

# **FOUND WANTING**

WHEN WHAT YOU GET  
IS NOT WHAT YOU WANT

**AUGUST 13, 2017**

**WONDERFUL MERCY CHURCH**

# AN IMPORTANT WORD

- Cultivate: to prepare and work on (land) in order to raise crops [dictionary.com]



# 1 CORINTHIANS 3:6-9

I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow.<sup>7</sup> So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.<sup>8</sup> The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor.<sup>9</sup> For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building.

# ENCOURAGEMENT FROM THE LORD

- “Cultivate. Work the field. Trust me with the results.”
- “I have lovely surprises for you. The work I’m doing in you as you are co-laboring with me is altogether beautiful.”



# WHEN WHAT YOU GET IS NOT WHAT YOU WANT

- Platitude: a trite or banal remark, especially one expressed as if it were original or significant
- Empty religious platitudes really mean: “I don’t take your struggles seriously, and I’m not prepared to muster the relational or spiritual depth to share them with you.”
- The Father *never* resorts to platitudes; he *always* takes our struggles seriously, *always* goes to depths to share them with us

# WHEN WHAT YOU GET IS NOT WHAT YOU WANT

- I sat with this question with the Father: what do you do when what you get is not what you want?
- I couldn't have been more surprised by the answer I heard: "What makes you think it's a good idea to get what you want?"

# CONSUMERISM CULTURE

- The most powerful word in advertising? YOU, and for a reason—it works. “Let’s talk about you. You are interesting, and you deserve the best...”
- This has infected our church culture in North America (think of how comfortable we are with the idea of “church shopping”)

# CONSUMERISM CULTURE

- “This family innocently approaches our church as consumers, and I, in turn, respond as a provider of religious goods. It is my job to present our various ‘products’ in such a way that this family will be inclined to choose us over the religious offerings of the other churches in town. There is a weirdness to this.” [Kent Carlson, *Renovation of the Church* (Kindle Locations 129-131), InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.]



# WE WANT WHAT WE WANT

- “...how can we help people deal with the fact that their problems in life and character—even ‘in church’—are primarily caused by living to get what they want?” [Dallas Willard, introduction to *Renovation of the Church* (Kindle locations 65-67), InterVarsity Press, ©2013.]
- Paradox: we can be cultivating the field the Father has called us to and be undone by our expectation that the net result will be that we’ll get what we want

# THE SOUL OF THE MATTER

- Consumerism—the raging desire to always get what we want—is cannibalizing our souls, and “a cadaver soul impacts everything.” [Tony Kriz, *Neighbors and Wise Men: Sacred Encounters in a Portland Pub and Other Unexpected Places*, p. xx, Thomas Nelson. Kindle Edition.]
- The soul “is the life-center of the human being.” [Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart*, p. 199]
- What matters most for how life goes, for how we do life, is what we are on the inside; maybe that’s why getting what we want isn’t best thing for us

# WHEN WE DON'T GET WHAT WE WANT

“It is spiritually formative to be dissatisfied and unable to resolve that dissatisfaction. In fact, there is hardly a better catalyst for transformation than to not get what we want. Sitting in the dissatisfaction, without frantically trying to resolve it, can do wonders for a human soul.

# WHEN WE DON'T GET WHAT WE WANT

“When we don’t get what we want, we are more acutely aware of eternity. We are more apt to remember God. We learn what it really means to trust him. We remember the bigger story. When we don’t get what we want, we have to deal with our inner restlessness. We have to face ourselves and our addictions. We have to deal with the various ‘medications’ we use to cope with life.” [Kent Carlson, *Renovation of the Church*, InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.]

# CULTIVATE

## A SECOND DEFINITION

“to bestow attention, care, and labor upon, with a view to valuable returns”

[Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary (1913)]



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