

Planting and Watering in God's Field

1 Cor 3:5-9

1 Corinthians 3:4-5

They are only ministers

God gives to every man

Faith

Growth

Victory

Fruit

Ministers: diakonia – servants, instruments, not the source.

Menial common worker ... free or slave.

Often used--table waiter

Foolish to build a movement or monument around waiters or bus boys.

Waiters of tables whose main purpose is to serve food of God's Word.

You're doing us no favor by putting us up on pedestals.

Your glory is misplaced.

Mac: ... The world cannot see beyond itself. But Christians know God...the Creator, the Sustainer, the Savior, the Lord of the universe, and the Source of all things. He alone is worthy of honor. We are but His servants, His instruments....

even as the Lord gave to every man? God gave to each of us specific gift, passion, talent, temperament.

Qualities of fruitful ministry.

1. Diversity.

1 Corinthians 3:6

Different tools, instruments, people needed to have great harvest

Ministry: Planters, waterers, plowers, harvesters

Different motivational gifts

Different ministries

Why church grow? People using gifts in body of Christ.

All have passion for souls.

but God gave the increase.

God is total source of all increase and growth.

2. Humility.

1 Corinthians 3:7

Why compare teachers, preachers, statistics?

Lenski: Men are nothing, and God is not only something but as the contrast implies, He is everything.

Wiersbe: *It is not the human laborers that produce the harvest, but the Lord of the harvest.*

Any work or labor of ministry apart from blessing and power of God--failure!

Who we are.

Ps 139:14 Fearfully and wonderfully made

Eph 1:6 Accepted in beloved.

Job 4:19 tenants of houses made with clay..... crushed as easily as the moth.

Job 25:6 ... *worm*

Isaiah 40:22 ...*grasshoppers*;

Psalms 49:12 ...: *he is like the beasts that perish.*

Psalms 103:14 ...*dust.*

Psalms 103:15 ...*as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.....it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.*

...but God that giveth the increase.

Prayer and praise!

Emphasis on prayer.

Praise: desire to bring glory and honor and praise to God

Growth--God has given increase!

Increase and prayer go hand in hand.

Proud people don't pray...praise.

3. Unity (of heart and purpose)

1 Corinthians 3:8

Team work!

Paul, Apollos, Peter not competing.

Two kinds of fruit.

1. Fruit of Christian. Jn 15:8

2. Fruit of Spirit. Gal 5:22

Wiersbe: *There can be no such thing as isolated ministry, because each worker enters into the labors of others...*

4. Accountability.

...and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

Romans 14:10, 12 1 Corinthians 3:13

Rewards handed out in proportion to potential.

Matthew 16:27 Matt 25 Parable of talents

1 Corinthians 3:9

Everything is centered on God
God's husbandry
God's building.
Not Paul's church

So What?

Most effective ministries/churches in this world:

1. Diversity.
2. Humility.
3. Unity.
4. Accountability.