

Life Lessons

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What to Do in Tough Times?

Last summer, outside our post office, I noticed a tiny plant squeezing through the crack in the parking lot. I was taken back at the ability of that little plant to force through the cement. Every time we'd visit the post office my kids would run to see it and say, "Look Dad, the plant is still here!" Everyday hundreds of cars would spew the plant with fume and exhaust. But every time we'd pass by that plant we'd see growth and increase in spite of tremendous opposition.

One day the Holy Spirit said to me, "Like the little seed, I've put everything inside you to blossom, prosper and bear fruit. Don't let the negative circumstances of your life squeeze the seed of the Word of God from your life."

Friend, as we begin this new year, let me remind you that the Almighty God has a wonderful plan for your life. **He breathed His LIFE inside of you. He put a stamp of approval on you. Seeds of greatness are in you. His dynamite Spirit lives inside of you. Just like the little seed in the concrete, God has pre-programmed you to prosper.**

As this year unfolds, I encourage you to see yourself as a conqueror. Life will throw some challenges at you but like that little plant in the smog and a tough circumstances, you too can prosper. **You can blossom where you've been planted.**

I want to give you a few tips that will help you to excel in the midst of famine this year.

1. Sanctify yourself. Before God can release you to a new level of victory He wants a new level of spiritual cleansing and maturity from you. Before crossing river Jordan and entering in to the promised land, Joshua told the Israelites, "Sanctify yourselves." (Joshua 3:5). Friend, God is never the problem. We are. Let us make sure we stand before God clean!

2. Pursue significance. Success is what you think you have achieved. Being significant is when other people reap the bene-

fit of your accomplishment long after you're gone. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, **"Everyone has the power of greatness. Not for fame, but for greatness. Because greatness is determined by service."** Remember, you can spend your time, resources and energy to benefit yourself. Or you can live unselfishly and make an eternal difference in your family, neighborhood and country.

3. Put on a new attitude. You cannot be significant with a poor, defeated, can't do it attitude. If you want to rise to the next level, you have to put on a "can do" attitude. Remember the ten spies? Only two out of twelve entered the promised land. Why? They said, "We were like grasshoppers *in our own sight*." (Numbers 13:33). Friend, you are bought with a price, cleansed with the precious blood of Jesus. Your sins are forgiven and your iniquities have been blotted out. **How you see yourself will determine where you'll go with your life.**

4. Confess how you want things to be. Your life will follow your mouth. When we're going through a rough patch we're tempted to magnify our problem. We're quick to pick up the phone and announce our problems to the world. We become doubtful and loose hope. I challenge you this year to speak the Word of God into and over your situation.

5. Get involved in world missions. Every miracle Jesus did was associated with reaching the lost. If you want God's abundant favor in your life, get involved in saving souls for Christ in foreign lands. There are millions of people who have never heard the name of Jesus - once! Do something about it. We can help!

Remember Mark Twain's, "It was the best of times and the worst of times?" Your thoughts, words and attitude will determine how this year turns out for you. **God's plan is to give you double for all your trouble. Isa. 61:7.**