



Our Legacy – Planting for the Future

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Porter

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Human history has witnessed the rise and fall of great empires and societies. Although the feats of these societies are great, so was the rate and completeness of their fall. The reasons for their demise varies; consistent with all was their inability or unwillingness to prepare for the future.

Johnny Appleseed occupies a prominent place in American folklore. He has been credited with populating the bulk of the Midwest with apple trees. Johnny Appleseed was actually a missionary who saw great potential for America and her future. His ministry was committed to the **immediate** and **eternal** needs of people of his country.

The impact of Johnny Appleseed’s actions on the generations that followed begs a simple question: Is it possible to live our lives in such a way that our impact is felt forever? The Bible tells us it’s the life we were created for.

Psalm 145:4 *Generation after generation stands in awe of your work; each one tells stories of your mighty acts.*

Planting Essentials

In order to receive the intended yield, we must determine the essentials of proper planting:

- **timing**
- **environment**
- care and **nurture**
- **cultivation**

The two most critical elements of planting is the **seed** and the **soil**.

Matthew 13:3-8 “Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seeds. 4 As he scattered them across his field, some seeds fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate them. 5 Other seeds fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. 6 But the plants soon wilted under the hot sun, and since they didn’t have deep roots, they died. 7 Other seeds fell among thorns that grew up and choked out the tender plants. 8 Still other seeds fell on fertile soil, and they produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times as much as had been planted!

Planting seeds is an **exercise** of faith. Living our lives to leave an eternal impact on others is like planting **seeds** of **faith**.

1 Corinthians 3:5-9

5 Who is Apollos, and who is Paul, that we should be the cause of such quarrels? Why, we're only servants. Through us God caused you to believe. Each of us did the work the Lord gave us.6 My job was to plant the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God, not we, who made it grow. 7 The ones who do the planting or watering aren't important, but God is important because he is the one who makes the seed grow. 8 The one who plants and the one who waters work as a team with the same purpose. Yet they will be rewarded individually, according to their own hard work. 9 We work together as partners who belong to God. You are God's field, God's building—not ours.

Seeds and Pebbles

Seeds and pebbles share several outward similarities. Inwardly, they are strikingly different. Inside a seed there is:

- **life**
- **power**
- **potential**

Unfortunately, some of us spend our time planting rocks – no **life**, no **power** and no **potential**.

The difference between planting seeds or pebbles is found in our **motivation** for planting...

...to benefit **myself** or **others**.

John 12:24-25 *Listen carefully: Unless a grain of wheat is buried in the ground, dead to the world, it is never any more than a grain of wheat. But if it is buried, it sprouts and reproduces itself many times over. In the same way, anyone who holds on to life just as it is destroys that life. But if you let it go, reckless in your love, you'll have it forever, real and eternal.*

...to further my **agenda** or God's **Will**.

Matthew 6:10 "May your kingdom come and what you want be done, here on earth as it is in heaven."

...to be a **source** of blessing or a **hindrance**.

Genesis 12:2-3

I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. 3 I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you."

Ecclesiastes 2:20-23

20 So I became sad about all the hard work I had done here on earth. 21 A person can work hard using all his wisdom, knowledge and skill. But he will die, and other people will get the things he worked for. They did not do the work, but they will get everything. This is also unfair and useless. 22 What does a person get for all his work and struggling here on earth? 23 All his life his work is full of pain and sorrow. Even at night his mind doesn't rest. This is also useless. . . . Nothing but smoke—and spitting into the wind.

The Soil Issue

Most farmers will tell you that **where** you plant is as important as **what** you plant.

Even seeds with the greatest potential planted in **bad** soil will not bear any **fruit**.

The results of the seeds that we sow in the lives of others depends on the **condition** of the "soil" of their hearts:

1. **Empty** condition – no **interest**
2. **Shallow** condition – no **depth**
3. **Cramped** condition – no **room**
4. **Prime** condition – no **excuses**

To ensure prime condition of the hearts of those that we sow seeds among, we can:

- Rely on the way that God has **prepared** us.

Ephesians 6:13

"Be prepared. You're up against far more than you can handle on your own. Take all the help you can get, every weapon God has issued, so that when it's all over but the shouting you'll still be on your feet."

- Advance with the **confidence** that God has in us.

Philippians 4:13

"For I can do everything with the help of Christ who gives me the strength I need."

- Employ the **gifts** that God has given us.

Galatians 6:5

"Each of you must take responsibility for doing the creative best you can with your own life."

Turning Point . . .

If we plant **temporary** things, then we will **harvest** temporary things.

If we plant **eternal** seeds, then we will **harvest** eternal fruit.

A bushel of **blessing** comes from a **tiny** seed of faith.

If we want to know that the impact of our lives will be felt forever, we must be willing to plant eternal seeds in the **fertile** places of our lives.