

Planted for Purpose | Matthew 13:31-32

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Preacher: Pastor Patrick Dailey

[0:00] Welcome to Ontario Community Church, where we are encouraging, equipping, and engaging lives for Christ. I'm Pastor Patrick Daly, and each week I share sermons that balance the grace and love of Jesus Christ with the truth of the Word of God.

Together, we'll explore Scripture using observation, interpretation, and application. This helps us discover practical ways to live out our faith every single day.

Let's dive in together into God's Word. It was eight years ago when the Lord first called me into ministry. There was a seed, as it were, that was planted into my heart.

A seed that, when I first received it, I didn't really want anything to do with it. At that time, I was working in a startup company.

I was recently married. And I thought, I went to school for marketing and for business. Of course I want to be in this new startup where I'm working in a sports car industry.

[1:08] It was a series of events that not only was God working in my life, but he was transforming my heart and my mind to lay aside all of those things of the former life.

It wasn't easy. I must admit. There were a lot of times I was wrestling and struggling and thinking to myself, God, not me.

Why would you call someone like me? I love my sports car. And I love this life that I potentially could have. The opportunity to meet celebrities, Jay Leno and all these things, was very appealing to me.

I thought, well, this sports car company is going to be the next Tesla. It's going to really kick off. But God had other plans.

And I kept thinking every so often. It was like that seed was being cultivated because I was reading and studying God's word. I was going to church with my wife.

[2:23] We didn't have kids at that point. We were attending and just receiving, listening and hearing from the word of God. And over time, I started thinking.

I don't know if I want this. I don't know if I want to have a life where that doesn't matter to me.

And it was very insulting to tell the owner, it's just another sports car. I noticed that my attitude began to change and God was really working in my mind and in my heart.

To eventually surrendering. I was and I am a Christian. And I knew God was calling for me for something else.

I just didn't know what. And over time, that seed was just growing and really wrestling with me to the point where I no longer associated. And I walked away from that startup company.

[3:25] It was intentionally saying goodbye. It was sad. But I knew that God had greater plans.

And now, here I am. I look back and I, every so often on Facebook, I get a memory. Some of you guys know what I'm talking about, right?

Of an old photo. And I think of how that was who I was at that time. My entire identity was wrapped around this sports car.

I didn't want it anymore. Now, it's just a distant memory. Some good times. Meet some good people. But there's nothing greater than the call that God had for my life, but also for you guys.

There is nothing more powerful than the call that God has for your life. Because God calls each and every one of us to believe in him, to believe in the death, the burial, and the resurrection of him, to grow in him.

[4:35] We think of the seed being planted into the good soil, representing our heart, growing and cultivating and taking root. For some of us, we may think, well, yeah, I've gardened before.

I've planted trees or a grapevine, all these different plants we can think of. And we observe this in the natural world. But we also think that's how it is with spiritual matters.

The seed being planted and growing and cultivated. Much like how the word says, you shall know them by their fruit. And God offers hope, healing for the broken, and transformation for our very lives.

I can say with great confidence that I am not the same person that I was eight years ago. I don't even know who that guy is. But the Lord has worked in my life in the same way that God will work in your life.

Have you responded to the invitation that God has for your life to receive salvation? Have you responded to God's specific calling for your life?

[5:47] I certainly hope that all of you have. Or if you haven't, let this be a call for you to do so. Our faith and our calling might start so small.

When we think of the mustard seed, we think of something being very small. But growing into something that's very great. Let us turn.

We're going to turn our Bibles to the Gospel of Matthew chapter 13. It's on the screen. It's two verses. And I realize I'm pressed on time.

So we're going to make this short and sweet here. But we still should read from the Word of God. Amen. Let's read this together. And you can read from your ESVPU Bible.

It's page 973 or your Bible of choice. So the Gospel of Matthew chapter 13 verses 31 through 32.

[6:54] It says, He put another parable before them saying, the kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field.

It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown, it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.

In verse 33, he told them another parable, right? Where you have the kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour till it was all leavened.

It's all connection. You guys remember when we were going over the parable of the weeds? It's all tucked in. It's nestled in there, which helps us with our understanding.

As I previously had preached about, the weeds representing sin and being transformed into wheat.

[7:54] Much like when you think of the four soils, you see the presence of weeds representing the presence of sin. And that we, before we know the Lord, are like those weeds.

And we get transformed, being saved by grace through faith to become wheat. It's much like how we think of other things. Vessels that get transported from the place they don't belong to the place that they should belong.

Even when we think of Japanese culture in kintsugi art, that which is broken, a broken plate or a broken cup coming back together and being together with gold.

Making it more valuable than what it once was before. And this helps us with our understanding of who our God is. Thinking of this as the seed that gets planted into the ground.

Let's go to that next. I love this kind of art. It reminds me of my mother. My mother and father are both Catholic and they would always show me this specific kind of art.

[8:59] You might know what I'm talking about when I say that. But it's still good art nonetheless. Nevertheless, where you're seeing this representation here, the sower representing God, that God is the great sower who plants the seed into the ground.

The seed of the word into the world, much like our hearts. We think of the ground, right? We think of the soils. We think of different fields. We can think of the world, but we can also think of our hearts that must receive the word.

We also see the seed here. The word. Jesus sent into the world like a seed planted into the garden, growing into the source of life.

The garden then represents world and our hearts being transformed. So when we think of the seed, the word became flesh and dwelt among us, right?

Changing the course of history. Much like as when we hear the word of God, we should respond and receive the word. Into our own soils, our hearts.

[10:05] And then there's the growth of the tree. I mean, too bad there's no fruit on here. But you get the idea. That it grows.

And we think of transformation. We think of going from the milk of the word to solid food. We think of how we go from being spiritual babies to maturing and continued transformation in our lives.

Perhaps you are going through a transformation in your life. Perhaps you are seeking the Lord. If you haven't sought the Lord before, I pray that the seed will be planted in your heart.

That you will respond to God's invitation for your life. May you grow. Don't just be a little plant. Grow into a tree, into maturity.

It goes on by saying the birds, which represent people, nations, and communities being drawn to the Lord.

[11:06] Much like how you shall know them by your fruits, right? The birds nestling in there. People and nations are drawn to Christ, his church, and they seek refuge and transformation.

It's like being a light unto the world. It's like being salt and light. And then, of course, the branches. New life. The fruit of discipleship.

Lives and ministries built upon Christ to bear fruit, stability, and to provide shelter. It's a lot of very interesting language when we think about that.

Something being planted in the ground and growing, representing us, that we should grow in the same way. We think of Christ. We think of how that changed the world.

But we also have to think of how we are to transform. And to be moved to where we bear fruit. What wonderful and beautiful imagery.

[12:06] And this takes us then into what can we learn from this then? And this is very important. The first one is that what started small was always meant to expand.

That God is the great, excuse me, the first covenant. Think about that. It started with Israel. But God's plan was something that was greater. A greater plan for salvation for all who believe shall not perish but have eternal life.

May you respond to that calling. And may you see that the Lord planting Christ into the world, the death, burial, and resurrection changes everything.

The mustard seed is a picture of how the gospel would expand from a small group to the entire world. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that some?

All. Or whosoever. Depending on your translation, okay? You might be used to one or the other. So ask yourself, do I trust in God's work?

[13:18] Do I trust in the Lord and the fact that he has provided salvation for all? The second thing then is that God uses the small and the unlikely for extraordinary purpose.

And we can think about how God uses everyday people for extraordinary purpose. Just because your life, you may think it's boring or may have a boring past, doesn't mean that God cannot use you for good, for his plan, for his purpose.

The mustard seed is small and yet it grows into something powerful. Doesn't God call the weak or the broken to be comforted, to be healed?

You have to think, maybe you identify with someone who is weak or is broken. Ask yourself, am I willing to let the Lord into my life to heal and to transform my life?

Even when I feel small. Sometimes we feel small, don't we? And the third thing then is that we are called to plant, grow, and expand the kingdom.

[14:35] And just as the kingdom of God is growing, we are called to sow or scatter the seeds of faith. To disciple others and to continue the mission that Jesus Christ has set before us to tell the good news of the gospel.

So ask yourself then, who in my life needs to hear about the hope in Jesus Christ or the transformation that comes from him?

We then go into the application then. How can I apply or live out these verses? This is the approach that we do here. Observation, interpretation, and application.

We read the word of God. What can we see just right on the surface? The interpretation or the lessons. What can apply to me personally in my walk in the Lord?

And then application. What can I do about this? Because we have to remember, we hear the word of God. We absorb it. But we are called to live it out every single day.

[15:40] Being salt and light unto the world. Don't just take these and just hold it in. Let the light of Christ shine for others to see. So the first thing is to receive the seed of the word and respond by faith in Jesus Christ, my friends.

That's the first thing. If you haven't done that, may you respond. Allow the seed of the word to be planted in your life. Salvation through faith in Christ.

Let us have that foundation in Christ. Let's not be like that foolish builder. Who builds their house on the sand anyways.

Right? The second thing then is to grow in Christ and to continue in the transformation process. We find that there's a lot of people out there.

They believe in Christ and they just kind of leave it there. But we are called to continue to grow. Do you seriously want to remain a child your entire life?

[16:44] I sure don't. I'm glad I'm not a baby anymore. You know? Even when I ask my own kids, you know, Hunter, Garrett, you're a big boy now. You can put on your own clothes.

Are you glad that you're doing that? Yeah, I can put on my pants now. Right? And I know that's just kind of a real life example we can think of. But when we think of the spiritual, don't just be a baby. May you grow. May you become more like Christ being transformed. When we think of this idea of repentance, metanoia, it is continued transformation.

Right? Just like the word metamorphosis means changing form, metanoia is the changing of mind. That we continue to learn and grow. Not only should it be a changing of our mind, but a changing of our heart and how we love people.

We're called to put on the new self and to be ambassadors for Christ. And then finally, be a sower of God's word to others.

[17:49] This is so important. Can you imagine if you won the lottery? You didn't tell anyone about it. There's some people who wouldn't. Right? Can you imagine if all of your debts were paid off?

You wouldn't tell anyone? And I know that's finances. Right? I know that's the physical world that we can think of. But when we're thinking in the idea of eternal life.

Knowing that you are saved by grace through faith. Knowing that Jesus paid it all. Do you really mean what you say?

Why wouldn't you then tell people about the good news of the gospel? Sharing in your testimony. Sharing in the death barrier.

I mean, all you really need to do is to show 1 Corinthians chapter 15 verses 1 through 4. That's one of the easiest gospel messages you can show. You can tell people about how we are sinners in need of a savior.

[18:47] You can proclaim the hope that is in Jesus Christ. Let us think for a moment that as we exhibit the light of Christ, we continue to shine the light so that others can see.

Or much like when we're thinking of the seed growing into a tree where the birds are attracted. And they have their nests. We can think of fruit even. Let that image resonate in your mind.

About how we are a continued work in progress. And we are to share in the good news of the gospel. Ask yourself, who can I plant seeds in this week with my words or maybe even my actions? I realize we live in a world where you may not be able to speak the truth. You can still do it by action though. You can still do good in the name of Christ.

Whether that's word or action. The church is a place where we gather together. Where there's healing and transformation.

[19:56] Where we can hear the word and we can grow in Christ and become sowers of the gospel. For those of you who believe in the Lord, may you

continue to grow.

And may you continue to be molded in Christ. For those of you who may have been, you may feel lost. Or you may feel hurt. Or you may just need healing in your life.

I pray that you will be renewed. Restored. And that there will be healing and comfort and restoration in your life. Whatever it is you're going through.

I don't know the scope of every person here. Of what they're going through. But I know that the Lord does. And I know that God is the great comforter.

The great physician. And I believe that God can speak in many and comfort people. Even if you're going through the roughest of times.

[20:52] The Lord is still there as our constant. And for those of you who do not know the Lord. May you respond to the invitation to experience new life in Christ.

And know that God has a great plan for you. A greater plan for you. Have you received the seed? Of God's word?

Are you allowing for God to mold you? To grow you into who he intended you to be? And how can you be a sower helping others come to faith?

To grow and experience the life-changing power of Jesus Christ? Remember, God takes that which is small.

And expands it into something great. In the same way that as God takes that which is broken. We think of brokenness like that broken plate as something that's useless.

[21:51] But yet God takes that which is broken. And brings it together. Making it more valuable than it ever was. I don't know where your journey is in Christ.

But I pray that you seek the Lord. You may find him. You may know him. And grow in him. And do good in his name.

Let's pray together. Father, we thank you for this time and this opportunity for us. This special day. I pray that every single person here knows that they are loved by you.

I pray that if there is someone who has not received the seed. Or hasn't made a decision to follow you. Or to proclaim. To say yes to Jesus Christ.

That that will be done. I pray for us that have received the seed. And may we continue to grow. And be molded by you. And to grow in you. There's such new life in Christ.

[22:55] And continued transformation in you. And I pray that as we know you. As we grow in you. May we be moved to be the hands and feet of you.

May we share in the gospel message. In what we say and what we do. I pray for anyone who is struggling. Whether they have just life happening.

Or whether they have addiction. Whatever it is. We pray for comfort. And divine intervention in their life.

There is no one like you. You are good. And we thank you. You are holy. You are sovereign. You are strong and mighty. May we be drawn to you.

Come to you. And just grow. And do good in your name. It is in the name of Jesus Christ. That we pray. And we all say together. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you for listening for this week's message from Ontario Community Church.

[24:06] I pray that you are encouraged and strengthened in your walk with Christ. For more sermons and resources, visit [OntarioCommunityChurch.org](https://ontariocommunitychurch.org). May God bless you as you live out His grace and truth every single day.

And do good in your journey.