



# Planted with Purpose

## GOD'S CULTIVATION BRINGS OUR TRANSFORMATION

### Lesson 1: A Seed Is A Promise

(Chapters 1 – 3)

*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!*

#### **Patience Greatest Reward**

##### **James 1:4**

But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. KJV

We have all heard the illustration explained that you cannot plant a seed today and expect a harvest tomorrow. But when you think about it, if God truly wanted seeds to sprout at that rate, He certainly could have caused them to do so. So, why didn't God design plants to produce fruit overnight? Perhaps, such a fast seed to harvest experience would require far less work on the part of the grower making us apathetic and lackadaisical. Perhaps such an abundance of harvest would cause such a surplus that we would weary from the fruit and become indifferent to the harvest.

**QUESTIONS:** Why would God have us to wait on the harvest of our blessings? Why would some people grow impatient waiting for their harvest?

What is this "perfect work" that is gained from our patience? It is the work of God's divine revelation of our created purpose. Once we gain a clearer understanding of God's desired will for us then we may experience the condition James calls "perfect and entire." This condition means that a person has become "fully instructed" in the things of God concerning them. This a condition that we are to strive for though never completely attained in this life. For the Christian, this waiting process is not a "downtime" or "halftime." But the waiting process is a time of growth that prepares you and I to receive the coming blessings with the kind of mindset and perspective that God wants to you receive it in.

Notice the Apostle James instructs us to "let" patience have her perfect work. This would imply that we may have a tendency to obstruct or hinder the work of patience in our lives. We tend to be especially prone to resist the work of patience in our lives it such actions mean we have to continue to suffer under uncomfortable circumstances. **QUESTIONS:** What do we tell ourselves when the hurt doesn't stop even though we prayed? Is there ever any real purpose to our pain?

##### **Luke 21:19**

In your patience possess ye your souls. KJV

In this particular passage, Jesus teaches his listeners about the coming of extremely perilous times fraught with dangers, persecution and destruction such as never seen before. But then Jesus comforts

them with the promise of God's protection and encourages them to just endure and hold on and they will get through it alright. With this Jesus adds: "In your patience possess ye your souls." What does this statement really mean? The word "patience" here can be translated to mean "consistency" or "regularity" or "steadfastness." The word "possess" means to keep or to preserve. In its complete translation it would mean that by enduring through perilous situation God will empower us to keep our souls (or minds and lives). **QUESTIONS:** Given the spiritual dynamic express by Jesus in this text, how should we as Christians respond to the issues and perils in our society today caused by the impact of COVID19? What can we faithfully expect God to do for us during these perilous times?

## **Planted But Not Buried**

### **John 12:24**

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. KJV **QUESTION:** How would you describe the difference between planting something and burying something?

To leave a seed unplanted is to rob it of its potential. As long as the seed remains just a seed, no one can ever experience the seeds full benefit. Of course, Jesus was speaking of his own death and subsequent resurrection, but this passage lends itself to some very rich implications to our study. Jesus wanted his disciples to understand, just like a seed has an ultimate purpose (to reproduce its kind) so Jesus had an ultimate purpose that involved bringing about man's salvation. So then, every "seed" has a God created purpose. In that way, every seed carries inside itself a promised and expected work. **QUESTION:** How are we like this seed?

## **Growing Ain't Easy**

As much as we might try to spiritualize the process, planting a seed is a lot like burying it! It places the seed in a situation that it has never experienced. It puts the seed in a dark place, shielding it from all light and leaves it isolated and alone. This process sounds rather bleak – and it can be. The truth is, there is no fruit without frustration. Once planted in the soil, and reserved to that dark isolated place, the seed's covering decomposes releasing the "germ." The germ is the only part of the grain that has the potential to grow into a plant. The rest of the seed existed only to protect the germ and the decomposed section of the seed also serves to feed the germ with nutrients until the germ is strong enough to get its own nourishment from the soil.

## **Bringing It All Home**

### **Col 2:6-7** (see Eph 3:17)

6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: 7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. KJV

Real transformation is about real sacrifice. Our growth in Christ is a lifelong process. When we choose to fight against God's process, we are fighting against God's plan for our lives. From the seed's perspective it looks an awful like he is being buried and left to rot. But from the farmer's perspective that seed is only being planted in a temporary place so it can attain its eternally created purpose. The dark and isolated times we all experienced is where we shed that part of us that is no longer needed for the balance of our life's journey. In our season of solitude our soul sends down roots searching for something strong to hold on to. It is in these experiences that the Christian experiences true fellowship with Christ and it is here that the refreshing spring of our praise and thanksgiving to God is discovered.