

Every Person Has a Pathway

“I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.” (1 Corinthians 3:6)

I’ve never been known to have a green thumb. I don’t exactly have a brown thumb, where everything I plant dies; but you’re not going to see any YouTube videos from me on how to raise a plant, or how to care for a lawn. I have to rely on other people to coach me on what to do and when to do it. If I follow directions, the plant often survives. If I try it on my own, well...

It’s interesting to me, then, that Paul uses plants as the analogy to making disciples of Jesus in 1 Corinthians 3. He recognizes his role and thus his limitation in making plants grow; he only plants. He has to depend on Apollos to water. Both of them have to depend on God to make the plant grow.

What’s remarkable about this growth process from God is that it is never the same for any two people. Every person is different; therefore, every pathway for growth is going to be different. But every person—every person who has been born again—is on a pathway of growth that God has personally and directly established.

Every person has a pathway to grow. And only God knows what that pathway entails.

As we help people to know Jesus Christ and equip them to make Jesus Christ known in their world, it’s easy to assume more responsibility than we ought. It’s easy to assume that it’s up to us to give growth to that which we planted or watered; but when we do, we are trying to do a job that only God can do.

Yet at the same time, the Lord also chooses to use us in the lives of others as they travel on their respective pathways laid out by Him. He uses us to encourage them; to challenge them; to equip them; and to walk that pathway with them.

The Lord knows what those pathways involve. For one person, the next station on their pathway may involve a new commitment to read the Bible every single day. For another, it may be a new desire to pray with others. For yet another, it may be a call to serve others, or to step up into a role of leadership.

But the Lord uses people in those pathway stations to equip, to challenge, to encourage, and to walk alongside. People like...small group leaders. Like **you**.

So here’s a question I’ll pose to you...

As you think about the people in your small group, as you think about where they appear to be in their walk with Christ (that pathway), what would you say their greatest need would be that would enable them to get to that next station on that pathway? Would it be a daily discipline of reading the Bible? Would it be in memorizing Scripture that will be key to transforming their lives? Would it be to serve in some capacity in one of the church's ministries? Or maybe to step into a role of leadership...maybe even start a new small group?

Prayerfully consider the people in your group, and what that next step might look for them. More next week...