this.



So this lump of clay was the same as that yesterday it was cut off that piece. And then today you can see it's completely different because it's been soaking in water overnight and now I can tear it, I can mould it, I can

shape it, I can do all sorts of things with it. And if I was a talented potter, I could make a pot out of it and make something beautiful out of this now.

And I really felt it was a such a clear visual for what that passage is talking about, which is that our hearts can become hardened with life and just all sorts of things, bad things happening to us, you know, the stuff that's going on around us at the moment can be really, really hard to deal with. Disappointment, things going wrong, illness, just financial difficulties, relationship difficulties, all sorts of things that happen to us cause us to become like this lump of clay; but what I really feel God's saying is that He wants us to trust Him, to actually put ourselves in his love, to actually put ourselves in that water, that liquid of His love to allow him to mould us again, so that we can become workable and changeable and soft. And that He can then create in us again, the unique person that He wanted us to be in the beginning. So that all those things that have maybe gone hard in our lives and died away, can be revived and renewed.

So I just want to pray and just ask the Holy Spirit to come and touch you where you are right now. So Father, I just pray that through Your spirit, You will come and You will encounter each of us today, as we listen to this and we receive Your love. Allow us the courage to put ourselves in Your hands again and to trust you, to shape us, to mould us, to pull out of us the things that You want us to be. And Father I also pray that we will be able to see in each other, the joy that You see in each of us and to celebrate in each other. Even in this time of lockdown that we would find ways of reaching each other and encouraging each other and in the stopping that we would find the pause, the time to be able to reflect on who You've created us to be, and the unique character that You've given to each of us. Thank you, Father that I'm fearfully and wonderfully made and that we have all been given that unique character that You have given us, in Jesus' name, amen.

Have a great day. See you soon. Bye.



Transcribed by <https://otter.ai> Ed Perrys