

Time to Grow

by Diane Anderson



Springtime is all about planting. Farmers in our area have been busy seeding their fields and have stopped only because wet weather has prevented them from continuing. On a smaller scale, the two greenhouses in town have been selling bedding plants which find their way to planters, pots and creative containers around town. As I observed all the plants available, there were dreams of flower gardens in my side and backyard, nicely arranged and planned to provide beauty and bursts of color throughout the summer months. Then reality hit and I wondered when the rain would stop long enough to get the few plants I had chosen in the dirt.

Maintaining plants requires a bit of discipline, with special attention paid to whether or not they are in need of water. Having allowed myself one hanging planter, there was now a daily routine of checking to see if watering was required. It was looking quite beautiful, with lots of pink and burgundy blossoms. Then came the busy week. A flurry of activities had us coming and going and suddenly I realized I had missed my watering duty for a day. . .or was it two? As I looked out the front door, I saw drooping flowers and curled up leaves. The plant was desperately in need of hydration. . .but was it too late? Quickly I drenched the plant and hoped it would come back to life while I was away for the evening. Thankfully, the plant revived and I've been more careful in the days since.

Tomorrow the ladies of our congregation will be in charge of the church service. The materials we received to put the service together centered around the theme of “Thirsty?”, with the theme verse coming from Psalm 42:2 where David said, “I thirst for God, the living God”. Studying the lessons, I realized, much like the hanging plant, my soul needed regular watering to insure beauty would be reflected to those around me. As I reviewed the story of the woman at the well in John 4, it was a blessing to realize the living water offered by Jesus is still available to those who thirst today.

God touched my life with one more “plant lesson” this week. It came from the petunias awaiting their new home in the tiered planters by our front steps. They have been moved back and forth, in and out of our garage according to the weather of the day. They are obviously at two different stages of growth, with the smaller plants looking a healthier green. You could see the larger plants were becoming root bound in the plastic containers and thus losing their color.

As I contemplated their need to grow, the Holy Spirit spoke to my heart about our growth as Christians. Could there be a need to “spread our roots” beyond the barriers of the church walls? It’s one thing to maintain our spiritual existence within the comforts of church life. It’s another to think about what could happen if we allowed our “roots” to work their way through the “dirt” of the world. With my plants, spreading roots means bigger and more beautiful plants, eventually producing flowers to brighten the world. Could the same be true if we, as Christians, would break past the barriers of tradition?

As I write, the sun is breaking through the clouds and I’m thinking I could even do some planting tonight. I’m thankful for the people who planted the seeds and nurtured the young plants to this point. From here on, they will be dependent on my care. In 1 Corinthians 3, Paul talks about planting, watering and growth. Though one person plants the seed and another waters it, only God can make it grow, The same holds true in the spiritual realm. Each of us has a task to do. Are you a seed planter? Plant God’s Word in the hearts of those around you and sow seeds of kindness. Are you one who waters? Find those who are thirsty and offer them the living water of Jesus. Finally, trust God will allow the growth to happen in His perfect way and timing.