

Why You Can Rejoice When God Rewrites Your Story

I think that this issue is profoundly important to the Antioch story and important to what God is doing across the earth as He is raising up “Antioch Sending Centers” for the fulfillment of the Great Commission and the promise of the global harvest. It is a leadership lesson all believers must learn if they are going to carry the weight of much fruit that God intends to display through their lives for His glory.

Jesus is looking for something dynamically different than what the world is looking for in leadership potential. Men are enamored with giftedness, intelligence, charisma, skill and strength. Jesus is looking for purity, love, humility and a willing spirit. Our destiny and assignments are dynamically affected by how we respond to Jesus’ leadership in every season of the journey. In this school of leadership, there is promotion and demotion, fruit and pruning, favor and testing. Each season is an invitation to greater intimacy with Him and authority in the Spirit. He is forming leaders to be able to carry the weight of what He wants to release in the earth in the generation of His return. Each promotion and test is sovereignly orchestrated by the Lord to address the deep issues of pride, ambition, fear and carnal wisdom currently operating in our souls that we cannot fully see or be aware of outside of His help.

Jesus is a tender leader; He walks with us gently. He does not show us the sin issues hindering our destiny all at once; instead, He leads us through seasons, allowing us to cooperate with Him in grace. In the tests of delay and promotion, Jesus pries our grip off of what we imagined the fulfillment of the promises over our lives would look like, so that we don’t reject the promise when it comes. In the delay, Jesus addresses the levels of our identity and self-confidence that

are wrapped up in our dreams and our callings. He breaks down all the confidence in what we think qualifies us and produces a brokenness that is a sweet fragrance to God. Many of you have already taken a few courses in this leadership school and know what I am speaking about.

Jesus is more committed to our destiny than we are. He is currently developing in you the wisdom, humility and love you need to actually steward the fullness of the anointing and favor He wants to give you. If we remain unoffended at His ways, even when they seem contrary to our good and opposite from the prophetic promises given to us, we graduate each season. Soon we come to realize that the fulfillment of the promises and the fruit of obedience is not our primary reward; it is actually the intimacy we experience with Jesus on the journey that deeply satisfies us. He is our reward.

Jesus prepares apostolic vessels in the fiery furnace of delay. Those who won't turn to the right or the left emerge as voices.

Peter declares to us that, if deemed necessary, fiery trials are part of Jesus' leadership over our lives to expose those hidden areas hindering our destiny. How we respond to those tests will determine how long and how often they are necessary. These fiery trials often have to do with the things that are closest to our hearts and emotions.

"In this you greatly rejoice, even though now, if for a little while, you have had to suffer various trials, in order that the genuineness of your faith, which is more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tried by fire, may be found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:6-7).

Once, as a young leader, he had confidence in his own giftedness and zeal. Peter could remember firsthand what it felt like to go through Jesus' leadership school.

Then Jesus said to them, 'All of you will fall away on account of Me this night' ... Peter answered, 'Though all men will fall away on account of You, yet I will never fall away.' Jesus said to him, 'Truly I say to you, this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.' Peter said to Him, 'Though I should die with You, yet I will not deny You.' And all the disciples spoke in this manner" (Matt. 26:31b, 33-35).

Fast forward, and Peter is utterly broken and giving up on his calling on the shores of the Sea of Galilee after denying Jesus three times. In Peter's greatest hour of brokenness and need, Jesus, the tender shepherd, meets him and redeems his worst moment. Then and only then is he ready to "feed the lambs" and "tend the sheep." Only about a month after this, Peter is standing up on the day of Pentecost, preaching with power and authority.

When God rewrites your story, He takes your worst moments and makes them the doorway into your destiny.

Here in Antioch, one small section of Scripture changes all of history: "Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul. When he had found him, he brought him to Antioch" (Acts 11:25-26a).

For the rest of this story, visit . {eo}

The preceding is an excerpt from Antioch Series: When Worship, Prayer and Missions Collide. Read the whole blog series at . And be sure to tune into the MAPS Global Podcast on the Charisma Podcast Network.