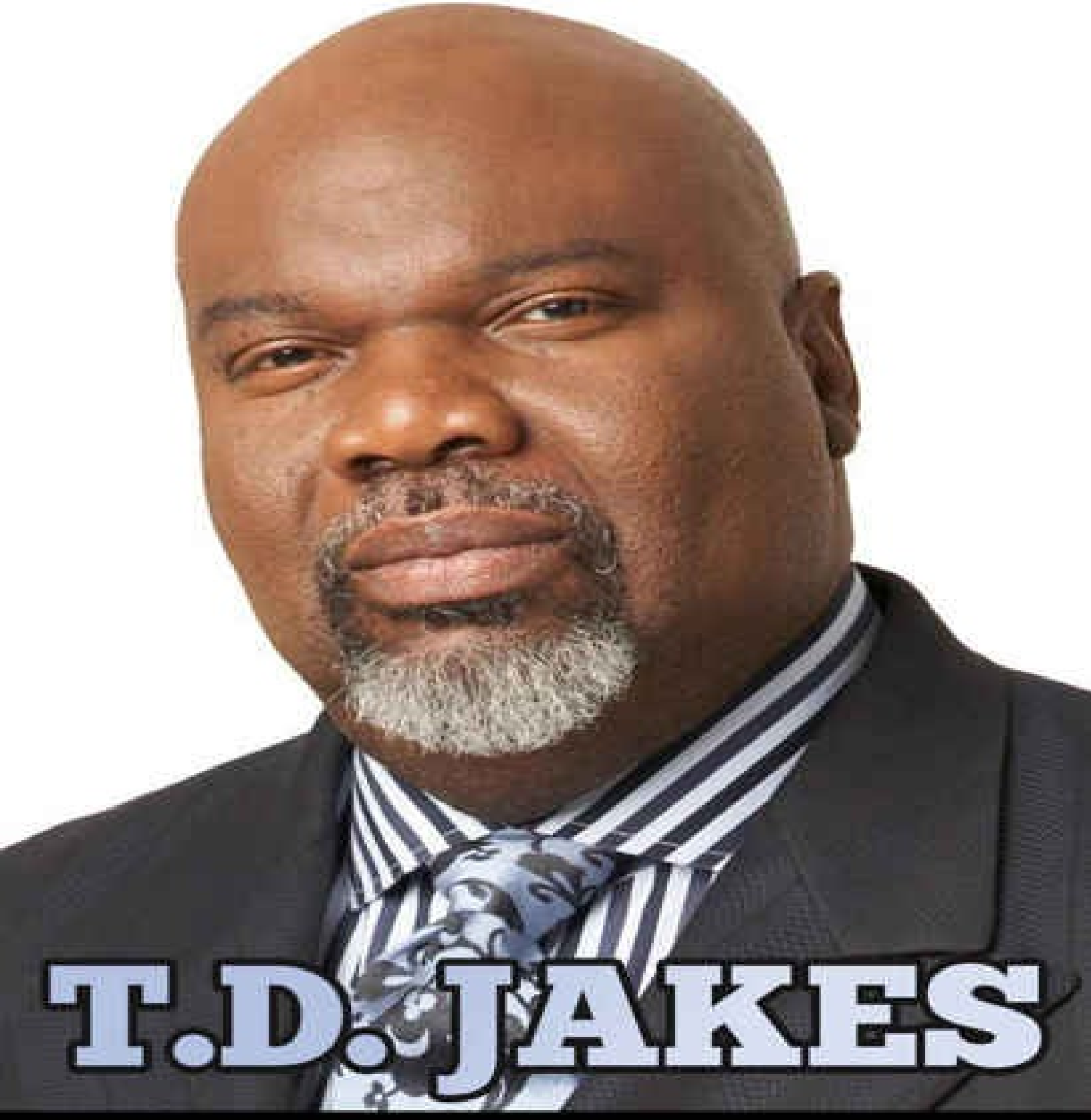
CHRIS JOHNSTON



T.D. JAKES

101 GREATEST LIFE LESSONS, INSPIRATION AND QUOTES FROM T.D. JAKES

T.D. Jakes:
101 Greatest Life Lessons, Inspiration and Quotes From T.D. Jakes

Table of contents

Introduction
Chapter 1 – T.D. Jakes' Lessons on Freedom
Chapter 2 – T. D. Jakes' Lessons on Passion and Purpose
Chapter 3 – T.D. Jakes' Lessons on Change
Chapter 4 – T.D. Jakes' Lessons on Faith
Chapter 5 – T.D. Jakes' Lessons on Love and Relationships
Conclusion

Introduction

Thomas Dexter Jakes spent his childhood in the church. Although his family were not pastors, he grew up very involved with his local Baptist churches in Vandalia, West Virginia.

Not until his teenage years, after having taken care of his father who had fallen ill with kidney disease, did he hear the true calling of the church.

He started preaching part-time before finally becoming the lead pastor of the Greater Emanuel Temple of Faith in Montgomery, West Virginia. From there, Jakes expanded his reach and opened the doors of his church to everyone.

Today, his non-denominational church in Dallas, Texas is host to more than 30,000 people, and T.D. Jakes' life lessons reach around the globe through his televised sermons, film appearances, and published novels.

Before becoming a full-time pastor, T.D. Jakes married his wife Serita Ann Jamison. Their marriage kick-started his career as a Christian leader. But trying to establish a career and a family at the same time is a courageously challenging endeavor.

In fact, Jakes worked as a ditch digger in order to fund his first church before he was able to finally rely on preaching as his sole source of income. Choosing to follow a path you know you deserve while, at the same time, knowing it will be the most difficult path you can take, requires a strong sense of faith and a strong sense of confidence.

But choosing that path is a journey all its own, and with his teachings, T.D. Jakes works to help others find their true path and realize their destiny.

T.D. Jakes' sermons cover all of life's lessons, from finding faith in yourself, finding faith in your God, dealing with change, falling in love, and most importantly, finding and pursuing your purpose in life.

Purpose and passion are at the center of T.D. Jakes' lessons, and many of the quotes found in this book cover anecdotes, faithful nods, favorite lines from his published works, and other motivational phrases to inspire you to uncover your own purpose.

Jakes has spent a majority of his career inspiring and encouraging faith and

courage in his followers, preaching that faith in oneself is just as important as having faith in one's God.

When it comes to your life's path, trusting in God means trusting in yourself, and building your faith comes from building relationships with both God and the people closest to you.

T.D. Jakes' unique perspective makes God available and accessible to anyone willing to listen, to pray, to try to be the person they are meant to be. The chapters in this book include lessons, quotes, and teachings on faith, purpose, change, and relationships.

Take these lessons and apply them to your daily struggles as you work to overcome the obstacles life tries to throw your way.

Chapter 1 – T.D. Jakes' Lessons on Freedom

T.D. Jakes non-denominational congregation opens their doors to members of all religions to practice their faith.

The freedom to practice what you believe, and to learn more about the God you trust in, is key to the lessons taught by Jakes.

Because without the freedom to pursue what you think is important, you will be unable to learn the things that will help you throughout your life. And what's the use of practicing a faith you aren't going to put to use?

" All over this nation, all over this world there are people going to church today and they say they are believers, but until you can take what you've been taught and bring it to the place you gave up--you will never be the radical believer that you need to be for the times in which we live. "

In fact, your freedom to choose to believe in God is a powerful tool that will influence how you interpret the rest of the lessons in this book. Will you trust in God to help you find your path?

Will you trust yourself enough to pursue your destiny? While you have the power and strength to walk the path, you also have the freedom to choose which path is yours to take.

T.D. Jakes' lessons on purpose and passion are in the following chapter, but before you walk with your purpose, you have to understand a fundamental core of Jakes' teachings:

" In order to make this journey, you have to make it without baggage. You can ' t carry loads of bags with weight on you in order to be free and Jesus gives you an invitation to come unto him. Now you have to come to

Him – you will not get rest from anybody else. If you go to anybody else you ’ re going to find more work. ”

Freedom is more than just the freedom to choose to believe or have faith. Your freedom means you are free of emotional burdens when the Lord is there to help you every step of the way.

You cannot pursue your passion if you are weighted down by a life that is less than extraordinary. T.D. Jakes teaches that each and every one of us is meant for greatness, even if we don’t know what that greatness could be yet.

But you can only pursue it when you finally free yourself up to do so. This takes courage and strength, but you have that already inside of you.

Jake teaches prayer as a way to tap into this strength, but also trusting in yourself enough to pursue this path is enough to give you strength.

A core of T.D. Jakes’ teachings is that you are just a strong as your God, maybe even stronger if you are brave enough to believe in yourself and ask God to help you when you need it.

“You are no stronger than your belief system.”

“It is possible for you to get a grip on the thing that used to have a grip on you. And instead of it controlling you, you are now controlling it.”

T.D. Jakes respects the freedom that God endowed humans with. Our freedom of choice and Free Will gives us the luxury of choosing to follow our own paths. But Jakes encourages his followers to keep that path close to God.

Allowing his love and grace to assist you on your life’s journey is the best possible thing you can do for yourself, especially if you are setting out on a new path that is rife with change and struggle.

You may be a strong person, but you cannot anticipate everything, and that is where God comes in. Jakes references God as the grace that shows up at the sign of trouble to give you the strength you need to persevere:

“Grace doesn't run from trouble--in fact it looks for trouble as a backdrop so that you can see how strong it

is.”

But God is also there throughout your entire journey, with a listening ear and a helping hand, as long as you are brave enough to ask for it. Because God is not there to baby you.

He is there to help you any way you need, but Jakes teaches that you need to take a proactive approach to your life and your destiny if you want to achieve it. God is the primary in your life, meaning you must be the secondary. Think of you and your God as a team that is out to conquer the world!

“ It is not about you--it's about what God is going to do in your life! ”

Chapter 2 – T. D. Jakes' Lessons on Passion and Purpose

> " Big ideas come from forward thinking people who challenge the norm, think outside the box, and invent the world they see inside rather than submitting to the limitations of current dilemmas. "

T.D. Jakes is an entrepreneur whose success is based on his hard work and unfaltering faith in God. Growing a congregation of 10 to over 10,000 is no easy feat, and coming to the conclusion that he was destined to find and educate these followers was also not an easy task for Jakes.

T.D. Jakes' family wanted him to inherit his father's janitorial business, and Jakes himself considered himself a musician and choir leader before uncovering his true purpose.

You'll never uncover your true purpose if you don't venture out into the world and start experiencing things. T.D. Jakes recommends finding what inspires you, what makes you happy, and forging a path from there. Your passion will give you a place to start looking for your purpose:

> " If you can't figure out your purpose, figure out your passion. For your passion will lead you right into your purpose."

Maybe you're not trying to find your purpose in life just yet. Maybe you're simply trying to get your footing.

Eking out your place in this world can be a very tedious and disheartening

experience, especially when unforeseen difficulties arise that force you onto an unwanted path.

Jakes is familiar with the route of temptation and the mistakes that it causes people to make. Temptation may not necessarily be a bad thing, but more of a distraction that keeps you from your true purpose.

And while you may not be sure of what your purpose may be, Jakes recommends uncovering what you are passionate about. These passions can be a clue as to what your true purpose really is.

“ Unfortunately, many of us often spend our lives doing what we were trained to do. Some do what they were asked to do. And most of us do what others need us to do. And all the while, we wonder why the feeling of fulfillment eludes us. ”

“ When you don ’ t become fixated on winning the prize or appearing successful, and instead pursue your passions, then you will discover the fulfillment that comes from living by instinct. ”

Think about what inspires you, what motivates you, and imagine yourself doing these things on a daily basis. Helping others may be your forte, still others may find that art is their true calling.

Whatever fills you with joy, let this happiness inspire you to pursue more and more paths that parallel this passion. What you learn about yourself on these paths and through these journeys are the key to uncovering your purpose.

Jakes reminds us that our faith is important in this revelation, and your purpose will be as God intended:

“ God has invested entirely too much in you for you to be comfortable in anything less than you were created to

be. ”

According to T.D. Jakes, everyone is created to serve a specific function in society and in heaven.

And while the range of these purposes is broad, covering everything from miniscule jobs and services to wide-scale and famous acts, everyone is responsible for playing their part as best they can.

But how do you discover the part you were meant to play? You can start with inspiration, with what makes you happy, but how can you be sure you aren’t being misled or distracted?

There are a few tricks Jakes offers up to help you find your true purpose, and many of his tips are much easier than you think:

1. Don’t avoid the things that drive you crazy. You may hate them, they may drive you up the wall, but try taking a closer look at that which grinds your gears and find out why you are so averse to it.

Is there a personal bias? An unhappy memory? Whatever it could be, uncovering it will teach you more about yourself and your motivations, which will get you closer to your purpose.

2. Don’t let anyone else influence you. You can be *inspired* by others – friends, family, pastors, motivational speakers, but do not allow these people to live your life for you.

The advice they offer should be taken just as that – advice. They do not speak facts. They do not know what song truly sings your heart. Take the advice of your parents and let it inspire you to stay motivated, but continue to pursue the path that you want as it will lead you to your purpose:

3. Do take time to meditate on your life’s journey. Your life is your own, and the moments you’ve lived have influenced the person

you’re becoming.

It will continue to influence you throughout your lifetime, so respect yourself by taking time to meditate on these moments. Take time for prayer, and take time to reflect on all you have learned thus far. Meditation is a great way to line up your life and figure out the next path to take, which is key to uncovering your purpose.

Along with these 3 helpful hints, T.D. Jakes also encourages his followers to take a proactive approach to their purpose. Just as you are held responsible for your actions, you are the only one responsible for your purpose.

And as you are inspired by others, you cannot let them shoulder the responsibility for your life. This is your destiny, and no one can walk the path but you. Even God, who is always present for support, will force you to uncover your path on your own:

“Listen, God can’t bless what you won’t do. You haven’t been taught correctly. Prosperity doesn’t just come from giving an offering. It’s good to be a giver. But you must also be a thinker, a planner, and a worker.”

“Others can inspire you, but ultimately the only thing that empowers you is what lies within you and learning how to better utilize what you’ve been given.”

“To those of us who often procrastinate on the decision we feel intimidated by lack of education or any area of weakness. I relieve you with this statement: It is not how much you know that arms you with the tools of great decision making, but rather how much you ask. Ask

questions.”

Taking this active role in uncovering your divine purpose will not only help you find your path, it will also give you the strength to walk your path.

Taking responsibility for your choices and your actions will instill you in a strong sense of both confidence and self-esteem, which will make walking the path of your purpose much easier to do.

Having faith in God and faith in yourself are key to T.D. Jakes’ teachings on purpose, because without confidence in yourself, you cannot have true faith in God. And without God, you will not be able to find your true passion:

“ Sometimes what makes us insecure and vulnerable becomes the fuel we need to be overachievers. The antidote for a snakebite is made from the poison, and the thing that made you go backward is the same force that will push you forward. ”

“ Face the giants in your life, slay them, and move on. Do not be daunted by the mistakes and failures in your life. ”

Remember, each mistake you make is a learning experience, and Jakes reminds us that God is there to help us learn and overcome each obstacle life throws your way.

Don’t look at your mistakes as sins, but rather misjudgments that sent you down the wrong path. There is nothing to say you have to stay on that path forever. Rather, rethink your life and consider the plan God has for you.

He isn’t going to let you stray far from your destined purpose as long as you have faith in Him.

Ask for advice through prayer if you feel yourself veering off your proposed path, and never be afraid to own up to your mistakes and ask for forgiveness.

“ When God has a plan for your life, I don ’ t care how much you murmur and complain and kick and fuss and scream and yell. When you know that God has a plan for your life, He got you tied up. I serve a God who will … tie you up while your temper is raging, tie you up when your ambition is out of control. Sometimes, God will tie you up ‘ til the time is right. Nothing will work, your money won ’ t work, your career won ’ t work, the boyfriend will leave, the house will sell, cause when God has you tied up, He ’ s not gonnalet you get away. He ’ ll say, ‘ Be still and see the salvation of the Lord ’ . ”

As you work toward your passion and uncover your purpose, God will be there every step of the way.

T. D. Jakes preaches that you and only you have the power to pursue your purpose, and God will be there to not only help you find this purpose, but to also stay on the right path that will lead you to the salvation and safety you seek.

Nothing is more comforting than finding your purpose and falling into the career, the relationship, and/or the lifestyle you know you deserve.

T.D. Jakes call this your destiny, and finding your true destiny is the secret to a happy and fulfilled life. Whenever you feel as if the path is becoming too difficult, remember these closing quotes and find that strength you know you have:

“Accept the process. Your blessing is already ready. It’s already done. God is getting you ready for the blessing, preparing you for your destiny.”

“You can’t let other people determine how far you are willing to go to reach Destiny because it’s simply not

their call. They don’t get it, so don’t worry about them!”

Chapter 3 – T.D. Jakes' Lessons on Change

When someone asks you your thoughts on change, how would you respond? Do you embrace the changes life brings? Do you meet the challenges head on? Or do you prefer the comfort of routine?

Changes can bring on both negative and positive experiences, and T.D. Jakes teaches that each change is an opportunity to grow, learning more about yourself and strengthening your relationship with your faith and with God.

But approaching change, meeting it head-on without fear, is a lesson that can be difficult to learn, especially when you are afraid of change.

> "You [can] leave the cage. The transition into the jungle will definitely be challenging. You take a few steps forward and a few back. You stumble and fall and get back on your feet. Such is the way we learn to lean forward and keep stumbling toward success."

T.D. Jakes teaches this life lesson on change by pointing out that there will definitely be challenges, and you will definitely stumble on your way toward success.

The path of your purpose (as discussed in Chapter 2) is not an easy one, and the changes that happen to you combined with the changes you make happen, will make that path even harder. But that does not mean you won't be able to do it!

The faith you have in yourself and your own abilities and talents, and the faith you have in God to protect you and lead you down the righteous path will help you overcome these challenges and get you back on your feet once again after you stumble.

“Instincts under pressure crush the carbon of conformity and create diamonds. Each new season of life offers to train us for the next season if we pay attention and adapt.”

Instincts are an integral part of T.D. Jakes’ life lessons and sermons. He teaches that our instincts are what define our character and inspire us to pursue our purpose, overcome challenges, and greet change with a happy and confident smile.

He also teaches that you cannot deny your instincts. Your instincts are what helped you survive this long, and they will not let you down as long as you continue to listen to them.

Next time you are faced with a difficult or unexpected change in your life, remember what T.D. Jakes teaches you about your instincts:

“Our human instincts transcend physical survival and include our unique gifting and purpose. When we unleash our instincts to guide us, we discover the special ways we’ve been equipped, educated, and enlightened to fulfill our destiny. Your instincts are more resourceful, resilient, and responsive than you probably realize.”

“When you’re living by instinct, then you will naturally enhance everything and everyone around you. In other words, success will come naturally! When both your intellect and instincts are aligned, then producing the fruits of your labors brings satisfaction beyond measure.”

These instincts of ours, what T.D. Jakes calls our “human instincts” are given to us by God, and they give us the tools we need to pursue our path and overcome

obstacles, temptation, and sin.

Most importantly, your instincts will encourage you to take a proactive approach to the changes you come across every day.

Even the most miniscule changes can sometimes cause extreme anxiety, but when you listen to yourself and trust your faith, you can approach these changes and mold them into something that will benefit you.

You will learn something new, uncover a hidden strength, or simply gain a new experience that can help you help someone else that is experiencing a similar dilemma. Whenever you trust your instincts and take the initiative, you are building yourself up higher and better than you were yesterday.

"When we are placed in a set of circumstances where we have to take initiative and be creative, some of us find it hard to transition. Those people have been trained not to think but to obey orders. They are slaves to the training, unconsciously pledging allegiance to the average. Mentally they recite from the manual of mediocrity."

Understanding Jakes' lessons on change means understanding that mediocrity is never acceptable. If you never change then you never grow, and without growth you can never hope to be anything more than average.

T.D. Jakes' teaches that God wants us to be anything more than average. You are meant to be extraordinary! And you can only hope to be extraordinary if accept the changes in your life and go through with them without complaint.

Does this mean change is easy? Of course not. Jakes reminds us that growth is impossible without a challenge. How can you expect to learn something new if everything is easy? An easy life breeds complacency.

You will never question something that is easy. Rather, you will simply go through the motions without understanding your motivations or reasoning behind it.

But, when life throws you a curveball, when unexpected change puts a hole in your plans, or when a challenge bulks up and blocks your path, you start to ask questions, you start to take an active role in your life, and you start to mold these changes and these challenges into something that will help you grow as a person:

“Hardship can humble you, but it cannot break you unless you let it. Your instinct for survival will see you through if you’re attuned to its frequency. Instinct will find a temporary stopgap without ever taking its sights off your larger goals. There’s no greater way to hone your instincts than to overcome adversity.”

“Nobody likes hard times, but it’s the unpleasant experiences that are often the catalysts to build the character required for our destiny.”

“God lets you go through challenges to give you credibility in a certain area and the ability to help someone else out of a situation that you once were in.”

As you face these challenges that change brings, remember to keep your eyes on the future. One of T.D. Jakes’ most important life lessons is not allowing yourself to be burdened by the past.

The wounds of the past are part of the past, and while you can learn valuable lessons from those experiences, it is unhealthy to hold on to the past so tightly.

Facing the future means facing the changes it brings, and letting go of the past means accepting these changes, whatever may come.

“People tend to glorify the past, especially when they are struggling with the future.”

“When you begin to realize that your past does not necessarily dictate the outcome of your future, then you can release the hurt. It is impossible to inhale new air until you exhale the old.”

Finally, T.D. Jakes’ last lesson on change comes not from the challenges or from the difficulties and stress change can bring, but rather he fills his sermons with tips on watching out for the peaceful times.

Just because you are content does not mean changes are not happening. It also doesn’t mean that change is a threat.

Jakes wants you to recognize these peaceful times as gifts, and to keep your eyes, ears, and hearts open for more possible life lessons that can arise even during the most pleasant days:

“ Even if you love your current job and don ’ t work in a hostile environment, you can still learn how to better equip yourself for when conflict and trials do come around. And believe me, sooner or later they always come around! For the devil can ’ t stand for God ’ s people to advance His causes without a fight. So if your present workplace isn ’ t hostile, then thank the Lord for this wonderful respite and use it to train yourself for when you will be sitting across the boardroom from a devil in disguise. ”

Always take each experience, new and old, as an opportunity to learn, grow, and prepare yourself against the sin, the temptation, and the hardships that all life brings.

As you pursue your purpose and overcome the challenges and changes along

your path, you will grow into a better person that can take charge and heed each challenge as an integral part of their growth process.

T.D. Jakes teaches that your instincts will help you meet these challenges head-on, but your faith also plays an important role. T.D. Jakes ’ lessons on Faith are discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 4 – T.D. Jakes' Lessons on Faith

" There is a higher power, a higher influence, a God who rules and reigns and controls circumstances and situations that are beyond your area and realm of authority. "

T.D. Jakes' history as a pastor is defined by his unwavering faith. His faith not only in God but also in his congregation to listen and heed God's word inspires all those he comes into contact with.

Expanding his church from a mere 10 followers to nearly 30,000 is due partly to his faith, and you too can gain these abilities by having faith – faith in yourself, faith in your support group, and faith in your God.

What makes T.D. Jakes' church so popular is its non-denominational direction. There is no exact religion or rule in The Potter's House.

Rather, anyone and everyone who has faith is welcome to visit, join, and participate. Just as Jesus accepted everyone, T.D. Jakes accepts all those who have faith, even those who are having doubts and difficulties with their faith and are seeking guidance.

He teaches that it does not matter where you celebrate your faith – it simply matters that you have faith:

" It does matter where you go to church, it does matter where you worship, it does matter where you lift your head, itdoes matter where you cry out to God. "

" Faith is the substance of whatever it is that we hope for. The important thing is that we teach that faith is connected to good works and responsibility. "

How do you get faith? Is it something that you sign up for? Is it something you're born with? No. T.D. Jakes teaches that faith is the ultimate investment in yourself.

Faith comes in the form of trust, trusting yourself and trusting your God to help you trust yourself. If you need a tangible representation of faith, then you are not a faithful person.

Because having faith means not needing tangible proof to believe in yourself and your God. When you have faith, you accept yourself with unwavering truth. There is no doubt in your mind when you have faith.

Think back on the first few chapters of this book. Do you have faith when you pursue your purpose? Does change challenge your faith?

Questions and doubts will always arise and challenge your faith, but remember that Jakes encourages questions because it means you are learning and taking a proactive approach to your faith.

Because just like you, faith is evolving, and your faith needs a challenge (or two) to help you learn more about yourself. When you find yourself questioning your faith, Jakes recommends prayer as a means to meditate on the challenge and uncover your true feelings:

> " Prayer will get you out of a pinch; prayer will get you out of a crisis; prayer will get you out of your dilemma; prayer will get you out of your trouble. "

Jakes also has a helpful tip for helping you recognize when your faith may be faltering. Sometimes we can lose faith without even realizing it. Life happens fast, and it can be overwhelming.

You may lose yourself in the daily hustle and bustle of your reality, and as each day gets harder and harder, you may find your faith shrinking and shrinking without even realizing it. In order to recognize a lapse in faith, here is what T.D. Jakes wants you to look out for:

> "…Whenever you face all of your problems and you trust

only your plans to get you out, it is a sign that your faith is deteriorating."

This does not mean that your plans are useless. Rather, Jakes wants you to trust yourself and your higher power to face your problems.

Your faith should inspire your plans, not the other way around. Create plans and fulfill them because you have faith in their success.

Don't rely on your plans to build your faith. Faith cannot come from something. Faith is its own entity and it can only come from within yourself.

T.D. Jakes teaches that faith is the only true ticket to heaven. Think on the quote earlier in the chapter: "Faith is connected to good works and responsibility".

What better way to reach heaven than by taking responsibility for your actions and only pursuing good deeds?

Only pursue those deeds which benefit others as well as yourself in all ways, including emotional, physical, and spiritual. Having faith and sharing your faith is a great way to inspire others and pave your way to heaven.

Because good deeds and are all and good, but if you fulfill this actions without faith, they are empty. Only when you take action inspired by faith can you truly consider yourself faithful.

"If the road to hell is paved with good intentions, the road to heaven is paved with relentless faith."

T.D. Jakes' final and most important lesson on faith is reminding us to recognize faith as our own saving grace. Without faith, we cannot hope to have the strength to overcome the challenges that are there to greet us as soon as we open the door.

Your faith is what carries you past obstacles, helps you stand when you stumble, and gives you the strength to take the lessons you've learned and share them

with the world.

Everyone has a part of their past they're not proud of, but when you have faith, you have the ability to overcome that challenge and grow past that point of no return:

"Come hell or high water you will never take me back to the place I was before. I have been through too much to let life whoop me again. My faith is stronger than it's ever been, my mind is more tenacious than it's ever been, [and] my soul is more absolute."

Chapter 5 – T.D. Jakes' Lessons on Love and Relationships

"A whole woman will always attract a whole man. And when they touch, they will fuse to create a whole marriage. Ultimately, when the time is right, they will produce whole children."

T.D. Jakes' advice on relationships is probably his most famous life lesson. His marriage to Serita for over thirty years, his experience as a pastor, and his education as a theologist has given him great insight into what makes relationships work.

Trust, communication, and faith are all integral to successful relationships, romantic and otherwise, but when it comes to romance, T.D. Jakes teaches that understanding, courage, and forgiveness are key to having a fulfilled, romantic relationship.

In order to be fully involved with another person, you need to understand them fully. Because only with understanding can you hope to accept someone else and have them accept you.

Understanding someone means understanding their motivations, where they come from, and all that they have learned. Each of these will influence their actions and how they treat you, and vice versa.

You have to share parts of yourself and your desires in order for your significant other to understand you. When you understand someone, you will have a much easier time communicating.

When you understand where someone is coming from, you can better overcome your differences. And when you understand what is motivating someone, you can reach compromises that are beneficial for both parties.

“Love embraces the totality of the other person. It is impossible to completely and effectively love someone without being included in that other person’s history. Our history has made us who we are. The images, scars, and victories that we live with have shaped us into the people we have become. We will never know who a person is until we understand where they have been. The secret of being transformed from a vulnerable victim to a victorious, loving person is found in the ability to open your past to someone responsible enough to share your weaknesses and pains. “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Gal. 6:2). You don’t have to keep reliving it. You can release it.”

Courage is another necessity for healthy relationships. Just as you need courage to pursue your purpose and find faith, you need courage to love not only others but also yourself.

In fact, loving yourself is probably one of the most difficult and courageous things you can do. Because once you love yourself, you make it possible for other people to love and accept you as well.

Love means no longer being afraid of your quirks or your flaws; love means accepting all of your past mistakes and the uncertainty of the future.

T.D. Jakes discusses courage and strength when he talks about relationships, and he focuses this lesson primarily on women.

In a society where male opinion is unfortunately the dominating one, some women seek male approval and mistake it for love.

Jakes makes it clear that no one needs to seek approval from anyone but God, and if you are pursuing a relationship only for approval, then it is the wrong relationship for you.

No one needs to approve of you but yourself, and taking the courage to accept, approve of, and love yourself is key to having healthy, mature relationships.

“Some young ladies are so starved for male approval that what should be a normal attraction to men is accelerated into an obsessive need for male affirmation. Tragically, these dear ladies allow themselves to be devoured in the arms of men who have neither regard not respect for them as people.”

Save yourself the pain and anguish of heartbreak and failure by taking the courage to love yourself.

This may take some time, some prayer, and some meditation to achieve, but once you love yourself and respect yourself, you will notice that good things and great people will come into your life.

When you exude self-confidence and proclaim a confidence in your faith, you will start attracting the people that want to and deserve to be with you. T.D. Jakes makes it very clear that wanting somebody and loving somebody are two totally different things.

Wanting someone is a carnal instinct, something unfulfilling, while love is a communion between two people that nurtures and grows with them. When you seek love, seek someone you want to be with simply because they are themselves.

And you should only be with people who want you for who you are, flaws and all. When you seek love in the form of position, power, and money, you are missing out on the key point of Jakes ’ lesson:

“Nobody wants somebody who wants them for what they have or the position they're in – you want somebody who wants you for you. In case it all goes crazy and it all turns to dust, I want somebody who loves me in the welfare line, eating gumbo, eating fish, black-eyed peas and rice.

I want somebody that loves me. God wants you to love him, not his cars, not his house, not his blessing – love Him."

T.D. Jakes also recognizes forgiveness as a key aspect of healthy relationships. Again, this aspect applies to you personally as well. Forgiving others can be much easier than forgiving yourself, especially if you hold yourself under the weight of sin. Remember, everyone makes mistakes.

Did you take the time to learn from this mistake? Do you understand what motivated you to pursue that wrongful path or action? If so, then you learned from the situation.

If you can gain knowledge and experience from each of your mistakes, then you are on the right path. You can start forgiving yourself.

When you have the power to forgive yourself, you have the power to love yourself. That is why Jakes argues that forgiveness is a powerful tool in a relationship:

"As we forge deeper into this issue of forgiveness, we must be prepared to open up and discuss things that bother us before they escalate to a crisis level. We must examine our struggles with forgiveness in which there are not overt offenses or blatant betrayals. I'm convinced that seeds of resentment take root in the silent frustrations that never get discussed. Other people cannot read our minds… and that is why we have tongues to speak."

Communication, understanding, trust, courage, faith, and forgiveness are all key lessons to learn when T.D. Jakes starts talking about relationships.

When you maintain open communication, understanding and forgiveness are much easier tasks to tackle. Trust is maintained when communication lines are open, but starting that conversation takes courage.

Always be brave when it comes to your relationships. Defend yourself and your needs when talking with the people you love, and always respect their wants and needs when the people you love approach you.

T.D. Jakes advises that you always make time for the people you love so that these lessons stay fresh in your mind. Always be aware of how communication is working with your loved ones so you can keep an open mind and an open heart through all situations

Conclusion

T.D. Jakes is continuing to teach these life lessons at his Potter's House church in Dallas, Texas. His 30,000 congregation members travel from all over the globe to hear his sermons and celebrate his calling.

The events he hosts across the country – which are open to everyone of all faiths – help practitioners and pastors alike learn more about themselves, their God, and their faith.

Because the way you interact with your God is key to how well you will succeed when it comes to pursuing your destiny.

If you want to pursue a faith as strong as T.D. Jakes', the lessons in this book are a great place to start. Learning all you can about yourself, the way you approach change, and the way you treat your relationships are all integral to finding your path and walking it.

Learning about yourself will prepare you for how you will react to all life throws your way, and learning about your faith will teach you when to take your time, when to ask questions, and when to put your trust in the Lord.

Your path and your passion are of the single most importance, and Jakes stresses the importance of uncovering your passion early so you can dedicate your like to pursuing it.

Because pursuing your passion is wrought with hardship, trials, obstacles, and maybe even heartbreak.

But success never comes to those who wait, and T.D. Jakes teaches that a proactive approach to your life is the only way to truly succeed. God will not wait around for you, and you should not wait around for God.

Start the conversation and tell Him what you want to do, and he will help you as long as you are brave enough to ask.