

helpless to alter the outcome."

sermon (and my entire ministry, for that matter) let it be this, **predeterminism is not** marionette, controlling all that happens.

When we look closely at this passage from Jeremiah, we learn that contrary to an active role in what is created. **God has created us in such a way that we have free will and freedom of choice. We share, therefore, in how we are shaped.** And, of course,

determination. As clay, then, whether we are gritty or smooth, malleable or stiff, refined

question is this: **Are you and I willing to trust that God, with all our flecks, flaws, and failures, can make something of beauty out of you and me, out of this community of faith?** The issue in the Book of Jeremiah, then, is whether Israel will become what God intended, as a denomination, even as a nation, are always faced with the same options.

Central to every core of the theological doctrine of creation is the belief that **God's intentions and live into what it fully means to be a child of God, we may need to change some of our attitudes and actions.** The theological word for this is "repentance."

for that matter, including Jesus.

to address. **Clay is workable only until it is fired.** After it is fired it can no longer be

us only if we remain open to being molded, shaped, and re-shaped. Once we become

God's intentions for us. Again, that

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And yet, simply by the i
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So the qu estion remains: **Will you and I, will we, allow God to shape and rework us (in those places in our hearts and minds and spirits that may need to be reworked) in order to more fully be fashioned into God's intentions for us?** For us as Christians, these

intentional i nteaching of the ways and teachings of Au s And the d d
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centered in the will of God, allowing God to take the raw material we give God and slowly but inexorably fashion it into a vessel of both usefulness and beauty."

to join me in singing *Spirit of the Living God*. [Text by Frances vescon].
 i n v i t e y o u

*Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.
 Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.
 Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.
 Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.*

And on us!
 Amen

Resources:

Guthrie, Shirley C., *Christian Doctrine*, Westminster/John Knox Press; Revised, 1994.
 Bratcher, Dennis, *14th Sunday After Pentecost, September 5, 2004*, Christian Resource Institute.