

# CULTIVATE

THE POTENTIAL IN YOU



## THE PARADOX OF POTENTIAL (Week 3)

**WELCOME:** Talk about a purchase that you made sometime in your life that you regret.

**WORSHIP:** Sing, *HERE I AM TO WORSHIP* (Tim Hughes)

### WORD:

Series Memory Verse: **EPHESIANS 4:7, *But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.***

This Week's Scripture: **1 Peter 4:10-11**

The Apostle Peter wrote this letter at the worst possible time in history to be a Christian.

- The teachings of Jesus were too strange for the general population of the Roman Empire and contradicted their values.
- The followers of Jesus were belittled, hated and mocked (1 Peter 4:4).
- Many of them lost their jobs, hurt, disowned by their own families and even killed.

But despite the situation, many of them kept the faith. The Apostle Peter wrote this letter to Christians to encourage them to keep serving Jesus and be a blessing to the world even though the world hates them (1 Peter 4:8-9). Though times were hard and others may not like you but be a follower of Jesus who blesses others anyway. On Sunday, Pastor three points about our potential.

### NURTURE AND USE YOUR POTENTIAL DESPITE THE STRAINS YOU EXPERIENCE.

The strains you experience (spiritual, emotional, physical, social, financial, etc.) should not keep you from nurturing and using your potential. It's in the difficult times when your potentials are drawn out. The Apostle Peter reminds us in his letter that the strains we experience have a purpose. Just like the seed that needs to break out of its shell in order for growth to take place, we must now allow hard times to keep us from drawing out our potential. Think of your sufferings as God's way of cracking the shell of your potential so you'll be able to live out your days free to pursue what God wants instead of being obsessed by what you want in life.

- What strains are you experiencing these days?
- What are you anxious about?

Pastor reminded us that when we're in difficult situations, instead of taking a break from God and His church, you need to rest in God and in His house (his church). The greater the strains we experience, the more we should run to God and keep serving; because God can use the strains you experience to crack the shells that keep your potential hidden. Read James 1:12.

- Have you ever retreated from serving because of the strains you experienced? Share and instance.
- In our church, we want to embrace the culture of always advancing for Christ. Retreating is for the defeated, advancing is for the victors. Which would you rather be?
- Another word for strain is tension (a force tending to stretch something). Some musical instruments need a good amount of tension to good produce sound. As God's children, we must choose to make friends with strains because it allows us to release potential and strength we never thought we had.

### THE POTENTIAL YOU HAVE IS MEANT TO BLESS BEYOND YOURSELF.

Read Verse 10 again.

God wants to bless His church and the world through you; and Pastor reminded us that the magnitude of our effectiveness is determined by the size of our willingness to be used; and that our usefulness is determined by our availability. The size of the blessing we receive will always be determined by how much room we make for it.

- How do you receive more blessings?
- What are some ways you can make room for more blessings in your life?

### ***Honor God with your substance.***

You are called to steward what you have been given. A steward is manager, not a hoarder. When we use our gifts to build each other up in the church, God brings glory to himself through Christ. We honor him and glorify him. Consequently, we dishonor God when we do not use them. In the parable found in Matthew 25:14-28, the master became very angry with the person with one talent who did not use his gift because he was "afraid" of using it. The master called him a wicked, lazy servant (v. 26). The servant had dishonored his master. This fear seems to be a common hindrance to many: "I'm afraid of leading a DGroup;" "I'm afraid of praying in front of people;" "I'm afraid of

evangelizing;” “I’m afraid of inviting friends to church.” Fear will be a major deterrent to the release of your potential and usefulness in building the kingdom of God.

The person who is afraid of releasing his potential because of the responsibility it demands will be called “wicked and lazy.” However, when we live with a proper view of how Jesus gifted us and we are excited to be part of His body, there is an encouragement, excitement and accountability to serve, and the Bible says one day he will reward us. He will say, “Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things (Matt 25:23).

- Read Proverbs 3:9-10. This Proverbs literally talks about wealth; but if we take essence of that verse fully, it means, honor God with what we have been given. Whether it’s wealth, strength, influence, power, position, gifts to talents, the Bible commands us to Honor God with what we have.
- What do you have that you have yet to use to honor God with?
- Pastor keeps reminded us of the power of faithfulness in the little things. How would rate your faithfulness in the small things God commands us to do?

### ***Increase your potential by using what you have!***

God gave each of us different gifts so we can function in the kingdom well. God designed it that way to keep His church balanced. That is why, not everyone preaches; nor does everyone lead the singing. We recognize the fact that God has gifted each of us differently, so we can serve God collectively.

### ***Start with the people closest to you.***

If God designed us to be a blessing, He wants us to start with the people closest to us. We believe that God is calling our church to reach people for Christ and be a growing church. A growing church is a reaching church! We have a goal of reaching 1000 people by 2019, our individual challenge each of us to bring 2 people to Christ by November 2017. But Pastor encouraged us to not stick with just TWO, and desire to bring as many people to Jesus.

- Why is leading people to Jesus such an important assignment for every disciple?
- How can you use your influence and gifts to brings someone to Christ?
- Will you use your potential by reaching more people for Jesus this year? How many do you want to reach before the year ends?

### **YOUR SWEET SPOT IS ALWAYS FOUND OUTSIDE OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE.**

***Our comfort zone*** is where we feel confident in our own abilities; a place where we think we can do it on our own comfortably. One of the misconceptions about comfort zone—most people think it’s all about physical location or geography. Leaving our comfort zone is about embracing responsibility, increasing capability and growing in obedience [not just a change of location]. We don’t need a change in location to leave your comfort zone. What we need is to embrace greater responsibility, increase our capability and grow in obedience.

- Are you in your comfort zone? What should you do to get you out of it?
- If you’re serving in the church, do you think your area of service has become a comfort zone? What should you aim to pursue to embrace greater responsibility, increase our capability and grow in obedience?

***Our sweet spot*** is where God knows you can do it, but you don’t know it yet. Pastor reminded us that “*God will keep us in our sweet spot but He will never let us stay in our comfort zone.*” The sweet spot is where we discover that God can do things through us if we will just be obedient to His Word and will for our life. It’s a place where you will find His strength made perfect in your weakness, but His purpose is fulfilled in your strength (potential/gifts)! God always supplies the strength in our sweet spot! We must do everything in the strength God Himself supplies. When He works, potentials are released and fruit is produced.

- Have you found your sweet spot?
- What are some of the ways to know whether we are in our sweet spot or not?

***The realm of false expectations.*** It’s a place where we try to be someone we are not or become someone others expect us to be; but it’s not where God called us to, so no matter how hard we try, we won’t find fruit in what we do.

Read verse 11. When we use God’s gifts (our potential) in the strength God supplies, His favor will always follow us wherever we go and whatever the situation. We will be like that person in Psalm 1:1-3 (read), the strength of Jesus is always evident, and God is pleased in all we do for Him!

***God is most glorified in you when you function and bear fruit in the way that He has gifted you in a place where you are most dependent on Him.***

### **WORKS**

- Bless one another in your DGroup.
- Declare (prophecy) the potential they each have in Christ. Encourage one another.