

**“WE ARE CO-LABORERS
WITH CHRIST”**
1 Corinthians 3:5-9

INTRODUCTION

Most of the first part of 1 Corinthians, up to this point, is about the Gospel and its ability and effectiveness. When looking at the work of Paul and Apollos, we find that their efforts are equally necessary to God’s process and program. They were workers together *with* God. The same goes for us. We can plant and/or water, but it is **God** who gives the increase!

DIGGING DEEPER

Agriculture

As the Lord describes how He works, He often uses **agriculture** to illustrate His work of salvation. **Galatians 6:7-9** and **John 12:24** are both examples of this. Let’s look at other mentions:

1 Peter 1:23 NKJV – “having been born again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, through the **word of God** which lives and abides forever”. The **word of God is that seed** which penetrates the spirit/soul of man. One of the most important issues is the condition of the “soil”, or the heart and will of the recipients! See **Mark 4:2-20** for the parable of the sower sowing the word of God into different types of soils or hearts.

God has put power in the seed! In creation God made seeds with a coat to protect the embryo. It has sensors to know when it is the right place to grow, with the right conditions. (*For instance, sunflower seeds and pumpkin seeds won’t grow in a bag of trail mix, thankfully! Seeds can last for hundreds or thousands of years before sprouting. Seed coats let water through to the embryo and roots go down. The endosperm is the plant food.*) With the **seed of God’s word**, the best “soil” will bring the best results!

Overcoming Obstacles

Romans 10:14-21. In Romans we see the process at work of the sharing of the seed of the word of God. The progression is preaching, hearing, believing and then calling upon the name of the Lord. If we are saved, then we are sent! We have to go! We have the blessed message of the gospel of peace, the reconciliation of God and man. Unfortunately, not all believe; only a few. Regardless, we need to be generous with the seed we spread! While we may have doubts about our effectiveness in doing this, remember, God is at work! He brings the increase!

Psalms 19 talks about the creation being a witness of God, but *people* have to tell others about Jesus! **The biggest question is how do we do it?** There are many types of people that we encounter, and they may seem intimidating to us. Maybe our lives are not similar to theirs, but ultimately, we all have the same worries and doubts. **The most important step in being an effective witness is to take an interest in a person! Be a good listener! Love people for who they are! We will then earn an entrance into their lives.**

There are many ways to begin to plant and water seeds: putting on a bumper sticker, giving away a New Testament, inviting someone to church, or sharing a scripture, etc. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the Gospel message and be ready! (**1 Peter 3:15**)

CONSIDER

Matthew 9:35-38. Jesus often took others out of their comfort zone. Perhaps the Lord will put opportunities in places or with people that you did not plan on. Yes, the fields are ready for harvest, but our Lord is looking for more laborers. Will you be a co-laborer with God? Remember we don’t do everything, we are only part of the process. God is at work and He brings the increase! Will you pray that others would be involved too?

PRAY

- For more laborers in the harvest.
- That we would be among those laborers!
- for our VBS outreach in July.
- for a good response to our church outreach in Canandaigua in August.
- for new and creative ways to plant and water the seed of the word of God!