



“Pastoral Callings: Plant, Water, Pray”

1 Corinthians 3:5-8

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1 Corinthians 3:5-8 - “What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave *opportunity* to each one. I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor.”

THEME STATEMENT: As a Christian, when it comes to why God has you alive right now, you’re either busy **PLANTING** (evangelism), **WATERING** (ministry/service), and **PRAYING** (for God’s growth) ... or you’re wasting your life away!

I. The Servant’s OPPORTUNITY

(verse 5) - “What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave *opportunity* to each one.”

A. Don’t think too highly of yourself - It’s not about you!

1. “What then is Apollos? And what is Paul?” - nobody special
2. “Servants” - δῆκονος (*diakonos*) - we get the word “deacon”
 - a. “one who renders service to another; an attendant, servant; one who executes a commission, a deputy; a servitor, a devoted follower”
 - b. “Table Bus Boy” —> not a “Waiter”

B. God may use you to bring others to a saving knowledge of Him.

1. “through whom you believed” - instruments in the hand of God

C. God uses people when the time (opportunity) is right — so be ready!

1. “as the Lord gave opportunity to each” - God is responsible for not only the result(s) of ministry but also for the OPPORTUNITY you have to serve other people.
 - a. “opportunity” —> a.k.a. “assigned” - δίδωμι (*didōmi*)
 1. “to give, bestow, present, cast or throw, supply, suggest; to be the author or source of a thing; to grant, permit, allow, entrust, reveal, appoint, to offer in sacrifice”
 2. Step #1 is to Present Yourself as Available - (“*Put me in, coach!*”)
 - a. “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.” (Romans 12:1 NKJV)

II. The Servant’s LABOR

(verses 6-7) - “I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth.”

A. PLANT —> (Paul said, “I planted”) —> You must plant the seed!

B. WATER —> (Paul said, “Apollos watered”) —> You must water the seed!

C. PRAY —> (Paul said, “God was causing the growth”) —> You must pray for growth!

1. PRAYER is what you do while “God was causing the growth.
2. POWERLESS: We cannot make anything grow; only God can do that!
3. We PLANT through Evangelism and we WATER with Ministry...but God alone is solely responsible for growth.
4. God wants us to Pray with “Wet Prayer”
5. “And others fell on the good soil and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty. He who has ears, let him hear.” (Matthew 13:8-9)
6. “*Prayer doesn’t work, but God works through prayer!*” -Dr. James Rosscup
7. “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.” (Matthew 7:7)
8. “And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.” (Matthew 21:22)
9. “Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do *it*.” (John 14:13-14)
10. “When He came into *the* house, His disciples *began* questioning Him privately, “Why could we not drive it out?” And He said to them, “This kind cannot come out by anything but prayer.” (Mark 9:28-29)
11. “Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.” (James 5:16)
12. “Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.” (Matthew 9:37-38)
13. Age doesn’t matter, because the flesh has no power for growth!
14. **Favorite Bible Passage** (2 Timothy 4:1-5): “I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”

III. The Servant’s REWARD

(verse 8) - “Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor.”

A. Unity in service. (Believers serve a common goal — God’s glory!)

B. God rewards His workers. (He won’t leave you empty-handed in eternity.)

C. Divine payment is based upon EFFORT. (“*labor*”) — not results!

CONCLUSION:

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU TO SERVE AT CHURCH - CBC Needs 101 Ministry Workers!

Awana - 9	Campus Kids - 29	Ushers - 18	Greeters - 6
Info Center - 3	Upward Volunteers - 10	Sports Ministry - 3	Men's Ministry - 2
Medical Team - 5	(Maple) Junior High - 2	(Maple) High School - 2	Security/Parking Lot - 6
(Palm) Sat. Sports - 4	(Palm) Youth Ministry - 2		

QUESTION: Are you laboring in God's field, or are you content on being a *Christian benchwarmer*?

QUESTION: Are you currently serving in at least one ministry and are you devoted to prayer? (If yes, then excel even more! If not, why not?)

A. Matthew 25:14-30 (The Parable of the Talents)

1. A person who is not Planting or Watering or Praying — looks more like an Unbeliever than they do a child of God.
2. When God “settles accounts” with you, the only thing that will matter on your tombstone is the “DASH” (not your name, the date of your birth, or your death). —> (What are you doing with your dash?) (“*Now after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them.*” vs. 19)
3. If you're faithfully SERVING God, He will — quite likely — add more to your plate! (“*Therefore take away the talent from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents.*” vs. 28)

B. Matthew 25: 31-46 (The Final Judgment)

C. John 13:34-35 “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

D. Plant, Water, Pray!

Discussion Questions

1. Do you think God has gifted you with spiritual gifts that are more appropriate for Planting (evangelism to unbelievers) ministries or for Watering (serving believers) ministries, and why do you think so?
2. What kinds of ministries has God called you to serve in that are either Planting or Watering ministries? Which of these have you experienced more joy in, and seen more fruit (positive results)?
3. How is your prayer life right now? Do you find your prayers to be long or short, and why? Do your prayer requests tend to be more focused on yourself or others? Why do some Christians struggle to pray, and what can we do in our own lives that would cause us to pray more?
4. In Romans 12:1, the apostle Paul said we are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice. What does that mean, and in what ways do you need to present yourself to God so that He can use you in ministry?
5. The apostle Paul reminded Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:5 to “fulfill your ministry.” Why do you think we as Christians sometimes need to be reminded to keep going, to not slow down, and to not stop...when it comes to fulfilling the work God has called us to do?
6. In John 13:34-35, Jesus tells us to “love one another, even as I have loved you.” In what ways does Jesus love us, and how can you show this same type of love to other people?
7. What do you think Jesus meant in John 13:34-35 when He said that our love for one another would be proof to the world that we are His disciples? Give examples of what this proof has looked like in your own life.