

Principles for a Productive Life.

"We are God's husbandry" (garden) 1 Cor 3:9

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, June 12th

REFLECTION: God uses many different analogies in His word to communicate his ways. One recurring analogy is that of a garden. In John 15 Jesus compares himself to a vine and us to the branches and clearly states *"I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit..."* vs 16

Last week I asked you to consider your life and relationships in the context of a back yard garden.

If you knew that your daily diet would depend on your backyard garden:

What would you plant and what steps would you take to ensure a good harvest?

Principles for a Productive "Garden" (A Fruitful Life) Jn 10:10

The Principle of Planning!

Author Stephen Covey identified 7 habits that highly successful people shared.

(They were Proactive, Began with an "end" in view, Put "first things" first; prioritized understanding over being understood, focused on synergy and took the time to "sharpen the saw".

The one thing that each of these qualities have in common is they involve intentional Planning!

"The key is not to prioritize your schedule, But to schedule your priorities!" Stephen Covey

Pr 15:22 *"Without counsel (sôd: deliberation) purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established." (qûm: confirmed) Successful projects are built at least twice!*

1. God has plans for you! Jer. 29:11 *"I know the thoughts (maḥashābâ': plan) that I think (ḥāshab: weave together) toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."* Ro 8:28,29

A. He uses Growing things to illustrate this. Isaiah 61:1-3

- 1) Notice How He finds us: *"to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound"*
- 2) What He does for us: vs 3 *"To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;"*
- 3) Why He does this for us: 3 *"that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified."*

B. Notice God's Plans for his vineyard. Is 5:1-4 *"My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: he fenced it, and gathered out the stones and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein..."*

Since *"We're laborers together with God..."* (1 Cor 3:9)

2. How Much Of Your "Yard" (life) Will You Dedicate To God's Garden?

A. Most recognize the value of prioritizing key relationships in our lives,

but Few make enough room for them to grow healthy. Eph. 5:15-17 *"walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. (poneros: diseased 1Jn 5:19)*

Wherefore be not unwise, But understanding what the will (thel'ema: desire, purpose) of the Lord is."

B. Most Prioritize (make too much room for) the wrong things!

- 1) We get caught in the thick of "thin things". *The "wood, hay, stubble" of 1Cor 3:10-15*

Ph 3:18,19 *"many walk... Whose end is destruction, (apolo: ruin, waste) whose God is their belly, whose glory is their shame, who mind (froneo: regard) earthly things."* (Epi'geios: superimposed soil!)

2) Worldly weeds choke out eternal fruit. *These are the "weights" of Heb. 12:1*

It's OK to have flowers or "toys" in your yard, but if your life depended on your garden, then it should take priority in size and location over all of the other "things" that tend to take up space. (Mk 4:19)

C. God considers dedicating our lives to Him Our *"Reasonable (logikos) service"* Ro. 12:1

Doing so enables us to:

- 1) Recognize/ Resist the world's Diseased value system. 1 Jn 2:16; 5:19 *"evil, wicked"* (poneros: diseased) Ro. 12:2 *"Be not conformed to (syschēmatiz'ō: fashioned, conditioned like) to this world"*
- 2) Renovate (weeding/reseeding) our soul with Divine Truth. Ro. 12:2 *"but be ye transformed (metamorphoo: meta {with} and morphoō: {fashioned, transformed} see 1 Cor 3:9 "with God") by the renewing (anakai'nōsis: renovating; {remove weeds/lies, replanting with truth}) of your mind"* (nous: thought, feeling, will)
- 3) Recognize the Desirable value of eternity. Vs 3 *"that ye may prove (dokimazo: discern, approve) what is that good, (agathos: beneficial) and acceptable (euar'estos: fully agreeable) and perfect (telios: complete, mature) will of God"* (thelema: purpose, plan; see Rev 4:11)

Conclusion:

Another word for "Planning" is to "Consider".

Ps 64:9 *"declare the work of God; ... wisely consider of his doing"*

Isaiah 1:3 *"The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but ... my people doth not consider."*

(Bîn: distinguish, understand)

Since we're *"laborers together with God"*, Take some time to consider:

1. God's Plans for You! (Jer. 29:11; Ro. 8:28,29)

2. Your Plans for God! *How Much Of Your "Yard" (life) will You Dedicate To God's Garden?*

Application:

Since Gal. 6:7 reminds us *"whatsoever you sow, that shall ye also reap"*

1) What are you "planning to plant" (*In the hope of a healthy, lasting legacy*)?

Spiritually? (*God, eternity*) Physically? (*Physical/Mental Health*) Relationally? (*Family, Friends*)

Emotionally? (*Where/ How is your heart?*) E. Practically: (*Work, Retirement*)

2) How much "room" are you dedicating to each of these priorities? Mt 6:33

"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God (proton: 1st in order, time, importance) and His righteousness;

And all these things shall be added unto you"

Failing to Plan for the inevitable/critical Is inevitably Planning to Fail!

Remember the Rich Farmer in Luke 12:16-21? Vs 20 "But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?"

Vs 21 "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God!"

Mt. 6:21 *"for where your treasure is, there shall thy heart be also."*