

The Cultivation Principle: Partnership

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, May 28th

The Bible reveals Spiritual principles to help guide us to God and His plans. Passion (Open Heart) Principle (Col. 3:16-24); Purpose (Open Hand) Principle (Ex. 3,4); Path (Open Door) Principle (Rev. 3:7-13); Preparation (Soil/Seed) Principle (Mt 13:3-30) And The Cultivation Principle. (Mt 13; 1 Cor 3:9) These principles are timeless and universal.

3000 years ago Solomon wrote about them in Proverbs 4:20-27.

In the parables of the soil (soul) and seed, Jesus made it clear that the seed could only produce fruit on the “good ground”. What makes some soil and soul “good” (*kalos* : beautiful, valuable) while other soil is tangled or rocky and therefore unproductive? The soil was the same in all 4 categories!

The only difference between them was the amount of Cultivation that was invested in each.

Before Mother’s day we discussed that the three distinct dimensions of Cultivation include: Preparing (Hos. 10:12); Protecting: Foster/improve growth by labor, care or study (Eph. 5:29); And Partnering: to seek the society of or cultivate friendships. (Gen 2:18; Ecc. 4:7-12)

This morning I’d like to discuss “The Partnership of Cultivation”.

God invites us to “Partner” with Him. 1 Cor 3:9

We’re not in this alone! John 14:18 *“I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.”*
Mt. 11:28,29; Jn 15:1-5

1. In our own “gardens” (lives). *“Ye are God’s Husbandry”*

We are laboring with God in our own “garden” (Soul); We are expected to “cultivate it”.

A. God partners with us. 1 Cor 3:9 *“Laborers together with God”*

- 1) God’s part is to **Reveal** (weeds, rocks, roots, Rot! {Sin}) Heb 12:1,2; 1 Jn 1:5,6; Ps 139:23-24
a) Our Part is to **Respond** (*Recognize, Repent, Realign and/or Relinquish*) Mt 16:24-26; Lk 14:33-35
- 2) God’s part is to **Convict (Reprove)**; Jn 16:8 *“he will reprove the world of sin, ... righteousness, judgment.”*
a) Our Part is to **Cooperate**: (Repent) 1 Jn 1:9 *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us...”*
(1) Repent (metanoēō) comes from meta (to change) and noeo (your mind, thinking).
(2) This is mandatory for any substantial “change” to last.
- 3) God’s Part is to **Direct** Ps 32:8 *“I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.”* Jn 10:27 *“My sheep hear my voice...”*
a) Our part is to **Decide to follow** (Submit) (See Pr. 3:5,6) Jn 10:27b *“my sheep...follow me”*
- 4) God’s Part is to **Lead**, Ps 139:24 *“lead me in the way everlasting”*
a) Our Part is to **Follow** (Ps 23); **Feed** (Heb 5:12-14); and **Weed**. (Heb 12:1,2; 2 Tim. 2:19-21)
- 5) God’s Part is to **Keep (Protect)**, (Jn 17:12; Jude 24)
a) Our Part is to **Cultivate** (Jer. 4:3) and **Pursue** (Phil. 3:14)

B. God partners with others to work in our lives

- 1) Partners in **Ministry!** 1 Cor 3:5,6, *“Who then is Paul... and ... Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I’ve planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.
9 “We are laborers together with God”*
Eccl 4:7-12 vs 9: *“Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor...
10 ... but woe to him that is alone when he falls...”*

a) This goes beyond “professional Preachers” (Heb 3:12-13; 10:23-25)

2) Partners in ***Marriage!*** Gen 2:18 “It is not good that the man should be alone;

a) **I will make him an help meet (‘ezer) for him.”** (From ‘āzar’: to surround, protect, aid, a ***variant!***)
If we always agreed, we couldn’t aid & protect!

b) Satan sought (and still seeks) to divide this partnership. Gen. 3:1-6

(1) Where was Adam during this conversation? (1 Tim 2:14)

(2) Sin makes this easier for him. Notice The curse (consequence) of Eve’s choice. Gen 3:16

“thy desire (Teshûqâ: from shûq: to run or reach after or over!) shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule (māshal’: govern) over thee.”

This same phrase is repeated by God in Gen. 4:6,7 to warn Cain of Satan and sin.

c) This tension is ***inevitable***

(1) We’re all inherently (and occasionally) selfish. (See Romans 6 and 7)

(2) Paul acknowledges this pressure in 1 Cor 7:28, reminding us that marriage will produce:

“trouble (thlipsis: pressure) in the flesh” and commands the married couple to focus on each other’s pleasure instead of their own. (Vs 33-34)

d) This tension is ***intentional!***

(1) Marriage is the best platform for growth because it exposes our own natural (carnal) selfishness. And requires Growth and Grace to overcome. (Jms 4:5-8)

e) This tension is ***navigable!*** God’s solution is to let him “mashal” each of us.

Eph. 5:18-33 vs 21 ***“submitting yourselves one to another in the fear (phobos) of God.”***

1 Pt 3:1-7 ***“dwell...according to knowledge, giving honor...as being heirs together of the grace of life...”***

Conclusion:

Tomorrow is Memorial Day, initiated during the not so “civil” war.

After this (and every war/conflict) we should shift our focus from hurt to healing.

Joel 2 opens with judgement (vs 1-11); pleads for repentance (vs 12-17); and concludes with the promise of restoration (18-32) 25 ***“I will restore to you the years that the locust have eaten...”***

And pour out my Spirit” (vs 28)

God wants to work with/through you to restore hope and purpose! Jer 29:11

Application

1 Cor 3:9 ***“We are laborers together with God ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building”***

➤ Vs 10-13 remind us that what we grow and/or build out of our lives will be tested;

➤ Faithfulness/Fruitfulness / usefulness will be rewarded. (vs 14);

➤ Selfishness, shallowness will cost us in the end. (vs 15)

Vs 16 ***“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”***

Since God has sealed us with His Holy Spirit, Will you purpose to Partner with Him, As well as those He seeks to use to cultivate (prepare) you for the life (and eternity) that Jesus designed and desires for you?

Jn 10:10 ***“The thief cometh...to steal...kill...destroy.***

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly!”