

Get Planted

In a Ministry

1 Peter 4:10-11

If you have your Bibles, last Sunday morning we talked to you about getting planted in a community. Some of you took us up on that last Sunday and in our small group Bible studies here at Hardin, last Sunday morning we were up 10%. 45 people, for the 1st time, got planted in one of our Adult Bible Fellowships; we praise the Lord for that. This morning we're going to continue our Get Planted series, and this morning we want to talk to you about getting planted in a ministry. The 1st thing we want you to do here at Hardin Baptist Church is to get planted in a community, (one of our small group Bible studies, one of our Community Connection groups) and then we want you to really consider getting planted in a ministry. Friday a little bit before 11 a.m., I got that little beep on my phone and I looked down and I had a new text message. It was from Celisa; I always check those. Here's what the text said, "I am waiting for my cheeseburger". Then it hit me, she was going to get a Belew's burger before I got my Belew's burger...I always get the 1st one! All of a sudden I realize, wow she's sitting at Belew's. But I remembered before I left Friday morning that she was supposed to be planting the garden. So I followed her text up with a phone call, and I said, "You mean you are already at Belew's", she said, "Yes I am". Then she went on to explain that she had already finished planting the garden and I asked how she got done so quickly? She began to explain to me that one of her friends who had never planted corn before wanted to come over Friday morning and learn to plant corn. So Celisa, with extra hands, showed her friend how to plant corn, so they got the job done quickly and got to Belew's before I did. Can you tell

I'm still agitated about that? As I planted big corn, all afternoon I kept thinking about Celisa showing Heather how to plant corn. Now Celisa's got this method she uses. Once the garden has been prepared, the 1st thing she does is to stake out her row. Now, we stake out the rows in our garden using her Memish's instruments. Memish had 2 sticks, they're probably 150 years old, and it was passed on to Celisa. We have nylon string, and we put one stick at each end of the garden, and we tie that nylon string from one stick to the other stick, and we get as perfect a row as we can have on the east-side. The 2nd thing we do is we get Memish's push plow and we follow that nylon string, guaranteeing a straight row. Once that furrow has been dug to about 2 to 2 1/2 inches deep, Celisa then takes the seeds out of the package (the variety that she has chosen to plant this year), and she starts dropping those seeds in the furrow at the desired plant spacing. Once all of the rows have been planted with corn, she then takes the hoe and then carefully makes sure that each one of those plants are covered just right with the maximum amount of dirt to seed contact, (about 2 inches deep) guaranteeing that surely 90 to 95% of those seeds will germinate, and then this summer we're going to have a bountiful harvest of sweet corn. Since Friday, all I can think about is planting.

This morning we're talking about getting planted, not just in a community, but getting planted in a ministry. You see there are some questions we ask ourselves before we plant corn in the garden. And there are some questions I want you and I to ask ourselves this morning, and as we answer these questions correctly, here's what will happen. We'll find ourselves planted in a ministry. What a difference it's going to make, not only in your life, but the life of the Church when you follow the leadership of God's Holy Spirit, and maximize your spiritual ability for the glory of God. Listen to what Peter wrote, 1 Peter chapter 4 beginning with verse 10, Peter says these words, "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks as one who speaks the oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the

strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To Him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” I think one of the 1st questions you ask yourself when you begin to plant in the springtime is this, (it makes all of the difference in the world); why am I planting this? We do not plant sweet corn in our garden to decorate our home. We do not plant sweet corn in our garden to shade our tomatoes. We do not plant sweet corn in our garden so that our green beans can run up the stalk. We plant sweet corn for one purpose only, and that’s to feed our family. I love corn on the cob, therefore I have my variety. Celisa loves cut corn, therefore she has her variety, and when we plant corn in the garden we are planting for a purpose. That purpose is for food on the table that we truly enjoy. Why should you get planted in a ministry? One purpose and one purpose only, according to Peter. Normally we start at the beginning of the verses and work our way to the end, but this morning we’re going to start at the back. Why...because Peter doesn’t tell us the purpose for getting planted in ministry until the end, “in order that”. Do you see that in verse 11? That’s the purpose, that’s why you and I get planted in a ministry. We get planted “in order that in everything, God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” We’re going to try to resurrect the old amen’s, amen? You should get planted in a ministry, and I should be planted in a ministry, so that God will be glorified. What does it mean for God to be glorified? It means for God to be made known. Ministry is not about you, and ministry is not about me, and ministry is not about the Church, ministry is about the glory of God. What makes God known according to Peter is this; saints in ministry. If you have a desire for God to be made known, that’s why you should get planted in a ministry, amen? Now once we have determined we want corn, we’ve got a dilemma because when we go to the co-op or you go to your seed store, there are numerous varieties of corn. I am amazed, I don’t ask people what kind of sweet corn they plant; people tell me what varieties of sweet corn they plant. People tell me what kind of mistake I’ve made by planting the variety that I plant because they tell me how much better the variety they plant is. There are

so many different varieties of corn. Listen to this, by the same token there are different spiritual enabling's, there are different spiritual gifts that God has given the Church. Peter does not go into the different varieties of giftedness that the Church has. He doesn't give you all of your options here; there is a spiritual gift list in 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4. I don't believe those are exhaustive, I believe there are other spiritual enabling's that are not listed in Scripture. Those are representative to tell us some of the early gifts that were in the Church, but here's what Peter reminds us of; each one of us has received a gift. You must look at yourself this way; I am a certain variety of God's grace. The Bible says that God's grace is multi-colored, it's varied. God did not do what Henry Ford did, and that's start producing automobiles alike. He never said you can have any color you want as long as it's black. God is a god of grace and His grace is not one color only, His grace is multi-colored. Therefore in the Church, you can't compare yourself to somebody else and compare yourself to them. You are unique, you are different and God has given you a gift that He hasn't given someone else. One of the 1st things you've got to do before you'll ever get planted in a ministry is this; you've got to determine what variety am I of God. What I'm referring to is; what is your giftedness?

Now let's call a timeout here and make sure we're all on the same page. When you were physically born from your parents, you received a genetic make-up from them and you were shaped a certain way, naturally. Clay Campbell is here this morning, (I don't know if you've ever been to the KY Opry but it is amazing); all 3 of his children are master musicians because of Barbie, amen? I mean Barbie's gene was passed on to every one of those boys. Therefore those boys, you could look at them and just go wow; they were natural at what they did. Peter's not talking about natural talents here; he's not talking about natural abilities that you got from your mama or your daddy. What Peter is referring to here is this; when you got saved and the Word of God and the Spirit of God converged on you, and you responded to the truth that Jesus Christ died for you on a cross, and

you responded by faith, and you were born again of the Spirit of God. At the moment that you were reborn, the Word of God and the Spirit of God converged upon you and you spiritually were given a gift, an enablement that comes only from the Holy Spirit of God, as determined by God the Father, purchased by God the Son, for you. So people shouldn't look at you when you minister and go wow, he's a natural. People shouldn't look at you and say wow, he plays by ear. People ought to look at you spiritually and go wow, he's a spiritual, he plays by the Spirit, and he's been graced!

This word gift is *charisma*, where we get our English word "charismatic" from. It comes from the word "grace". What does it mean to be charismatic? It means to be gifted by God's grace. I don't want to scare any of you, but this is a charismatic church. I'm not talking about denominationally, I'm talking about biblically, and I'm talking about spiritually. While some people run from that word charismatic, we embrace it here at Hardin Baptist Church because we understand it, we know what it means. It means this church has special gifts that have been given to us by God, they've been given to the membership of this church, and we have them not because of who we are, but because of who He is, and what He wants out of us. He has given us the gracious and generous gifts that we have because of His grace! How dare we tell people we're not charismatic! We are charismatic, and each one of you is charismatic. Each one of you has a gift that's been given to you by the Spirit of God at the moment you were reborn, unless you haven't been reborn. Don't ever let me hear you say, Bro Ricky I don't think I have a gift, because the moment you tell me you don't think you have a gift, I'm going to say you may not be saved, because each person who is saved has a spiritual gift, amen? Listen to what Peter says, "As each one has received the gift, use it to serve one another".

I'm going to make a statement and i want you to remember this statement. Do you remember the statement we learned many, many years ago, "the main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing"? Do you remember that other statement we learned years ago, "it's not about us;

it's about Him and them"? I want you to add this statement to that list of many statements we have..."your gift is to you, but it's not for you". Now let's say that this way, "my gift is to me, but it's not for me". Now just so you understand that, all of us especially if you're a husband, has received or given a gift that was to somebody but not really for them, amen? I didn't understand when one birthday I got Celisa some Sears Craftsman wrenches. I really needed wrenches; I thought they'd make a great birthday gift to Celisa. It was a gift to her, but it wasn't for her, it was for me. I loved her gift; I picked it out myself, amen? She did me once that way; she bought me golf clubs. If you know my wife, they were to me, but they were not for me, they were for her so that I would play golf with her. Every husband here has received a gift like that, amen? Weedeaters make great anniversary gifts to your wife, amen? Don't look at me like that guys, every one of us understand this principle. How many times have you chosen a gift, given it to somebody, they've opened it and for that quick moment you could tell they didn't really believe this was for them, but they knew it was to them, and they knew they were stuck with it? And you could tell they wanted to tell you the truth, but they thanked you for it, amen? I don't want you to ever believe the spiritual gift God has given you was to you for you; it absolutely was not. That's where so many divisions come in the church of Jesus Christ; it is when people believe their giftedness has been given as a gift to them, and it separates them from the body of Christ instead of drawing them into the body of Christ. You beware of people who use their giftedness to divide the church of Christ! God never gave people gifts for them; He gave me a gift and you a gift for each other. I am to take that gift and not build my name, but to build God's name, and the way I build God's name and let the world know who God is, is by serving one another.

This word serve is where we get our English word "deacon". You've heard me tell many, many times the root of this word means "to serve". It literally means "to wait tables". Greek scholars really can't decide if we ought to translate this as servants, or waiters. In other words, this word

comes right out of our modern restaurants. In the biblical day, for Jesus to illustrate the need to serve, (remember in the upper room on the night of Passover) He took off His garment and slipped an apron around Himself. You see in that society, to be a servant meant to have no shoes, so if you were a servant you were a "dirty footed one"; you got dirty. In the dry season you had dust on your feet, in the rainy season you had mud on your feet. But then Jesus gave us a new symbol for servanthood, and that was an apron. Wow, Celisa's and my mamaw's, my granny's; I loved it when they put their apron on. Modern ladies, please when you become grandmothers, make sure you still know the value of an apron. There's just something about an apron that says I'm here for you, amen? But in our society, I don't know that the apron has the appeal to a younger generation anymore because this younger generation is being reared not to see an apron in the home anymore. I'm not criticizing; I'm just saying that's the way it is, so here's what maybe our new symbol ought to be. I go into the restaurant and the waiter or the waitress approaches our table and the 1st thing they do after welcoming me to the restaurant is they say "what do you want"? Ah, you say that to me and I'm not going to tell you because I can tell you don't really want to serve me, amen! That's not what they say; they say "what can I get you"? Wow! For a few minutes it's going to be all about me! I've got to be honest with you, I've eaten in most of the restaurants in this area, and when I go into a restaurant there are certain waiters or waitresses that are my favorites. And then I have my list of not so favorites. I will wait for a certain section to get a certain waitress because my dining experience is going to be pleasurable, amen? Now if you are a unique eater, (not picky but unique eater as I am) a unique connoisseur of food, you want to make sure that your food comes back to you exactly the way you want it. So when I'm telling my favorite waitress what I want, I am watching for that ink pen on that pad to make sure everything is being written down in detail. I want to make sure she takes it back there and the cook looks at it and reads it twice so that when it comes out it is to my liking, amen! That's why you've been given a spiritual gift. Your spiritual gift qualifies you; gives you a PH degree in being a

waiter and a waitress in God's Church! You see when you get planted in a ministry, you will quit coming to church for what you get out of church, you will quit getting in ministries for what you get out of ministries, and you will understand that you've been gifted the way you are for everybody around you, not for you! You will understand that you have come to church with your notepad ready to ask people what can I do for you, how can I serve you, how can I help you grow in your relationship with Christ? You don't say that verbally, but that's the attitude you have, amen?

Now where am I going to get planted? You see, once you realize why you're going to get planted, you will realize what variety you are going to be, but you've got to get planted somewhere. Can I say this, you'll never know what variety you really are until you get planted, and it may surprise you. You may think you're *this*, and you're not. Give me 5 different types of corn seed, and while I may not be able to tell what type they are by the seed, once they bear fruit I can tell you what they are, amen? Have you ever lost your little markers on your tomatoes? You'll eventually know what kind of tomatoes you planted by the fruit it bears. Now here's what I want to say to you, I wouldn't get so caught up on what variety I am. If I wasn't sure I wouldn't let that hinder me from ministering, I'd just get dirty, I'd just get in a ministry because here's how I really believe you ought to get planted in a ministry. The 1st ministry you ought to have should be based on this; where am I needed? If I wasn't planted in a ministry at Hardin Baptist Church, I'd just look through the bulletin and go wow, we need a nursery worker and I'd get planted there. If we had a 3 year old class that needed a teacher, I'd get planted there. If we needed somebody passing out bubble gum at the front door, I'd get planted there. I'm being serious. I know people who have been in the church for 15 or 20 years and can't tell me what their spiritual gift is. Let me tell you why you don't know what it is, you've not got planted anywhere! When you get planted in ministry, it reveals who you are and what your unique giftedness is. Let me tell you what will happen, ministry will not be a bother to you. Now it will be frustrating sometimes, and you'll want to pull your hair out sometimes, but

the people you're with and the ministry you're doing will not be a bother to you.

One of my biggest pet peeves is for someone to call me and then say, "Preacher I hate to bother you". I have never been bothered as pastor of Hardin Baptist Church, never. Have I been frustrated? Absolutely...have I wanted to strangle some folks? Absolutely...but listen to me, I've never been bothered. Do you know why I've never been bothered? It's because this is who I am. This is not just who I am on Sunday morning, this is who I am 24/7. I have certain spiritual gifts that God has given me, and as long as I minister in the realm of that giftedness, ministry will never be a bother, it'll be a blessing! Now there have been times when I'm fresher than other times. There may be times when I'm more devoted than other times, but listen to me; it will not be a bother. Jesus has clearly told us, if we take His yoke upon ourselves, it'd be easy...wow! Where are you planted in ministry? I mean I'm asking you, where are you getting dirty at? I appreciate our heritage; I love most everything that was handed down to me from the church, once I understood why it was handed down to me. But let me tell you one thing I think we messed up on, now I'm talking about you old timers, not me younger, you older ones. There was a time when you taught that you dressed a certain way to go to church and you dressed another way when you went to work, right? I can remember being a kid and we'd get ready for church, and Mom and Dad would get us ready, then they would get ready, and I can't tell you how many times we'd hear this; don't get dirty, we're going to church. So I was reared thinking when you go to church you are clean, and you stayed clean. Can I ask you an honest question? How much good would Bro Ricky be in this (dress clothes), 27/7? How many flat tires do you think I could change in this? How many dirty diapers do you think I would change in the nursery with this on? How many kids do you think I would get down on the floor with and color Jesus, with these on? Do you get the picture? What really ought to happen is when we come to church, here's how we ought to look at it; I've got my work clothes on. I'm going to the assembly of the saints

today, not to stay clean, I'm going to the assembly of the saints today because there's going to be a need and I need to get dirty, so I'm going to be ready to roll my sleeve up. I'm going roll my britches legs up, I'm going to take my socks and shoes off, and I'm going to get in there and get dirt all over me because I'll never grown up to be who God desires me to be until I get dirty, until somebody covers me with dirt! Once I get covered in dirt in a place where there is a need, if I'll stick it out I'll discover if that's my ministry or not! And if it's not my ministry, praise God I now know what it's not and I have narrowed my list. But I promise you because my heart was right, I was a blessing to a little child, or to a youth, or to a senior saint, or to a guest because God honors not the outside, He honors the inside, amen?

Now, when? Let me say this...now. Now is the time for you to get planted. Quit waiting for the soil to be just right. It's time for you to get in the dirt, in a ministry, inside the walls of this church building, and outside the walls of this church building. And here's what I want us to do; I want us to wear all of the time, our ministry clothes, and let's be ready to minister. My Papaw, (I loved him) but he had 2 caps. He had a confinement hog operation; all the hogs were inside. This meant once you were ever inside and you stepped outside, what was inside went with you outside, everywhere you went, if you understand that. Therefore my Papaw had a work cap, but he always kept a go-to-town cap. My Papaw told me you never wear your work cap into your banker's office, you put your go-to-town cap on. Now I never understood why we could have the same boots on, the same pants on, the same shirt on, and we could still smell like a pig, but once we put that go-to-town cap on everything was ok. I want you to throw your go-to-church cap away, and I want you to put your ministry cap on, and you let God plant you in a ministry. That ministry will not just be for a certain hour on a certain day, that ministry will blossom into a life lived for the glory of God, amen?