I Want the Church to Grow–But Do I Want Any More People? #2

1 Corinthians 3:1-7

Introduction:

1. There is often a difference between where I am and where I ought to be.

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food (Hebrews 5:12).

1. I WANT THE CHURCH TO GROW BECAUSE JESUS TAUGHT THAT IT WOULD.
   1. The sower and the seed. Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23
      1. The seed is the word.

“Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God (Luke 8:11).

* + 1. The good ground produces thirty, sixty, hundred
  1. Mustard seed.

Another parable He put forth to them, saying: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches” (Matthew 13:31, 32).

* + 1. Small seed.
    2. Grows into large plant.
  1. Leaven.

Another parable He spoke to them: “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened” (Matthew 13:33).

* + 1. Small lump of dough left on the hearth overnight.
    2. Causes about ½ bushel of flour to rise.
  1. 1 Corinthians 3:1-7

1. BUT–I MAY NOT WANT PEOPLE OF A DIFFERENT RACE.
   1. Peter was very reluctant to go to Gentiles. Acts 10
   2. When he had baptized the Gentiles, he was called into question. Acts 11
   3. The issue was not fear as in the case of Saul.
      1. He was a devout man.

a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always.

And they said, “Cornelius the centurion, a just man, one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you” (Acts 10:2, 22).

* + 1. But he was a Gentile.

Now the apostles and brethren who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God (Acts 11:1).

* 1. Peter said that he had learned God’s will in this matter.

Then he said to them, “You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean.” (Acts 10:28).

Then Peter opened his mouth and said: “In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him” (Acts 10:34, 35).

* 1. People today may be reluctant or even rebellious to accept God’s will in this matter.
     1. Madisonville, “You are spending more time with those niggers than you are with me.”
        1. Was this someone who didn’t want the church to grow?
        2. No. He wanted the church to grow. He wanted to build a bigger building, on more land, quicker than the elders decided.
        3. He wanted and worked for the church to grow.
        4. He just didn’t want the kind of people who were coming at the time.
     2. Churches in changing neighborhoods may not want the kind of people who are moving in.
        1. “Bus kids don’t pay the bills.”
        2. “We need more quality people.”
        3. Or we may not want the rich for the same reason–we may be uncomfortable with people who are different from us.
  2. And many mistakenly think that religion is to make them comfortable.
  3. Jesus did not teach that idea.

Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it” (Luke 9:23, 24).

* 1. In is biography, *Handyman of the Lord*, is recounted Wm. Holmes Border’s parable of a deprived black man who had been reduced to begging for food. Ringing the front doorbell at a southern mansion, the black man informed the occupant, “I’m hungry.” The answer was, “Go around to the back door.” The white man brought food and said, “First we will bless the food. Now repeat after me, ‘Our Father...’”

The black man said, “Your Father...”

“Why do you insist on saying, ‘Your Father,’ when I keep telling you to say, ‘Our Father?’”

The black beggar answered, “Well, boss, if I say ‘Our Father,’ that would make you and me brothers, and I’m afraid the Lord wouldn’t like it, you makin’ your brother come to the back porch to get a piece of bread.”

Conclusion:

1. I want to the church to grow, but do I want any more people?
   1. How many?
   2. What kind?
   3. Do I want more people in the church if God will check with me before He lets them in?
2. What does God want?
   1. All who are burdened with sin.

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30).

* 1. All who want to be saved.

And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely (Revelation 22:17).

1. How will I cooperate with Him?
2. What is your response to God’s call?
   1. Are you weary?
   2. Do you have the desire?
   3. Will you come?