

## **Hosea 10:12**

### ***“Fertile Ground”***

#### **Intro.**

- I. **Luke 1:35** – Mary was *overshadowed* (to invest with supernatural influence) by the power of the Highest.
  - A. *She was pure physically and spiritually, resulting in God’s favor (divine grace) & a high standing with God.*
  - B. *Because of this, she was prepared to be used by God for His glory, even the miraculous birth of His Son, Jesus Christ. God saw her as a worthy investment of His supernatural influence to be poured into.*
    - 1) **Are we in a right standing with God that would draw His favor & desire to invest in our lives, whether for the miraculous or the mundane?**
    - 2) ***How*** does this happen? ***How do we ensure we are fertile ground for God?***
      - a) Plant God’s standards.
      - b) Harvest God’s crops.
      - c) Plow our hardened heart.
      - d) Pursue the Lord.
      - e) Patiently await God’s prompting.

#### **Body**

- I. **Hosea 10:12 – Fertile ground for God.**
  - A. **Plant God’s standards: V.12 – “*Sow for yourselves righteousness*”**
    - 1) Sow (Heb.) = to plant; to scatter seed

2) Righteousness (Heb.) = legal *and* relational; static *and* dynamic – what is right & just *in God's eyes*; embodying all that God expects of His people.

a) Many sow everything but righteousness in their lives & then wonder why God's blessings are absent from their life – v.1-2.

b) You *reap* (Gr = gather; receive) what you sow, *regardless of intent or interpretations*– Gal. 6:7-8; Is. 3:10-11; Luke 6:38.

3) For yourselves = nobody else can do it for you.

a) *If you want to reap God's blessings in your life, don't be dependent on someone else to invoke it = live faithfully to Him. God wants your faithfulness.*

i) Ex. 8:8, 28; 9:28 – Pharaoh to Moses, to stop the plagues.

ii) Num. 21:7 – Israel to Moses to remove the serpents.

iii) 1 Sam. 7:8; 12:19 – Israel to Samuel to stop God's wrath.

iv) Jer. 37:3; 42:2, 20 – Leaders to Jeremiah for intercession & mercy.

v) Acts 18:24 – Simon the sorcerer to Peter for forgiveness of his sins.

## B. Harvest God's crops: V.12 – “Reap in mercy”

1) Results of sowing righteousness: when we do what is right *in God's eyes*, we invoke His mercies & blessings!

a) Ps. 106:3; Prov. 11:18; Is. 32:17; Gal. 6:7-9; James 3:18

## C. Plow our hardened heart: V.12 – “Break up your fallow ground.”

1) Break up = to till or plow

2) *Your* fallow ground = stop focusing on the changes everyone else needs to make and plow the fields of your own heart – Deut. 4:9; 1 Tim. 4:16

3) Fallow = untilled; hardened

a) Jer. 4:3-4; Deut. 10:16; Matt. 13:1-9; Rom. 2:28-29

b) **How do we break up the fallow ground of our heart?**

i) Stop debating God's word; accept it for what it says – James 1:21-25.

ii) Stop defending sinful behavior: acknowledge it for what it is – Ps. 32:5; 51:1-4; 1 John 1:9.

iii) Stop deflecting God's conviction: submit & repent.

**D. Pursue the Lord: V.12 – “For it is time to seek the Lord” – Rom. 13:11-14**

1) *Israel had been seeking everything else; they had progressively fallen away from God & into spiritual adultery with the idols of the surrounding nations – James 1:12-16.*

2) *When we drift away from God, our hearts become hardened. When our hearts are hardened, we do not, cannot & will not seek God – Is. 59:1-2; Ezekiel 3:7; Acts 7:51; Rom. 8:5-8*

3) *What did you seek after most in 2020? Will 2021 be a repeat?*

**E. Patiently await God's prompting: v.12 – “Till He comes and rains righteousness on you.”**

1) *A farmer doesn't wait until the threat of rain to start planting crops, preparing the soil, etc.; he does it ahead of time. Even in the midst of drought, he ensures everything is ready to receive the nourishment it so desperately needs to grow.*

2) *So it is spiritually: we can't wait to prepare our hearts for God's rains of blessing & nourishment; if we do it'll be too late; we'll miss out & like crops, will dry up & wither away.*

3) *Even when we're not seeing the expected promise of God's blessing & nurturing, we know He is faithful & will give us what we need,*

*but we cannot wait; we have to prepare our hearts ahead of time = we have to be ready to receive God's word, message, plan, purpose, direction...just like Mary, so that when it arrives, we'll readily accept it:*

a) **Luke 1:38** – ***“Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.”***