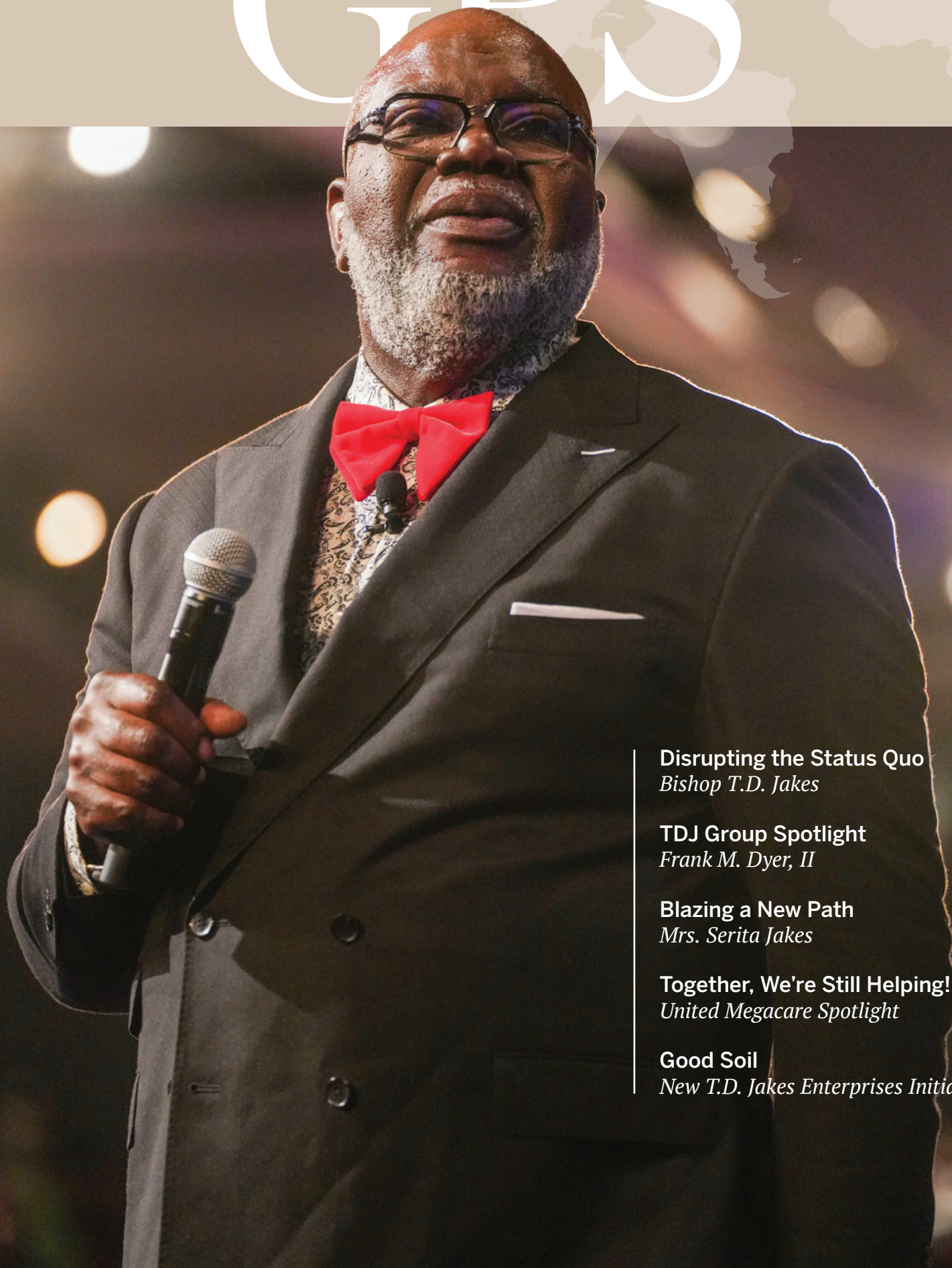


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Disrupting the Status Quo
Bishop T.D. Jakes

TDJ Group Spotlight
Frank M. Dyer, II

Blazing a New Path
Mrs. Serita Jakes

Together, We're Still Helping!
United Megacare Spotlight

Good Soil
New T.D. Jakes Enterprises Initiative

Disrupting the Status Quo

by **BISHOP T.D. JAKES**



When praying about what the Lord wanted me to focus on in my next book project, I found myself thinking about the unknown social contract we all sign, whether we realize it or not. No matter whether our choice is conscious or not, people are trained to fit in, not stand out from everyone else. No matter if it's in our jobs, churches, or schools, we usually work to blend in with those around us.

In some arenas, the ability to fit in can mean a promotion or being accepted in a certain circle. So we behave, dress, talk, and walk in ways that don't disrupt the status quo. Yet our history books are full of brave souls who did the opposite, people who challenged norms, stood out as exceptional, and made world-shifting discoveries in the face of opposition.

As much as we are indebted to the faith heroes of the past, God wants to do a significant work in this age through us. If you're going to transform your life,

be your best self, and stand out as a living testimony of God's glory, it begins with challenging your mindset. I wrote "Disruptive Thinking" to challenge the thought patterns keeping you from believing you can live better despite your flaws, environment, circumstances, or insecurities.

When we neglect to step outside of our comfort zone, our lives begin to reflect our predominant choice patterns. We may be born looking like our parents, but we all die looking like our decisions.

While our cinema screens are filled with tales of superheroes, our world desperately needs us to be agents of change. It's your time to embrace a way of thinking that shakes up the norm. God is calling you to be uncomfortable in new arenas. Running with the herd is not for you.

I want to rekindle the fire the Holy Spirit put inside of you that says you can have

a better life. You are more than the story your circumstances are trying to tell.

When you engage in disruptive thinking, you will see opportunities where others only see roadblocks. Transformative success is rooted in seeing our problems from a different perspective.

It took me many years before I could see the gold that was buried beneath my pain because I was used to seeing it from a carnal perspective. It was only when God showed me how to convert the attacks, the pain, and the past to purpose and

You are more than the story your circumstances are trying to tell.

power that I began to see challenges through a spiritual lens.

We have a choice to either scream at the darkness or light a candle and trust God to help us move forward. Disruptive thinking is all about being solution-oriented, goal-motivated, and radical enough to go where others refuse to venture. This is how champions are formed.

I believe the Lord wants to lead you off

the well-worn path to show you glorious things only obvious to those willing to disrupt their normal way of doing life. The first step is to make peace with who you are. Embracing your God-given uniqueness frees you to operate beyond the limiting barriers the world tries to impose on you.

Being a disruptive thinker means not compromising who God made you to be for the sake of other people's acceptance. You're not called to make peace settlements with their flawed expectations and views of who you are. In my own life, I had to draw a line between what success meant to me and what others thought.

You are called to do the same. This season can usher you into the best days of your life. I pray the Spirit of God gives you a heart that's willing to disrupt your comfort and lay hold of a revolutionary way of thinking! Serita and I agree in faith that you will experience pioneering progress in Jesus' name. Amen. 🙌

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TDJ Group Spotlight:

FRANK M. DYER, II, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER



TEAM SPOTLIGHT

Over the years, I've learned wisdom can come from blessed experiences or through the trials from which God delivers us. Last year, I was diagnosed with Myelodysplastic Syndrome (MDS), and I want to share my journey to healing with you.

MDS is a disorder affecting the blood cells and is known as preleukemia. Blood diseases like anemia, lymphoma, and sickle cell impact millions worldwide.

As I started my search for a donor, I began to face a formidable reality of how difficult the search would be. Due to a glaring lack of diversity in the donor pool, African Americans have a significantly harder time finding a match. For example, there are 8 million people in the blood donor database, yet only 6% of those are people of color.

While stem cells cure many blood diseases, a sick person needs a donor with the same ethnic background and similar genetics. As a result, only 30% of African Americans are healed from blood diseases compared to roughly 80% of white Americans. This is why education is critical if we are going to win the fight to be well.

When the doctors diagnosed me, I was grateful to be surrounded by family, prayer warriors, and Bishop and Mrs. Serita Jakes. Bishop gave me a word, saying, "You're not done. God has much for you to do still." That helped me stay strong in faith as I continued the fight for my life.

The Lord has provided, as my youngest daughter's bone marrow DNA is a perfect match for my stem cell transfusion. Though she was a premie at birth, she has become God's instrument to save my life.

After three months of the initial treatment in preparation for my stem cell donation, my condition miraculously stabilized, putting me into remission. I may have found my donor, but this fight is far from over. There are many people, just like me, who are still in dire need, and I am determined to spread the word and encourage everyone to register to become a donor to save a life.

I'm so thankful to share my story with our *GPS* partners. If you'd like to learn more about the fight against blood cancer, visit **dkms.org**.



Sincerely, Serita

Blazing a New Path

The Bible instructs mature women to guide and be examples for the younger generation of women (Titus 2:3-5). I, too, had this as a young girl, and I often get overwhelmed thinking of the women who showed me what grace, womanhood, and self-love looked like. That's why my life's greatest passion is helping young girls do the same as they find their place as women of God.

To that end, our team has worked tirelessly to create the *Distinctively Debutantes* program to pour wisdom into the next generation of forward-thinking women through mentoring and life coaching.

Since 1997, girls between the ages of 10 and 17 have been edified based on the foundational pillars of faith, etiquette, chastity, finances, and human relationships to build on a rich legacy of community and fostering the growth and readiness of women.

We believe in the reach-and-teach approach, so each year, for seven months, trained mentors work closely with the debutantes. All enrollees must maintain a B or higher academic standing, have a membership at a local church, and demonstrate outstanding character, leadership, dependability, and service in school and/or the community. Their training culmi-

nates with a formal graduation and royal cotillion.

... my life's greatest passion is helping young girls ... find their place as women of God.

Since the program's inception, nearly 1,000 girls have graduated and gone on to become educators, doctors, CEOs, lawyers, and more.

I couldn't be more thankful for the generous support of our GPS partners who make this possible. If you'd like more information about this mentorship program, visit **tphdistinctivelydebs.com** today to learn how you can impart grace, poise, confidence, and godly femininity to future generations of women.

Sincerely,

Together, We're Still Helping!

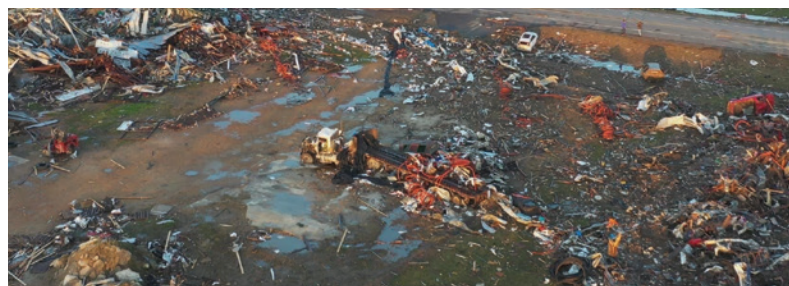
When deadly tornados struck southwest Mississippi, claiming dozens of lives, causing millions of dollars in damages, and leaving many homeless, the gifts of *GPS* partners like you helped provide:

- temporary housing
- home repairs
- crisis counseling
- medical supplies
- distribution of food and personal items

We are thankful for our *GPS* partners whose generosity gave precious families an opportunity to rebuild their lives after suffering much loss. The grace of God is spreading because of people like you!



**You Are Changing the
Lives of Families and
Generations to Come.**



GOOD SOIL



Good Soil is a new initiative by *T.D. Jakes Enterprises* that plans to increase generational wealth and employment by supporting and nurturing Black entrepreneurs. Our goal is to become industry leaders in the development of one million entrepreneurs over the next decade.

Launching the day before this year's *International Leadership Summit*, *Good Soil* held an intensive,

one-day event designed to help rising business owners develop and scale their enterprises with interactive sessions focusing on:

- forming strategic partnerships
- breaking through in various forms of business
- accessing capital
- marketing and advertising in a crowded media landscape



For more information, visit:
goodsoilmovement.com
and discover how you can be a part of an initiative that ushers in the next wave of entrepreneurs and businesses.



UPCOMING EVENTS



I was humbled and honored to see the fruits of this year's *International Leadership Summit (ILS)*. Whether you attended and felt charged and changed by what you learned, or you were not able to attend, let's make plans to meet back up next year for our 2024 *ILS* in Dallas, Texas. Don't miss your moment to boldly move forward. Register now at **ThisIsILS.org**.

Your Conference Checklist:

- Register online at **ThisIsILS.org**.
- Book your hotel.
- Book your flight.
- RSVP for the special *GPS* partner event.
- Need assistance? Call 1-800-BISHOP-2.

GET EQUIPPED



Thank you. Your faithful partnership is taking the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the uttermost parts of the world. Together, we can impact the globe and accomplish marvelous things to the glory of God.



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