

# The Plow

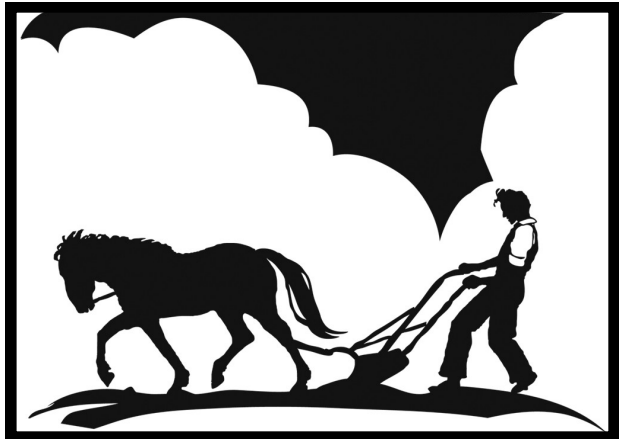
*Part Nine in a Series*

## Introduction

We are now on our ninth month of comparing farming techniques to the process of Christ being formed in us. It is amazing how creation testifies of God's heart for His harvest! God's imprint is upon everything He created, declaring that His eternal purpose in all things is to bring forth an increase of His Son. We read in Romans 8:19 that all creation itself is groaning for the manifestation of the sons of God. The true harvest this earth was created to bring forth was an increase of Christ. We are the earthen vessels specifically formed to be filled with Jesus, and we are the field in which Christ is meant to be planted and fruitful in. Our Father is the faithful husbandman who plows, plants, cultivates, and watches over His garden continually for the harvest of His Son through us. When our Father planted His Seed, He did so by allowing His only begotten, beloved Son to fall into the ground and die a horrible death. It cost Him everything to plant His Son into our field. And yet the Father knew that His Seed would never be able to grow unto fruitfulness if that field was not cultivated. And so we are learning to yield to the Great Farmer, our Father, and allow Him to deal with us in a manner that will truly help Jesus to grow in us.

## What Is Plowing?

Plowing is the first course of action a farmer enforces upon his field in order to eventually bring forth a harvest. Plowing occurs before the first seed is sown. The farmer begins by cutting through the tough soil with a tool known as a plow. The plow is positioned against the hardened ground and begins to slice through, turn over, and soften ground, which is otherwise not ready to receive the seed. Plowing the field is the first step in preparing the land to bring forth fruit. Before this time the soil is untouched by the farmer and has been living in a state of "barren independence", which has left it full of weeds, rocks, and wild growth. Plowing is only the very beginning of a field



on its journey to fruitfulness. Later there will come many more steps such as sowing, watering, fertilizing, and eventually processing the harvest itself in reaping, threshing, and other preparations for distribution.

## Plowing With Purpose

The purpose of plowing is to prepare for planting. The ground must be made ready to properly receive the seed. Ground that is hard, rocky, shallow, and full of weeds may receive a seed into it but will never sustain that seed to maturity. Proper planting cannot occur unless the ground has been prepared. Plowing is to make the ground ready for planting. Plowing is not to punish the ground for being full of weeds and hard, or to make it feel like a failure because it is not the seed! Plowing is the farmer helping the ground to be ready to fully embrace the seed and eventually bring forth fruit. In this sense, plowing is the mercy of the farmer to help the ground.

The farmer is never satisfied with simply plowing and planting. The farmer does these things because he desires fruitfulness. May our hearts truly open to see that God our Father is never fully satisfied that we

simply “get saved” while refusing to allow Christ to be formed in us and become fruitful through us. Our Father sowed the Seed of His Son into us at new birth with the hope of eventually receiving the harvest of His increase through us. Our Father deals with our hearts to help that Seed which is Christ grow. There is no virtue or glory in being “dealt with” over and over again. The bible defines glory in Col. 1:27 as “Christ in you”. Once again, the purpose and goal is the harvest. May we never become satisfied and stop until we have brought forth more of Jesus. We may feel spiritual because God dealt with our heart in a certain area, but truly spirituality IS CHRIST.

## Plowing Is Not Fun

Let us consider what the ground of an unplowed field might experience on the first day of its plowing. The field has been resting peacefully in the sun, enjoying an uninterrupted tranquil existence of simply lying fallow. Nothing has disturbed or even touched it for a long time. Then all of a sudden, the field feels the vibrations of a tractor coming near. As the tractor gets closer the soil sees blades shredding the field apart everywhere it goes. All of sudden the plow is upon it and a complete upheaval and slicing pierces and turns the land in ways it has never known. Weeds are uprooted, rocks are broke loose, and the soil is opened, overturned, and softened in areas that have never been touched before. The soil feels devastated. What has it done to deserve such treatment? What could be the purpose of such upheaval and pain? Has the farmer gone insane?



Without a doubt; having the plow of God thrash through our life is not a pleasant experience. Once that tractor is finished plowing a field, every part of that piece of land is overturned, uprooted, and broken open. Yet the farmer plows in hope (I Cor. 9:10) knowing that this field is on its way to fruitfulness. The ground feels pain and upheaval, but the farmer feels anticipation for this is where he has chosen to plant his precious seed.

God’s plowing is not meant to condemn, punish or curse us. We most certainly will feel susceptible to feelings of rejection, failure, or fear in the midst of the kind of upheaval such plowing can bring. But this is where we must know God’s purpose. This is not a time of rejection but of preparation. ALL our punishment, rejection and condemnation was borne for us when Jesus took our penalty at Calvary. God no longer deals with us on that basis. BECAUSE God has accepted us in Christ and relates to us as our Father, He will tirelessly work to bring us into the true spirit of His family by forming Christ in us.

We may count our offense with the farmer for hammering the plow into our ground as something godly and just. Our thought may be, “If God loved me, He would not plow into me like that”. Yet, if God truly and eternally loves us, He will do whatever it takes in this lifetime to bring forth His Son in us. In order to bring forth a fruitful harvest of Christ through us, the field of our hearts must be prepared to cultivate the Seed of Christ within.

## Let The Plow Go Deep

The deeper the farmer plows into the ground, the greater the soil will be able to absorb moisture during times of intense heat. In order for the ground to be able to properly nourish the seed through the times of drought, heat, and other pressures, the plow must cut painfully deep into the ground. The entire purpose of the farmer and the ground is to eventually bring forth fruit, so there will be no satisfaction if the ground endures a shallow plowing, receives the proper seed, but loses it all in a season of draught. We must remember this when we feel the plow going extremely deep into our soil. If we press past the pain into God's purpose, we will rejoice that there will be a depth forged into our hearts that will be as healthy soil to contain God's Seed/Son through times of difficulty and trial.

We must also remember that plowing is not just a one-time event. Farmers plow their land every year, even so Christians require more than one tilling to maintain fruitfulness. There are seasons where plowing is necessary to cultivate more openness to Christ being formed in new areas.

## Job, A Plowed Field

Job was a man who was like a field that belonged to God, but was harvesting the wrong seed. Job loved the Lord and was as faithful as he knew how to be. Job was a pillar of righteousness in the eyes of all men and in his own eyes. Yet God, the Father and the Farmer, knew that Job was functioning from his own righteousness rather than bringing forth the fruit of His Son. In order for Job to become as ground ready to embrace the true Seed and allow God Himself to be His righteousness and life, he needed to undergo a very deep plowing experience.

Job was aware of his outward actions and how holy "he appeared". But Job had serious issues that lay way beneath the surface of his earth. These deep core issues could not be addressed without sufficient pressure and breaking. The plowing and breaking of Job was never the goal, only part of the process. Job's inward parts, even his very foundation needed to be exposed past the point of self-justification. There was a deeper communion and fellowship that God desired to have with Job that could only come through His Son (Seed) being Job's life. This relationship would never be actualized without this process.

Trials ran over Job's life like the blades of a plow until indignation over "unjust circumstances" finally gave way to acknowledging the deeper poison of Job's own reactions. Job's earth needed to be overturned, exposing hidden motives and intents until he could see beyond his actions into the spirit of his attitudes. Under the blade of the plow and heat of the fire, bad attitudes and self-righteousness rose to the surface like dross. Job was like a plowed field, broken open and turned over to reveal the true attitudes of his being that were hidden way beneath the surface.

And so Job was being moved from the obedience and faithfulness of his own personal service to the spirit and heart of true son-ship (Gal. 4:1-6). As the plow burrowed deeper into his own reactions and inward motivations, Job became confronted with the true issue which concerned his "nature", and not how many things he did right. How could God cultivate His Seed (Christ) in a man like Job when Job had such a confidence in his own goodness? Our will – power can many times hold on to a righteousness that is blameless according to the law, but we can never maintain a pure attitude in trials like Job experienced. It is in this way and through such trials that we are found lacking, falling short of true glory (Col. 1:27). We watch as our attitudes become tainted towards the "worthless counselors" that breathe down our neck night and day. God Himself is spoken to with pride and even bitterness. Where is that spotless servant who would rather die

than curse God? The winepress has squeezed out what is in the core of this man and all men... bitter water, which is the nature of self that can never be the sweet Son. The pressing circumstances become like the plow that unearths our true motives, until we are broken enough to receive Christ as our only righteousness and Life.

Finally Job's eyes were opened to see and receive Christ as the only righteous life (Job 42:5-6). Now God's Seed would be the source of fruitfulness, and not Job's personal goodness. Job would have never been open to the revelation of Christ if the plow had not come to make ready his heart.

## Yielding To The Plow

We must ask ourselves, "Do I receive every blow from the farmer's plow or the refiner's fire as a mere dealing, hurtful circumstance or a form of punishment? Am I offended with the very things that could truly help me bring forth Christ? Have I come to the true purpose of God's heart and do I realize His love and care to help me truly be a vessel of His Life?". When we see God's heart and His purpose, we will no longer wrestle with thoughts that misinterpret the goodness of God as He "farms our land".

There is a tenacity of the Holy Spirit and the Father to remain faithfully with us until His end is truly reached. God's purpose is not to expose and break, but to form Christ in us in the deepest and fullest measure possible. This end is so sweet to the heart of the Father and so wonderful for us, that we count all things lightly as compared to the eternal weight of glory at the end (II Cor. 4:15-18 ). As we see the plow coming, may our hearts see beyond the temporal trial into the eternal glory and cry out "Maranatha... come forth Lord Jesus" rather than begging God to stop plowing. May the grace of God sustain us, strengthen us, and keep us as we yield to our faithful Father as He farms the land of our hearts.

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**Ow! The Plow... it hurts my dirt!  
The blades of this plow need to stop now.**

**They thrash and slice, wrecking my life.  
Such upheaval and pain could never bring gain!**

**But as I look at my ground all tilled and undone,  
I see mostly Me and very little of the Son.  
The Seed has been sown, but He has not grown.**

**So I turn to the Father and as I look in His eyes,  
I see this has been done to help bring forth His Son.**

**My focus then turns, my heart now yearns.  
May God's Harvest come! More of the Son!**