



[Leader Tip: A fun icebreaker game that ties to one of the illustrations in this message is the “Bob Ross Trivia” game by Jerry Varner. You can find it at DYM here: <https://www.downloadyouthministry.com/p/bob-ross-trivia/games-2563.html>]

[Show Slide 1] How many of you like to make things? Maybe something in particular? [Leader tip: use an example from your own life of something you enjoyed making.] When I was around ten years old, I used to make candles. I made them in all different colors, scents, shapes. I had molds so I could create dog candles, owl candles, you name it. I could never bring myself to burn them, though. Too beautiful.

I’ve known some people who are really good at building models. Not me. The results were always devastating when I tried. Some people build houses; like actual buildings. But that’s way out of my skill set. Unless it’s with Legos. Others are really good at creating incredible desserts, although it doesn’t take much to find some doozy fails. I Googled “Pinterest fails” and was NOT disappointed. Check these out:

[Show Slide 2] Isn’t that just a beautiful bunny?

[Show Slide 3] I mean, those are scary ... maybe not ghosts ... but scary ...

[Show Slide 4] Whichever kid got this Olaf cake for his birthday probably has some trauma that needs to be dealt with.

[Show Slide 5] Terrifying. It looks like the bad guys faces when they open the ark in Indiana Jones!

[Show Slide 6] I honestly believe this desire to create is in part because **you are created in the image of God**. God is the ultimate Creator, and there is something in us that shares in that joy. Our desire to create is a reflection of the great Creator. And it’s not just in the opening chapters of Genesis that we see that; it’s throughout scripture. God uses language of creation to describe His ongoing interest in our lives.

[Show Slide 7] *Isaiah 64:8 (NLT) And yet, O Lord, you are our Father. We are the clay, and you are the potter. We all are formed by your hand.*

Have you ever seen an artist at work? It's mesmerizing, isn't it, to watch them take raw materials and transform them into something beautiful? Have you seen a potter at work? They take a lump of clay and mold it into something stunning. Or have you seen a glass blower work? They take this blob of molten glass and spin it into something incredible.

God uses the imagery of Him being the Potter and us being the clay throughout Scripture. Why? Because it is an ongoing process of creation. God desires to shape and mold us every day. He is the master artist, the sovereign Creator; a fancy way of saying He is the one ultimately in control.

[Show Slide 8] How many of you have watched Bob Ross paint? Look him up on YouTube. He is the super chill guy who believes in "happy accidents." What's so fun to see is how he starts off just throwing colors on a canvas, it doesn't really make any sense, you just kind of enjoy listening to him talk while he does it. And then at some point, all of a sudden, you can start to see what it is he is painting as it takes shape. Now here's the thing; Bob Ross knew all along what he was going to paint, as the artist knows where he or she is going. But for us watching, sometimes it takes us a while to realize what the artist's plan is, to see it start to come together.

[Show Slide 9] Which begs the question; **are you allowing the Artist to work?** Are we allowing the Potter to mold us into what He has envisioned for us?

[Show Slide 10] [Leader tip: if this verse is meaningful for you, then change it to you. Another option is to say, "A friend of mine told me that Proverbs 16:9 is a life verse for him."] There is a verse in Proverbs that is a life verse for me; it changed my perspective when I was 17 years old and has been an ongoing reminder to me of what it means to follow God.

[Show Slide 11] *Proverbs 16:9 (NLT) We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps.*

Why is this simple verse so profound? Because my tendency is to make plans; my heart wants to be in control of my life. I want to call the shots. I want to be the artist molding myself. And that's a ridiculous image if I stop and consider it. That's not how clay works, is it?

The power is in the second half of that verse; *"the Lord determines our steps."* How do we allow God to mold us? We let Him guide our steps,



- Have you seen an artist work before? What was it like? What does that experience teach you about God's use of this metaphor?
- Can you think of a time in your life when God was shaping you? What happened? What did you learn?
- Read Ephesians 2:10. What is a masterpiece? Why does God call us His masterpiece?
- Is it easy or difficult to believe you are a masterpiece? Why?
- What are the good things God has planned for us to do? Where can we find out what they are?
- Read Jeremiah 18:2-6. What do we learn about God in this passage?
- What do we learn about ourselves in Jeremiah?
- What is something you believe God wants to mold in you in the coming days and weeks?
- What will you do to allow God to shape you? How can we help?

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