



Planted with Purpose

GOD'S CULTIVATION BRINGS OUR TRANSFORMATION

Lesson 5: Being and Becoming

(Chapters 1 – 10)

This lesson is the first in a series of bible studies entitled "Planted with Purpose." This lesson series is a type of companion study of Bishop T. D Jakes' book entitled "Planted with a Purpose" Although this series will feature some of the themes of Bishop Jakes' book, it will not precisely follow the author's premise or literary structure. Nevertheless, you may find that using the book along with these lessons will greatly enhance your learning experience. The chapters in parenthesis under the lesson's name refers to the chapters read in Bishop Jake's book in preparation of this lesson – Blessing to You!

I was, I am and I will be

1 Cor 15:9-10 (I Cor 6: 9 – 11)

9 For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. KJV

Everyone has a past. And no matter who we are today, everyone of us had enough sin in our past lives to send Jesus all the way to Calvary's cross. Everyone was something, everyone is something and everyone will be something. We are all being and becoming. The Apostle Paul owns up to his past when he ranks himself as the very least of all of the other apostles – why? Because Paul had a past. Paul was a chief persecutor of the church of God. But God planted Paul and cultivated him to become the greatest missionary/apostle of all time! Paul declares his current estate and tells all this was achieved by and through the grace of God. At the time the Apostle Paul penned this letter he was still laboring working to expand the gospel of Jesus Christ into the hearts and minds of people near and far. Paul was still becoming.

Like us, the Apostle Paul was a miracle in motion. He was a beautiful yet unfinished fine work of art. Paul was being what God wanted him to be and becoming what God wanted him to be all at the same time. **QUESTION:** How is it possible for a person to "be" what God wants them to be and still be "becoming" what God wants them to be at the same time? The Christian life is a life of progression. It is a divinely lead journey and a continual state of transformation.

Dead Ends, Detours and Dry Holes

Ex 15:22-24

22 So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. 23 And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah. 24 And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? KJV

Things are not always as they appear. Because of this fact, when we walk by "sight" we will seldom see what God is really up to. When God has us in the cultivation stage, our spiritual eye sight may be obscured by all of the things God is doing all around us. In fact, during our time of spiritual cultivation,

our spiritual eyes may yet be underdeveloped. This was precisely the condition that the newly emancipated Israelites were experiencing in our text. Filled with excitement fueled by God's recent triumphal deliverance of them from the bondage of Egypt, they were oblivious to the challenges and perils that lay ahead of them. Their jubilant march to freedom came to a dead end and was cut short at the banks of the Red Sea with Pharaoh's blood thirsty army fast approaching. Here on the banks of the Red Sea, Moses and these recently freed slaves had reached the limits of what they could do. With no where to flee and with no weapons to fight, they could only contemplate their demise. What this episode in the bible teaches us is that our limitation is God invitation. **QUESTIONS:** What does this statement mean to you? Why would God lead us to dead ends?

God's miraculous opening of the Red Sea and the subsequent drowning of Pharaoh's army must have left the fleeing Israelites awestruck. Their hearts must have been overwhelmed with both admiration and complete reverence for their God. But imagine, leaving the Red Sea experience full of joy and excitement and enthusiasm and then to walk three days without finding any water. Imagine now, being part of this joyful journey that began with people full of praise for God and shouting for joy and high-fiving the brothers only to witness over the next three days that this joyful journey and this praising people have now grown deadfly silent and now their joyful journey has turned into a dry death march. The scriptures tell us that over a million Jews had walked three days in the wilderness with no water for the adults, no water for the children, no water for their animals, just no water at all! **QUESTIONS:** What might these Jews be thinking at this moment? What might have been the reason God had them on this three-day journey? Are "detours" ever a good thing? Now, imagine after going three days in the desert with no water, suddenly hearing the sound of water; feeling the cool mist blowing on breeze and dampening your face! The people dash towards the cool stream, cupping their hands together and hungrily hurling the water into their mouths – only to have spit it out! Why? because the water was extremely bitter! Disappointments happen when our expectations are not properly met. **QUESTIONS:** Is God ever truly disappointed? Can disappointment serve as a reality check? By placing us directly into the reality of our current situation, disappointments have the power to realign and redirect us and cause us to view our issue from a new perspective. Our attitude in difficult times often drives the decisions we make during difficult times. The journey from cultivation to transformation is littered with disappointments that serve to redirect us.

Things I Never Saw, Because I Never Looked

Ex 15:25 (James 1:15)

25 And he cried unto the LORD; and the LORD shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them,

Distraction is Satan "go-to" trick and unfortunately, it almost works on us every time! In their thirsty despair these Israelites looked to everything and everyone except God; the one who had so miraculously delivered them not only from 400 years of slavery but through the perils of the Red Sea experience. When Moses prayed, God showed him that the answer was right there all the time. The people had allowed the distraction of their thirst to blind them from the deliverance that God had already provided. **QUESTIONS** It seems that their faith decline at the same rate their water declined? What is this saying to us? God had planted Israel in the soil of his prophetic word and now the wilderness would be their time of cultivation and transformation. Know that you have been planted in the soil of God's word declaring "I know the plans I have for you!" Remember, God has planted you with a purpose. Your life is under the careful watch and loving hands of the master gardener.

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. KJV