

The Assignments of God

One of the great discoveries that I made as a new Christian was that God worked on the principle of assignments, and this was a concept that I was familiar with from my job at that time since my occupation as a CPA consisted of going from one assignment to the next. God was able to teach me about the operation of the principle as well as use the principle to begin to teach me about the things of God. I quickly came to understand that the assignments of God were gifts from Him of great value and I was to treat them accordingly. Moreover, as time went by I began to understand that while they mirrored the principle of assignments in the natural realm, the assignments of God operated by the principles of spiritual law which were far less familiar to me than the principles I was accustomed to. It was therefore necessary that I study spiritual law in addition to the principles of assignments if God was going to properly train me.

I also realized that if this was an important tool that God used to develop his people, then I needed to understand it, and understanding of spiritual things comes from study and meditation of the Word of God concerning the subject and then allowing God to exercise me in the practical outworking of it. There was virtually no teaching I could find on the subject, because it runs directly contrary to what is taught in most churches and it is seen as contrary to principles of “successful” church development. However, God is far less interested in the development of a church organization than he is in the development of the people of the church.

God has purpose for his assignments, but more importantly he has purpose for every one of his people, and he uses assignments to develop that purpose. God has put in the DNA of every person the specific purpose that he created them for, and the pursuit of joy and fulfillment in life, and ultimately fulfillment of the call of God upon your life, is dependent upon the discovery and the pursuit of that call. The Apostle Paul, who wrote a significant part of the New Testament and who was used by God to present to all men revelation knowledge that no man previously had, focused his life on the passionate pursuit of the call and the assignment of God upon his life.

Acts 9:1-22 ... And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest. And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and

brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink. And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth. And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightiest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he was the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that he is the very Christ. This is primarily the story of God's assignment on the life of Paul at that time. Notice Paul's question in **vs. 6**: *what wilt thou have me to do?* In other words, what is your assignment for me? Notice the response of God: Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. This is a key principle of assignments that God uses. He begins with an instruction that is easy, simple and uncomplicated, but must be obeyed. He is looking to establish your obedience. The first instruction of an assignment is always a test to see if you will obey what God says to do, because the completion and fulfillment of an assignment will always require obedience to the Word of God. Sometimes that word is the logos of God and sometimes it is the rhema of God, but in any event it will require you to obey. If you will not obey that which is simple, easy and uncomplicated, you will never obey that which is difficult or unpleasant. The failure or unwillingness to obey will always block the successful completion of your assignment. I have found that many times people would never even enter into the assignments that I knew God had for them because they could not get past the first few simple instructions for whatever reason. The reasons could range from unbelief, or pride, or offense, through just the belief that God would not operate in the manner that we see, but they still prevented people from entering into and receiving the benefits of the assignments that he had for them. And that **always** results in the person not being developed in the manner God intended for them at that time.

Next we notice that Paul is now blind, and unable to see. His physical condition now mirrors his spiritual condition. He was always spiritually blind and unable to see, but now his physical condition causes him to call out to God. God assigns a disciple named Ananias to lay hands on him to receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost (Acts 9:17). When Ananias does so, immediately he receives both his natural vision and the ability to see into the realm of the spirit, or an impartation of spiritual vision that he did not previously have. Before Ananias came, Paul was praying to receive his sight, not

realizing he needed spiritual vision also. God gives him both natural and spiritual vision and *now God can show him the assignment*, which is in **Acts 9:15,16**: *he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. As a result, he is immediately transformed (Acts 9:20 ... And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.)* Here we see the operation of one of the objectives of the assignments of God, which is to develop and expand your spiritual vision. When you embrace your assignment it enhances spiritual vision. Assignments of God *require and provide* enhanced spiritual vision. It is a key principle of assignments of God.

Every man has a call of God upon his life, which basically should be the purpose of his life. That calling is inside of each man waiting for him to discover it, along with the measure of Christ that is deposited at salvation. Man is responsible to develop that measure of Christ deposited in him, to arise to the fullness of the stature of Christ in him, and to discover and fulfill the purpose of his life God put there. God uses his assignments to accomplish this end, and those assignments enhance spiritual vision so that man can see into the realm of the spirit. .

After the events discussed above, Paul was able to discover the specific assignment God had upon his life, and to understand it and pursue it. **Col 1:24- 27** *Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the Word of God; Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.* He was called to be an Apostle, and God had a specific purpose for him. In **Chapter 22** of the **Book of Acts**, Paul is telling the story of various assignments in his life that God used to prepare him to fulfill his calling and purpose. In that we see another key principle of assignments, that God has a plan for our lives to fulfill our calling, and he structures assignments to reveal and execute that plan. Paul was Jewish and trained in the law, so his heritage was critical, he was an eager and skilled student of the law, and he was recognized as zealous in the pursuit of his beliefs. God used all of these things, which were established in the assignments of his life, to bring him to the place where he could know and complete God's purpose for his life.

Look at **Gal 1:11-17...** *But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man, For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. For ye have heard of my conversion in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: And profited in the Jews' religion above many of my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the tradition of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.* Paul is telling the story of how God developed him in his understanding of the Word of God. This is another key principle of the assignments of God: God uses them for the purpose of developing

people in their understanding of the Word of God. God uses assignments for educational purposes, since he desires that his people not be ignorant of the law of God, of spiritual law, or of any other matter concerning him. We are told in **2 Tim 2:15** that we are to ...*Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.* There are spiritual realities sometimes better communicated through example than reading or studying. It is the desire of God that we have experiential realities with the Word of God. It is clearly not enough just to know the Word of God, we are to be*doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves Jas 1:22.* .

God certainly has other purposes in using assignments, and there are other principles that apply to them. Here are some of them:

The initiation of an assignment from God must necessarily be God's domain. The reason for an assignment, the timing of the assignment and the initiation of it are all determined by God. Since the assignments of God are the sovereign domain of God, they are originated by him as he desires and when he desires. Because God is not random, they cannot be determined at random. God must have a purpose for them and a reason to initiate an assignment. God is purposeful and specific and never changes. I personally believe that assignments are initiated by God when someone cries out to him, and most often when that cry is accompanied by a seed that has been sown that God has respect for. Even when someone cries out to God and mercy moves God's hand to act on their behalf, there was some form of seed sown. It may have been their own obedience to God, it may have been importunity (**see Luke 11:8**), or perhaps some specific seed sown to God, but in any event there was something that God had respect for that moved his hand. Notice **Gen 4:3,4,5**: *And in process of time, it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering, he had not respect.* God will always act when there is a seed sown with which he has respect to.

I remember a specific situation where I had a dream from the Lord about a person who worked for me, who was in covenant with me and my family. She was a faithful prayer person, extremely faithful to God, to me and my family. From the dream it was obvious that she was crying out to God about a situation in her own family that needed divine intervention from God, and God assigned my wife and I to handle the situation. I know that her cry was heard by God and he responded as a direct result of the fact that he had respect to her seeds of faithfulness and love for him and the people of God.

Our God is a relationship God, and everything he does is driven by relationships, either with him or with other people, people to people. As relationships are established and grown, trust and confidence enter the picture. These greatly facilitate the planting of seeds, whether of the Word of God, of love, of wisdom or knowledge or maturity, or of other things God wants to use to move in the lives of people.

In the example given above, God needed to assign someone to the job who had the necessary qualifications for the job. Qualifications for God's assignments are again his domain, but he is very purposeful in developing the gifts, talents and abilities of his people so he can use them to handle situations for him. It is an honor and privilege to

be used by God in an assignment, and it reflects his desire to develop up and shows his confidence in us.

God uses assignments to develop people in the ways of God. He uses assignments to take people to places where they can receive an impartation of spiritual things that they do not already have. This may involve enhancement of spiritual vision as was previously discussed, and sometimes it may involve the experiential reality of the ways of God. Once again, relationships are key elements in the assignments of God. As indicated previously, God does everything he does through relationship, either the relationship with him or relationships between people. God's assignments can be to people, places (geographical) or groups (families, ministries, businesses, etc.) but they will always involve people and relationships. This is evidenced by **Mt 22:35-40** .. *Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, on these two commandments hand all the law and the prophets.* These two commandments clearly deal with relationships.

For every assignment that God uses, there is a closing of that assignment. This can be the most difficult part of the assignment. Not only is it important to execute well but it is critical to close well. The way we close one assignment is a seed to how we open the next one, it reflects our ability to see how God does what he does through people, and reflects how well we allow God to use us to accomplish his purpose. Christian maturity involves the subordination of our will to his will, our purpose to his purpose and to that end assignments are about allowing him to use us to accomplish his purpose. There is always a test at the end of each assignment. These are some of the test questions:

1. Did you discover the purpose God had for you in the assignment? God is purposeful and always has purpose for an assignment. If you did not discover his purpose for you in the assignment, you did not pass the test. You should review and meditate on your assignments to make sure you know what God's purpose was for you. If it is important enough to God to give you an assignment, it should be important enough to you to discover what he wanted to accomplish with it.
2. Did you accomplish that purpose? I can discover his purpose but not accomplish it. While it is not as important to accomplish the purpose as to know what it is, I do want to accomplish what God has for me. The accomplishment of God's ultimate purpose for an assignment sometimes involves the will of other people and other circumstances and situations that I cannot control, but in so far as it depends upon me, I have determined that I will accomplish his purpose for me. Look at **1 Cor 3:6** ... *I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.* My assignment may be to plant, it may be to water, but it is always God who gives the increase.
3. Were you able to subordinate your desires to his? Jesus Christ, the Son of God, while walking the earth as a man, had to subordinate his own will to that of the Father. Note **Mt 26:36-44**... *Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, sit ye here while I go and pray yonder.*

And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. This is a powerful picture of subordinating his will and desires to that of the Father.

4. Did you allow yourself to become offended? Notice **Mark 6:3** .. *Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Judah, and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.* The people were offended with Jesus and therefore did not receive from him. This mirrors what happens in **Mark 4:17**....*when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.* Note that they were offended because there arose persecution. Offense is one of the most powerful weapons in the enemy's arsenal. If he can get you into offense you will not get all of the benefits of the season you are in, and it is a general rule of assignments that you are ready to move to a new season when you have exhausted the benefits of the current season and passed the test to be promoted. It has been my observation that when God moves me into an assignment, there is an anointing from Him to perform and fulfill the assignment that includes a covering of the eyes so that you do not see all of the imperfections and flaws of the person or persons that you are assigned to. It is like a veil over the eyes and it is part of God's equipping for me to fulfill that which he appointed me to do. However, when the assignment is over, the anointing and the veil is lifted and I can easily see that which I did not see before. In fact, the sin nature that is in man will cause him to focus on the failures, shortcomings, imperfections, and areas where a person is not "Christ like" that he did not even see before. Because they were previously hidden, they will be magnified and my vision and attention will be drawn to them before anything else. *This is a weapon of the enemy that will cause you to lose all the benefits of the assignment and the season you have just completed if you are not aware of this and on your spiritual guard against it.*
5. Was the character of Christ further formed in you? This is God's primary purpose with every man, that Christ would be formed in them. If you cannot identify the specific area of your character that God was dealing with, then you missed a key element of the assignment. Go through the assignment again until you not only know what God was dealing with in you, but you can explain it in detail.
6. Are you ready for your next assignment? Closing an assignment properly is critical to God's ability to develop us through further assignments. If you fail to close properly, you take the seed of failure from the current assignment to the next one, and pretty soon the new place you are in looks just like the old place

and you did not grow through the process. In order to prevent this from happening, God will have you repeat the nature of an assignment until you pass the test and are ready for promotion.

Other scriptures and thoughts

1 Samuel 22:1,2 ...*David therefore departed thence, and escaped to the cave Adullam: and when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him. And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about 400 men.* This is a picture of assignments. These men were assigned to David, and David was assigned as their leader. Notice that they were not developed, choice men with which to build an army, let alone a kingdom. It was David's assignment to teach them and mold them into warriors and citizens of the new kingdom he was to lead. He did not have much to work with but he completed his assignment in such a way that he defeated his enemies with them and along the way transformed some of them into the *mighty men* of **2 Sam 23:8-39**. Some of these men who started out as unlikely candidates for anything actually have their names recorded in the Bible for all eternity as men who established themselves as mighty men, and David had been assigned to train them up.

In this passage we see one of the key elements of God's purpose in assignments. He desires people to be trained up in the image and likeness of Christ, irrespective of what they started with, and to take them to the next step in development. Notice that all of the 400 men did not become mighty men, so the individual has a role to play as well in his development, but God will see to it that people get assigned to a place they can learn and be instructed. Further, his purpose in this case was also to develop David into a leader and a man able to teach others the things that he himself learned.

Finally, note that David became a great king and leader, and his nation a great power, although he did not have much talent to work with in creating the team of men under him. David was not fortunate in the men that were assigned to him, *he was skilled in training up what was assigned to him.* This is an important leadership principle: great leaders develop followers not based on what they had to start with, but with leadership and training skills that develop whatever you have to work with.

1 Cor 4:1,2 ... *Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.* God's objective for every person is that Christ would be fully formed in them, and that they develop into *Christians, (little Christs, the adult sons of God.)* However, the path to sonship always leads through the doorway of stewardship. A steward is one who is able to do exactly what he is instructed with the matters entrusted to his care. You do not have to share the heart of the one entrusting the matter to your care to be a steward, but you have to share that heart to be an adult son and joint heir with Christ. Faithful stewardship of the mysteries of the assignments of God is an absolute requirement to come to full status of sonship. This is spiritual law.

Suggestions for development in the assignments of God:

1. Go back over the significant people, places and situations of your life to identify where you think God gave you assignments. Meditate them to try to discover what God had for you in those assignments and what you got out of them. Ask the Holy Spirit to be your guide and helper in this process. Make notes. Keep a journal.
 2. Try to determine your present assignment. Even if you were completely unaware that God is dealing with you in an assignment, that does not mean you are not involved in one. God does what he does even if you are unaware of what he is doing or how he is doing it.
 3. Repent for failures of past assignments. Repentance is a required seed for change and for promotion to the next level. If you don't sow that seed you don't have a harvest. We have always had some element of failure in our past assignments, because we were human beings with sin natures. One of the most common failures that we need to repent of is allowing ourselves to get over into offense with others or with God for past failures, whether ours or theirs. The sin nature of man will always look to assign blame for failure, and in almost all cases to others. From offense it is a very short step to unforgiveness, which blocks the power of God from your life. Repentance restores relationship with God, and sometimes with others, and it is a required seed for change and for promotion to the next level. Sow it now, sow it often and sow it generously.
 4. Let God know you want him to use you in assignments and that you are ready for him to teach and develop you in this process. Let him know you are ready for progressively more important assignments and that you welcome the test that he has for you in this area. God does not need a test to determine where we are on the scale of Christ being formed in us, we need the test. We need the test to experientially establish our mastery of a principle, and to point up areas we need to work on. They should be embraced, not avoided.
- *Finally, do not forget that it is a privilege and an honor to be used by God in the area of assignments. It means he is doing something with you and that his attention is on you. It means he wants to develop you into something you are not, that he has confidence in you and loves you enough to not leave you where you are. To be used by God in an assignment that matters to him is one of the great joys and privileges of life.*