

# A CHURCH GARDEN

## INTRODUCTION:

- 1 Today we are going to have a lesson in gardening!
2. This is the time of the year that we plant seeds in the ground and later plants bear fruit for our eating. To help and aid us grow a physical garden, there are a number of self-helps for our use:
  - a We can find books that will instruct us what to do and how to do it.
  - b We can go to the internet and type in a search exactly what we are trying to do.
  - c We can watch things such as you-tube and see how to go about gardening.
- 3 Each of these sources of help will ultimately tell us we must plant a seed in dirt and it will grow. Christians are produced in a natural way also.
  - a. We plant the seed --WORD! - *Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. (Luk 8:11)*
  - b. We also water - *I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. (1Co 3:6)*
4. If a person will cultivate his own heart and allow the word of God to grow, the church can have a bumper crop!
5. We are going to go to the BOOK that shows how to successfully grow a CHURCH GARDEN!

**ANYTIME YOU PLANT A GARDEN, FIRST YOU MUST RID THE AREA OF THE WEEDS, BROKEN GLASS, LARGE ROCKS, etc. THEN YOU CAN SUCCESSFULLY PLANT UR GARDEN. (Jer. 1:10)-"See I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build and to plant.**

## I. THREE ROWS OF "SQUASH"

- A. **Squash INDIFFERENCE.**
  1. Webster's-not showing or feeling interest.
  2. One of the greatest menaces facing the church in our time is the lack of commitment and conviction of her members!!!
  3. People simply do not care enough about spiritual matters to put forth the effort that God requires.
  4. The church in Laodicea is a prime example (Rev. 3:14-21).  
(18)\*\*\*\*\*
    - a. Gold tried in fire--requires sacrifice .in order to please God.
    - b. White raiment...shame of nakedness--we must keep our lives pure and at this time of year, wear enough clothes!!!!
    - c. Eye salve--apply the word of God so we can see error and sin and know how and where the Devil is!
  5. How do we overcome indifference?
    - a. I Cor. 12:25--we should care - **it takes time on our part to care for our brethren the correct way** - *That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.*
    - b. We should awake out of our spiritual sleep - *And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. (Rom 13:11-14)*

- c We should put on all the whole armour of God - *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. (Eph 6:10-11)*
- d We should seek the kingdom first - *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Mat 6:33)*

## B. Squash "CRITICISM"

1. Webster's -to find fault with, point out the faults of.
2. **NOT SUGGESTING THAT WE OVERLOOK SIN AND ERROR!!!!!!!!!!**
3. We need to look for the good in others as long as possible - *Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. (1Co 13:7)*
4. Our rule of criticism – *Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets. (Mat 7:12)*
5. Undue criticism will cause people to become discouraged and stumble (Matt. 18:7)--we had better not be the cause!! – *But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! (Mat 18:6-7)*
- 6 *Do all things without murmurings and disputings: (Phil 2:14)*

## C. Squash "GOSSIP"

1. Rom. 1:30--backbiters listed among the sins of the Gentiles--worthy of death (Rom. 1:32).
2. Who shall abide (Ps. 15:3)? one that backbiteth not! – *He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour. (Psa 15:3)*
4. (I Peter 4:15)-we are not to be busybodies in other men's matters - *But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. (1Pe 4:15)*
5. Gossip will work in a congregation like a cancer and destroy the body!

## II. FOUR ROWS OF TURNIPS

### A. Turn up for MEETINGS.

1. This can be Gospel Meetings or regular services.
2. We can not put too much emphasis on assembling.
3. Forsaking **ANY SERVICE** is a sin!!!!!!
  - a. Heb. 10:25--not to forsake.
  - b. Acts 20:7--upon the first day of the week. Many use this verse to show attendance is only binding at the Lord's Supper.
  - c. Heb. 13:17-we are to obey them that have the rule. Elders have the rule and when they set a time to assemble we are to obey. When we forsake we sin and teach our children to sin also!!!!!!
  - d. It amazes me that we have so many brethren trying to justify missing rather than wanting to show our love to God by being here!!!

### B. Turn up with a SMILE.

1. Christians should be the happiest - we have the most to live for!!!!!!
2. Proverbs:
  - a. *A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken. (Pro 15:13)*
  - b. A merry heart helps us be thankful - **will help us beat the "woe is me" attitude!!! All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast. (Pro 15:15)**

- c. A merry heart is like medicine to the soul - *A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones. (Pro 17:22)*

C. Turn with a VISITOR.

1. Andrew was always bring someone to Christ. (JN.1:40-42)
2. We will not grow until we reach out to others.
3. Sad, but true, that some members are afraid of what their neighbors might hear.
4. Actually knew a man that asked the preacher not to preach on the church because his friend was there. **Don't need enemies with friends like that.**

D. Turn up with a BIBLE.

1. Actually had someone tell me that I was binding my opinion to say God was not pleased when we don't bring it.
2. *I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name. (Psa 138:2)*
3. *These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. (Act 17:11)*
4. Would teachers allow students to come to class w/o books?

### III. FIVE ROWS OF LETTUCE

A. Let us LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

1. (I Jn. 3:14)-test to see if alive.
2. (Jn.13:35)- examples as Christians
3. Sacrificial kind of love that God had for us.

B. Let us WELCOME STRANGERS

1. (Prov. 18:24)-we must first be friendly - *A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.*
2. (Gen. 18:1-8)-Abraham entertained angels unawares.
3. We will not entertain as he did, but this teaches we should be as friendly as possible.

C. Let us PROVOKE ONE ANOTHER TO LOVE AND GOOD WORKS.

1. *And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: (Heb 10:24)*
2. The idea is to “stir each other up” – edify one another – build one another up
3. *Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. (Rom 14:19)*
4. *Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. (1Th 5:11)*

D. Let us TRULY WORSHIP GOD.

1. (John 4:24)-we need the proper att.
2. God desires our hearts and if we come to the services, think about other things, and go home, **WE MIGHT AS WELL HAVE STAYED THERE!**
3. We are given the extreme honor of communing with our Lord on every Lord's Day!!!
4. When we worship God it **MUST** be done in spirit **AND** truth.

E. **Let us GIVE LIBERALLY.**

1. Our giving is the proof of our love. (II Cor. 8:7-8, 24) – *Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also. I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love. (2Co 8:7-8).....Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf. (2Co 8:24)*
2. Our giving should come from a cheerful heart (II Cor. 9:7) – *Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. (2Co 9:7)*
3. Our giving should be purposed.
4. If we truly love the Lord and appreciate what He has done for us, we will be generous givers!!!

**CONCLUSION:**

1. Is your garden like this or full of weeds?
2. We need to get rid of the weeds.
3. The word needs to be planted and allowed to produce fruit in your life.