

I often went to the woodcarver's workshop, for I usually found a message there worth learning¹. During one visit, I found him working away on several pieces, and he described to me how he would eventually integrate them together to accomplish the vision that he had in his mind for the complete work.

I noticed that when he shaved off a bit of wood, it simply dropped to the floor, where he later swept it up and burned it in the fire. He had to cut out the portions that did not fit his intent for the piece. This was in contrast to the work of the potter, who reshaped what was ill-formed, or what did not meet the purpose of his creation².

I thought about how God deals with those that do not fulfill His vision. I saw a parallel with the woodcarver, because his detritus is simply destroyed. It does not undergo an eternal punishment filled with suffering, but because it is not made a part of the final product it is simply removed from existence for all time.

God is the God of life, and He is the Great Creator. He is looking to create, and He is looking for the pieces that contribute to His "art." He is not looking to destroy – but He does not need the pieces that cannot be made to fit.

God is putting together a masterpiece, and it is amazing that the final product is continually changing throughout the generations of His Kingdom. He adds more and more souls to the mix without making it look "junky" or excessively ornate.

Each soul retains its individual characteristics, which is pleasing to God for He sees how to fit them all together in a unique way. It is the free will of these souls that defines how this masterful creation ultimately turns out.

I enjoyed watching the woodcarver lovingly engaged in his work: choosing pieces of wood and carving out of them what was not beautiful or did not fit within the plan he had established. He had certain criteria that enabled him to determine whether or not to integrate them into the overall work. The unique components did in fact fit together because even though they were different, they had a common structure that was a fundamental part of their form and existence³.

I left the woodcarver, having once again found meaning in his work. I also, once again, was in awe of the great power of God's creativity and His love for His work.

1. Jeremiah 18:1-3
2. Jeremiah 18:4
3. Like today's LEGO blocks; they are many different varieties, but they must all fit (snap) together to the common attachment basis