

# FRUSTRATION *into* CREATION

## **DAY 1 – FRUSTRATION TO CREATION**

### **PSALMS 37:23 (NKJV)**

The steps of a *good* man are ordered by the Lord, and He delights in his way.

### **ROMANS 8:28**

And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.

### **MATTHEW 14: 13 – 21**

<sup>13</sup> As soon as Jesus heard the news, he left in a boat to a remote area to be alone. But the crowds heard where he was headed and followed on foot from many towns. <sup>14</sup> Jesus saw the huge crowd as he stepped from the boat, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick. <sup>15</sup> That evening the disciples came to him and said, “This is a remote place, and it’s already getting late. Send the crowds away so they can go to the villages and buy food for themselves.” <sup>16</sup> But Jesus said, “That isn’t necessary—you feed them.” <sup>17</sup> “But we have only five loaves of bread and two fish!” they answered. <sup>18</sup> “Bring them here,” he said. <sup>19</sup> Then he told the people to sit down on the grass. Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up toward heaven, and blessed them. Then, breaking the loaves into pieces, he gave the bread to the disciples, who distributed it to the people. <sup>20</sup> They all ate as much as they wanted, and afterward, the disciples picked up twelve baskets of leftovers. <sup>21</sup> About 5,000 men were fed that day, in addition to all the women and children!

### **JOHN 2:1 – 11**

The next day there was a wedding celebration in the village of Cana in Galilee. Jesus’ mother was there, <sup>2</sup> and Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the celebration. <sup>3</sup> The wine supply ran out during the festivities, so Jesus’ mother told him, “They have no more wine.” <sup>4</sup> “Dear woman, that’s not our problem,” Jesus replied. “My time has not yet come.” <sup>5</sup> But his mother told the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” <sup>6</sup> Standing nearby were six stone water jars, used for Jewish ceremonial washing. Each could hold twenty to thirty gallons. <sup>7</sup> Jesus told the servants, “Fill the jars with water.” When the jars had been filled, <sup>8</sup> he said, “Now dip some out, and take it to the master of ceremonies.” So the servants followed his instructions. <sup>9</sup> When the master of ceremonies tasted the water that was now wine, not knowing where it had come from (though, of course, the servants knew), he called the bridegroom over. <sup>10</sup> “A host always serves the best wine first,” he said. “Then, when everyone has had a lot to drink, he brings out the less expensive wine. But you have kept the best until now!” <sup>11</sup> This miraculous sign at Cana in Galilee was the first time Jesus revealed his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

## **DEVOTIONAL**

Have you ever heard the story of how the waffle ice cream cone was invented? In 1904 at the World Fair in St. Louis an ice cream vendor ran out of serving dishes; we can imagine he would have been incredibly frustrated and panicked as he looked for a solution. The waffle vendor next to him – Ernest Hamwi – saw a solution and decided to shape his waffles into a cone shape to serve the ice cream. The rest, as they say, is history.

I'm sure we can all relate to a time in our lives where we accidentally did something that resulted in frustration or a complication. However, the good news is that throughout the Bible, we see Jesus turn moments of frustration into something beautiful. In the book of John, Jesus created wine out of water when the host ran out of wine at a wedding; in Matthew, Jesus fed the 5,000 because no one had brought food with them to eat.

During the next five days, we are going to look at how God takes our frustrations and turns them into creations. You could be facing any number of frustrations and complications today, but God has the ability and will to take those frustrations and create something beautiful; why? Because God works all things together for our good.

## **PRAYER**

Lord, thank you for being with me in this season, for being a God that creates and can make all things good and new. I pray you would reveal your truth to me through these next five days and show me how you will take my frustrations and turn them into creations.

## Day 2 // POSTURE VS PLANNING

### PSALMS 37:23 (NKJV)

The steps of a *good* man are ordered by the Lord, and He delights in his way.

### 2 SAMUEL 5:17 - 25

<sup>17</sup> When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king of Israel, they mobilized all their forces to capture him. But David was told they were coming, so he went into the stronghold. <sup>18</sup> The Philistines arrived and spread out across the valley of Rephaim. <sup>19</sup> So David asked the Lord, “Should I go out to fight the Philistines? Will you hand them over to me?” The Lord replied to David, “Yes, go ahead. I will certainly hand them over to you.” <sup>20</sup> So David went to Baal-perazim and defeated the Philistines there. “The Lord did it!” David exclaimed. “He burst through my enemies like a raging flood!” So he named that place Baal-perazim (which means “the Lord who bursts through”). <sup>21</sup> The Philistines had abandoned their idols there, so David and his men confiscated them. <sup>22</sup> But after a while the Philistines returned and again spread out across the valley of Rephaim. <sup>23</sup> And again David asked the Lord what to do. “Do not attack them straight on,” the Lord replied. “Instead, circle around behind and attack them near the poplar trees. <sup>24</sup> When you hear a sound like marching feet in the tops of the poplar trees, be on the alert! That will be the signal that the Lord is moving ahead of you to strike down the Philistine army.” <sup>25</sup> So David did what the Lord commanded, and he struck down the Philistines all the way from Gibeon to Gezer.

### DEVOTIONAL

If we are going to see God turn our frustrations into creations, we are going to need to wrestle the tension between our posture and our planning. In Psalms 37:23 God is attempting to teach us that the posture of our hearts is more important than the plans in our heads. In other words, the posture of our hearts towards God is more important than our plans to succeed or achieve or win. When our hearts are postured correctly before the Lord, He Himself will order our steps and create something beautiful out of our frustrations.

Keeping our hearts postured this way isn't always easy, but it is possible. David in 2 Samuel, after finally becoming King, is faced with war from the Philistines. At a time when he should be celebrating his coronation and ushering in a season of peace, he is faced with war and frustration. David would have had every right to storm angrily into battle and fight the Philistines, but he wrestled with that urge and understood the importance of ensuring the posture of his heart was in alignment with God and His will. Instead of attacking the Philistines, David sought the face of God to find out if he should engage in the battle and then by following the directions of the Lord, he fought back and won. When the Philistines attacked a second time, David once again sought the face of God and received a strategy that brought about victory.

Because of the posture of David's heart towards God, God took him from a place of frustration to a place of creation. They didn't just gain more territory; their win was so significant they changed the name of the city from the Valley of Rephaim (valley of giants) to Baal Perazim (the Lord who breaks out).

What condition is your heart in today? Are you living with the right heart posture instead of worrying about the right plan?

### **PRAYER**

God, thank you that you already have a plan for my frustrations and problems. I ask that you help me to always seek you and posture my heart in accordance with your will and not my plan. Your ways are higher than mine and I trust you in all things.

## Day 3 // NOTHING WRONG WITH PLANNING

### PSALMS 37:23 (NKJV)

The steps of a *good* man are ordered by the Lord, and He delights in his way.

### JOHN 5:1–15

Afterward Jesus returned to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish holy days.<sup>2</sup> Inside the city, near the Sheep Gate, was the pool of Bethesda, with five covered porches.<sup>3</sup> Crowds of sick people — blind, lame, or paralysed — lay on the porches *waiting for a certain movement of the water*,<sup>4</sup> *for an angel of the Lord came from time to time and stirred up the water. And the first person to step in after the water was stirred was healed of whatever disease he had.*<sup>5</sup> One of the men lying there had been sick for thirty-eight years.<sup>6</sup> When Jesus saw him and knew he had been ill for a long time, he asked him, “Would you like to get well?”<sup>7</sup> “I can’t, sir,” the sick man said, “for I have no one to put me into the pool when the water bubbles up. Someone else always gets there ahead of me.”<sup>8</sup> Jesus told him, “Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!”<sup>9</sup> Instantly, the man was healed! He rolled up his sleeping mat and began walking! But this miracle happened on the Sabbath,<sup>10</sup> so the Jewish leaders objected. They said to the man who was cured, “You can’t work on the Sabbath! The law doesn’t allow you to carry that sleeping mat!”<sup>11</sup> But he replied, “The man who healed me told me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’”<sup>12</sup> “Who said such a thing as that?” they demanded.<sup>13</sup> The man didn’t know, for Jesus had disappeared into the crowd.<sup>14</sup> But afterward Jesus found him in the Temple and told him, “Now you are well; so stop sinning, or something even worse may happen to you.”<sup>15</sup> Then the man went and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had healed him.

### DEVOTIONAL

There’s an old saying: if you fail to plan, you plan to fail. While the posture of our hearts is the most important thing, we need to remember that there is nothing wrong with planning. In fact, we should take an active role and make plans for our lives and goals, rather than sit and wait, expecting God to drop things into our laps.

Throughout the Gospels, Jesus consistently invited people to partner with Him by taking action to receive their miracle. In John 5, a man waited by the pool *Bethesda* for 38 years for the chance to be healed and receive his miracle. Finally, Jesus happens upon the man and tells him, “Rise, take up your bed and walk”. It was only after the man chose to obey and rose from his bed that he was healed. We need to partner with the miracle by taking action and making a plan to keep moving forward. Without a plan, we sit and become stagnant instead of progressing through what God has for us. You can say it like this: in life, pray as though 100% of the result depends on God and plan as though 100% of it depends on you.

Our plans shouldn't be made just for the sake of it. We need to make our plans specific, measurable, relevant, time-bound and achievable. And make sure that while we plan, our heart is in the right posture before God because the posture of our hearts is more important than plans in our hands.

## **PRAYER**

Thank you, God, that you have designed me to take an active role in life. I pray that even as I plan and prepare for the future you have for me, that my heart would always be postured towards you and your righteousness.

## Day 4 // HAVING THE RIGHT POSTURE

### PSALMS 37:23 (NKJV)

The steps of a *good* man are ordered by the Lord, And He delights in his way.

### PSALMS 1:1–3

Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers. <sup>2</sup> But they delight in the law of the Lord, meditating on it day and night. <sup>3</sup> They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do. <sup>4</sup> But not the wicked! They are like worthless chaff, scattered by the wind.<sup>5</sup> They will be condemned at the time of judgment. Sinners will have no place among the godly. <sup>6</sup> For the Lord watches over the path of the godly, but the path of the wicked leads to destruction.

### DEVOTIONAL

If we are going to effectively wrestle the tension between our posture and our plans, we need to understand that having the right posture towards God can be difficult but is entirely possible. But, as much as we might want to have the right heart posture, how can we know that we are on the right track? In Psalms 1, David kindly spells it out for us.

A heart postured towards God

- Listens to the counsel of the godly
- Stands in the paths of the righteous
- Sits in the seat of respectful people
- Finds their delight in the Lord
- Meditates on God's law and Word day and night

When our hearts are postured towards God, we are better able to wrestle the tension between heart and plan and lean into God. The same way when you gain ground in pulling a tug-of-war it becomes easier to retain that momentum: the closer our heart's posture to God is, the easier it is to stay in that space and continue walking in accordance with Him and His plan instead of our own.

### PRAYER

Dear God, in my humanity I confess that I will sometimes forget to lean into you and have the right heart posture and I ask for your understanding and forgiveness in this. I thank you, however, that you do not set your children up for failure and that I can and will overcome this more often than not and align my heart with you and your plan for my life. Give me strength and tenacity to do this, in Jesus name.



## Day 5 // GOD DIRECTS POSTURED HEARTS

### PSALMS 37:23 (NKJV)

The steps of a *good* man are ordered by the Lord, And He delights in his way.

### DEVOTIONAL

We know that it is God who directs, establishes and orders our steps, but Psalms 37:23 reminds us that God orders the steps of good people. He orders the steps of people who are righteous and blessed, whose hearts are postured and positioned towards Him and who seek after God, listening and being obedient to Him. In short, if your heart isn't postured to Him, God isn't directing your steps.

If you have ever driven a car you know in order for it to be able to turn or change direction, the car needs to be moving. Whether it is moving because you have your foot on the pedal or it's moving because it's being pushed, cars can't be directed and manoeuvred unless they are moving. And what prevents cars from moving? Having the handbrake on and the car out of gear. In a similar way, only when our hearts are postured and positioned towards God can our steps be ordered, directed and established. Only when the handbrake is off and the car is in gear can it move and be directed.

God wants to turn our frustrations into creations, but He is looking for people who know that the posture of their hearts is more important than the plans in their heads. By having a plan, we have the option for movement. Combine this with our heart postured towards God and He is able to direct our steps and lead us through life. When He is directing us, He can take our frustrations or wrong turns and turn them into creations by directing us back the right way.

### PRAYER

Thank you, God, that you are there to direct my path. Help me to keep my heart postured and my plans moving so that I may always hear your voice guiding me.

### FINAL PRAYER

Today, I declare that God can and will take my frustrations and turn them into creations for His glory. I declare that my heart's posture will always be turned towards God. I declare that I will make plans that are specific, measurable, relevant, time-bound and achievable for the glory of God. I declare that I will always listen to God's voice and ordering of my path. I declare all this, in Jesus' name. Amen.