

Surrender Where You're Planted

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Earlier this summer as I was leaving my Dad's farm I noticed a grouping of small plants near the edge of the cornfield close by the house.



In an area about the size of a tennis court, the plants were all about half the size of the the plants that covered the rest of the field.

To a farmer, this kind of variation on such a small scale is nothing to be worried about because the field will yield just fine even if that small area doesn't produce as much. But if the stunted corn plants could talk and feel like they do on Veggie Tales, you better believe that *they* would be worried!

"Why is this so hard?" "Why did the farmer plant me here?" "Will I ever grow?" "Ugh, this ground is so rocky and dry, how does the farmer expect me to bear any fruit?"

Maybe you have the same questions.

Maybe your life has been one big disappointment this week, or this year. You may even think that if you could just find success, then you would find happiness, but what you are really longing for is *surrender*.

The Problem of Concern in Corinth

"Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him. This is my rule in all the churches" (1 Cor 7:17).

Paul wrote these words to a group of people that just couldn't wait to modify their lives. Some wanted to change their ethnic classification (18), some wanted to be free (21), and others wished to get married (25).

The problem was not that these desires were bad. In fact Paul advocated for marriage (38) and for freedom from slavery (21)—the problem was the overriding concern for a different situation than the Corinthians had fallen into.

They had bought into the lie that if they just focused enough on themselves and what they needed to do to change their circumstance, they would be satisfied.

And this problem of concern wasn't limited to them! Paul said that his directive to find contentment in the life sovereignly assigned by God was a rule in *all the churches*. In all the churches of the 1st Century world that Paul knew of, he said, "In whatever condition each was called, there let him remain with God" (24).

The Bible is saying that just as the farmer decides where the seeds are planted, so God calls people to Christ in the midst of life situations that he has assigned. This means that God's responsibility is the assigning of the circumstance that you are in, and your responsibility is to surrender to his calling right where you're planted.

Remaining with God

This is an invitation into a brand-new way of living! A life *with* God. It is the difference of Christianity—that we humans, though sinful and failing, are meant to be with God.

If God is with me right down in the difficulty and disappointment, what else do I need? If he is with me in my inadequacies, why do I need better qualifications? If Christ himself is by my side in singleness, why am I so concerned with a spouse? If my Jesus who suffered for me holds my hand in distress, what comfort am I waiting for?

The secret to life isn't success, it's surrender. It isn't in a modified circumstance, but in contentment right where you are.

And if you learn this, little by little, you will enjoy Jesus more and more and you will declare with great power, even in your weakness, that the God who is with you never fails.