

GOD GIVES THE GROWTH!

1 Corinthians 3:4-7 “. . .one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” . . .What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.”

There are times when favorites are good such as using that feature on your computer. There are times when favorites are not good, such as what happened in the church in Corinth. From the beginning of Chapter 3 a problem arose in the congregation of members choosing between their favorite pastors – Paul and Apollos.

St. Paul addressed their problem of having favorite pastors in the letter he wrote to this congregation. In today’s devotion verses Paul is crystal clear that what was happening in Corinth was not beneficial to the members or congregation. He and Apollos were not trying to garner personal followers. Instead, Paul says that both he and Apollos were “servants” used by God to proclaim the Gospel through which they became believers in Jesus Christ.

There is no pastor on earth able to give you faith in Jesus Christ! There is no pastor on earth who has a more direct line to God than all other pastors. There is no pastor who has power to make your baptism, the Lord’s Supper or a preached sermon more powerful than other pastors. Your pastor does not say following the general confession of sins at the beginning of the worship service, it is by my power or authority that I announce to you that your sins are forgiven. No! He says, “I, by virtue of my office as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all yours sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

“So,” St. Paul concludes with this Biblical truth, “. . .neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God. . .gives the growth.” (1 Corinthians 3:7)

Prayer: Dear Father in Heaven, send Your Spirit to give growth to the preaching, teaching and administration of the sacraments by my pastor(s). I ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Almighty God, Your Word is cast Like seed into the ground;
Now let the dew of heav'n descend And righteous fruits abound.

Let not the sly satanic foe This holy seed remove,
But give it root in ev'ry heart To bring forth fruits of love.

Let not the world's deceitful cares The rising plant destroy,
But let it yield a hundredfold The fruits of peace and joy.

So when the precious seed is sown, Life-giving grace bestow
That all whose souls the truth receive Its saving pow'r may know.
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