

CULTIVATE

A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT

AUGUST 6, 2017

WONDERFUL MERCY CHURCH

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- 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.⁷ So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.⁸ The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor.⁹ For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building.

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- Note where Paul draws our attention: *“So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow”* [v. 7]
- Paul isn't suggesting that what we do does not matter, nor that, in the Father's eyes, He is everything and we are nothing

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- Paul's statement is a relative one: from the macro view of ultimate reality, God is the first and the last and everything in between
- Paul wants us to understand that as vital as our part is, we can claim no credit for anything that results from our efforts at cultivating

MATTHEW 11:28-30

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

THE PRESSURE FOR RESULTS

- The pressure we put on ourselves, the weight of this responsibility for results, causes us to become, in our disappointment and impatience, accusers—of others, ourselves, and God
- We instinctively look for causality; we naturally want to assign blame for meager or missing results

UNEXPECTED

- In the midst of cultivating, as we work toward a desired result, something's happening we aren't looking for: something in us
- Paul tells us, as we are working alongside the Father, "You are God's field" [1 Cor. 3:9]
- We are workers in the field, eager for a kingdom harvest, and simultaneously we are the field God is cultivating

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- **Isaiah 65:22b** NIV

...my chosen ones will long enjoy the works of their hands.

- **Galatians 6:9** NIV

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

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.”



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