



How Do You Bloom Where You Are Planted?

1 Timothy 6:6: (NASB) *But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment.*



"The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence." As we go about the business of making our lives work, we can easily and frequently wind up looking at others around us with some level of envy. They seem to have it better than we do; they seem to be more stable, secure or more engaged than we are. These emotional and reactionary observations then give way to those gnawing feelings of "if only I had" or "if only I could" or "Why does everything always go their way?" What we are left with is a discontented void in our hearts, and that

hollow void yearns for fulfillment. So, how do we get there? As Christians, how do we fill that space with thoughts, words and actions that are not envious or discouraging? How do we embrace our experiences with a God-honoring and growth-oriented acceptance and outlook?

Where does "Bloom Where You're Planted" come from?

(Source: [Bloom Where You're Planted](#); Posted by Elyse Bruce on July 30, 2015) Over the generations, people have attributed "Bloom Where You're Planted" to the Bible, and while that's not exactly correct, the idiom does have a connection to the Catholic Church. The Bishop of Geneva, Saint Francis de Sales (1567-1622) is credited with having said the following: "Truly, charity has no limit; for the love of God has been poured into our hearts by His Spirit dwelling in each one of us, calling us to a life of devotion and inviting us to bloom in the garden where He has planted and directing us to radiate the beauty and spread the fragrance of His Providence."

Aimee Mullins is an American athlete, actress and fashion model who first became famous for her athletic accomplishments. She was born with fibular hemimelia (missing fibula bones) which resulted in the amputation of both of her lower legs. Aimee redefines the word "disabled."

 **Birth story, *The Opportunity of Adversity*, Aimee Mullins, TED Talk**

- A few years ago, I was in a food market in the town where I grew up, in that red zone in northeastern Pennsylvania. I hear this guy, this voice behind me say, "Well, if it isn't Aimee Mullins." And I turn around, and it's an older man and I have no idea who he is. And I said, "I'm sorry, sir, have we met? I don't remember meeting you." He said, "Well, you wouldn't remember meeting me. I mean, when we met I was delivering you from your mother's womb." Oh, that guy. But of course, actually, it did click. This man was Dr. Kean, a man that I had only known about through my mother's stories of that day, because, of course, typical fashion, I arrived late for my birthday by two weeks. And so, my mother's prenatal physician had gone on vacation, so the*



Aimee Mullins



man who delivered me was a complete stranger to my parents. And, because I was born without the fibula bones, and had feet turned in, and a few toes in this foot and a few toes in that, this stranger had to be the bearer of bad news. He said to me, "I had to give this prognosis to your parents that you would never walk, and you would never have the kind of mobility that other kids have or any kind of life of independence, and you've been making a liar out of me ever since."

Sometimes we think:

"THERE IS DOOM WHERE YOU'RE PLANTED."



The context of the following Scriptures takes place right after Paul addresses marital questions and potentially unholy decisions of separation and divorce.

We apply these next verses in principle to our present reasoning and conversation on blooming where you're planted:

1 Corinthians 7:17-19: (NASB) ¹⁷Only, as the Lord has assigned to each one, as God has called each, in this manner let him walk. And so I direct in all the churches. (Walk in the state you were called in. Do not look for change!) ¹⁸Was any man called when he was already circumcised? He is not to become uncircumcised. Has anyone been called in uncircumcision? He is not to be circumcised. ¹⁹Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but what matters is the keeping of the commandments of God.

Whatever our circumstances, we must ask ourselves, "Am I keeping of the commandments of God?"

The challenge is anticipating, without all the information. Often, we look into the future without all the information and anticipate what is going to happen - and we anticipate the doom or gloom. We make it a reality by anticipating without being able to fill in the gaps. God knows and fills in the gaps. The Apostle Paul is clearly teaching us no matter what perceived advantage or disadvantage we may have, it all still leads to being able to bloom.



Imagine a gift, *The Best Gift I Ever Survived*, Stacey Kramer, TED Talk



- *Imagine, if you will - a gift. I'd like for you to picture it in your mind. It's not too big, about the size of a golf ball. So, envision what it looks like all wrapped up. But before I show you what's inside, I will tell you, it's going to do incredible things for you. It will bring all of your family together. You will feel loved and appreciated like never before and reconnect with friends and acquaintances you haven't heard from in years. Adoration and admiration will overwhelm you. It will recalibrate what's most important in your life. It will redefine your sense of spirituality and faith.*

More to follow on "the gift."

1 Corinthians 7:20-24: (NASB) ²⁰Each man must remain in that condition in which he was called. ²¹Were you called while a slave? Do not worry about it; but if you are able also to become free, rather do that. ²²For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord's freedman; likewise, he who was called while free, is Christ's slave. (Paul is saying, "You can bloom where you are planted.") ²³You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men. ²⁴Brethren, each one is to remain with God in that condition in which he was called.

Paul continually repeats - *each one is to remain with God in that condition in which he was called.*



If we are blooming, we have to be nourished.

Plant Food:
We easily interpret our
circumstances
as leading us down a path
of doom, when in reality
if we could see them through
God's eyes we would see them as
fertilizer that provokes us to bloom!



What should we do when we are not able to see life
from God's perspective? How do we grow?

This is an expected challenge. It is also expected that God knows the limitations of our spiritual sight and has built in to our experiences a compensating factor to help us through. This is one of the most thrilling realizations we can have - God knows, God plans and God pays attention. "Blooming where you're planted" is putting yourself into the hands of God and saying, "Whatever Your will is for me, I will do that." Put your trust in God.

The X Factor, *The Opportunity of Adversity*, Aimee Mullins, TED Talk

- *The extraordinary thing is that he said he had saved newspaper clippings throughout my whole childhood, whether winning a second grade spelling bee, marching with the Girl Scouts, the Halloween parades, winning my college scholarship or any of my sports victories, and he was using it and integrating it into teaching resident students, med students from Hahnemann Medical School and Hershey Medical School. And he called this part of the course, "The X Factor," the potential of the human will. No prognosis can account for how powerful this could be as a determinant in the quality of someone's life. He said, "In my experience, unless repeatedly told otherwise, and even if given a modicum of support, if left to their own devices a child will achieve."*

The doctor's prognosis did not count "The X Factor" which is, *the will with which we approach that which we have to deal with*. To bloom where we are planted we need to find that X Factor in our own lives.

Sometimes we think:

"There is GLOOM where you're planted."

The challenge here is in becoming depressed when the experiences are long, difficult and unrelenting. This can only be countered by adopting a powerful HOPE!

1 Peter 4:12-13: (NASB) ¹²*Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you;* ¹³*but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of his glory you may rejoice with exultation.*



The depressing magnitude of trials needs the hopeful perspective that they are "God's gardening tools."

True contentment is a thing as active as agriculture. It is the power of getting out of any situation all that there is in it. It is arduous, and it is rare. — Gilbert K. Chesterton



In the next verses written in the context of Judah's great sins with idolatry, God begins by telling them of their coming failure, as they have believed in the deceitfulness of imperfect man and his imagination over believing in Him.

God shows them the gloomy future of those who live without Him:

Jeremiah 17:5-11: (NASB) ⁵Thus says the LORD, Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength, and whose heart turns away from the LORD. ⁶For he will be like a bush in the desert and will not see when prosperity comes, but will live in stony wastes in the wilderness, a land of salt without inhabitant.

God now shows them the value of blooming where and how He had planted them - He gives them HOPE:

⁷Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD And whose trust is the LORD. ⁸For he will be like a tree planted by the water, that extends its roots by a stream and will not fear when the heat comes; but its leaves will be green, and it will not be anxious in a year of drought nor cease to yield fruit. (You will never be lacking.)

Wherever we are, we will always be watered and healthy, if we keep our roots where they belong.



Multiple benefits, *The Best Gift I Ever Survived*, Stacey Kramer, TED Talk

- You'll have a new understanding and trust in your body. You'll have unsurpassed vitality and energy. You'll expand your vocabulary, meet new people, and you'll have a healthier lifestyle. And get this - you'll have an eight-week vacation of doing absolutely nothing. You'll eat countless gourmet meals. Flowers will arrive by the truckload. People will say to you, "You look great. Have you had any work done?" You'll be challenged, inspired, motivated, and humbled. Your life will have new meaning. Peace, health, serenity, happiness, nirvana. The price? \$55,000, and that's an incredible deal.



God reminds them it is the human heart that deceives us above all else:

⁹The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it? ¹⁰I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the results of his deeds. ¹¹As a partridge that hatches eggs which it has not laid, so is he who makes a fortune, but unjustly; in the midst of his days it will forsake him, and in the end, he will be a fool.

The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick - Most often when selfishness takes over it does not look or feel like selfishness - it feels like entitlement. What the human heart wants, the heart will try to get and is not always in harmony with the will of God.



HOPE keeps us focused as it paints a picture that provokes us to strive:

Psalm 92:12-15: (NASB) ¹²The righteous man will flourish like the palm tree, he will grow like a cedar in Lebanon. ¹³Planted in the house of the LORD, they will flourish in the courts of our God. ¹⁴They will still yield fruit in old age; they shall be full of sap and very green, ¹⁵to declare that the LORD is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

Plant Food:

Gloom and depression are based in the deceitful perspective of fleshly desire.

True hope

can water us with the word of God and, if we let it, revitalize our broken spirit!



It is easy to say, "Have hope and all will be well!"
What about when all is not well, and we want to quit?

A fundamental truth of applying the "Bloom where you are planted" principle is there are many challenges to growth, and therefore, many fixes as well. Seeing our lives from God's perspective works. Having Scripture-based hope works. These are great, but sometimes you just need a friend.



Dr. P and therapy, *The Opportunity of Adversity*, Aimee Mullins, TED

- One such person who opened doors for me was my childhood doctor at the A.I. DuPont Institute in Wilmington, Delaware. His name was Dr. Pizzutillo, an Italian American whose name, apparently, was too difficult for most Americans to pronounce, so he went by Dr. P. And Dr. P always wore really colorful bow ties and had the very perfect disposition to work with children. I loved almost everything about my time spent at this hospital, with the exception of my physical therapy sessions. I had to do what seemed like innumerable repetitions of exercises with these thick, elastic bands, different colors, to help build up my leg muscles. And I hated these bands more than anything. I hated them, had names for them. I hated them. And I was already bargaining, as a five-year-old child, with Dr. P to try to get out of doing these exercises - unsuccessfully, of course!

The hardest work is usually work we dislike the most and is usually the work that gives us the most.

Sometimes we think:

"THERE IS NO ROOM WHERE YOU'RE PLANTED."

We get frustrated when we have circumstances, trials or tragedies that just do not fit into our daily planner. It is here we desperately need the encouraging hearts of others to find the strength to cope.



The formula for growing through frustration with circumstances that are not scheduled in:

1 Timothy 6:6-11: (NASB) *“But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. ⁷For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. ⁸If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.*

We need to be willing to be contented with very little.

Christian growth is founded in clear perspective that less in this world is often more eternally.

This is a hard concept (needing God’s perspective and hope), and this is where frustration can easily set in:

⁹But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. (Frustration - especially for a Christian - misplaced desires stifle growth.) ¹¹But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.

Frustrated with circumstances? Check what you are running to and what you are running from.



Sometimes we feel there is no room for anything else on our plate, but God knows best what we need. Our family is going through a personal trial right now. This summer we had to rescue my Mom and Dad from a difficult situation with a family member who was caring for them out of state in Mom and Dad’s home. I prefer not to be specific.

My parents are 89-years-old and my dad has moderate stage Alzheimer’s Disease. Mom was distraught over their living conditions and asked if they could please live with us. They are living here permanently now. It was a big adjustment for us with a great responsibility, but we are grateful we can help. They are content and happy and that is what is important.

The family member who was, and still is, living at their house is harassing us daily, but the encouragement and prayers from family and our Christian brethren are helping us to find strength to cope.

Having friends helps make room for circumstances that are not “scheduled in.” This helps us to bloom.

Contentment is the only real wealth. — Alfred Nobel



Unwanted gifts, *The Best Gift I Ever Survived*, Stacey Kramer, TED Talk

- *By now, I know you're dying to know what it is and where you can get one. Does Amazon carry it? Does it have the Apple logo on it? Is there a waiting list? Not likely. This gift came to me about five months ago. It looked more like this when it was all wrapped up, not quite so pretty. It was a rare gem - a brain tumor, hemangioblastoma. The gift that keeps on giving. And while I'm okay now, I wouldn't wish this gift for you. I'm not sure you'd want it. But I wouldn't change my experience. It*





profoundly altered my life in ways I didn't expect, in all the ways I just shared with you. So, the next time you're faced with something that's unexpected, unwanted and uncertain, consider that it just may be a gift.

For Jonathan, his experience may also just be a gift.

These next "unscheduled events" are even more frustrating and difficult:

1 Peter 1:6-7: (NASB) *⁶In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, ⁷so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

Often the strength comes from having someone else to rely on and to vent to. The power of prayer for others and knowing you are being prayed for is very strengthening.



I work at a school. This week I saw this shirt on a child: "If it doesn't challenge you, it doesn't change you." I thought it was very powerful and it goes very well with the theme today.



Cancer from nowhere, Deb's Story

- *Never in a million years would I have thought that my very physically fit, active husband would be diagnosed with brain cancer. There is no history of cancer in his family. BUT, he was. Not until we faced this challenge together did we realize all the love of family, friends and the Heavenly Father. And our love for each other grew stronger each day we battled this together.*



CQ Team



Contributor

When we think there is no room to bloom, remember that we grow as one part of something marvelously designed:

Ephesians 4:11-13: (NASB) *¹¹And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, ¹²for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; ¹³until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.*

Notice - all these positions are for the purpose of creating a "mature man," a *collectively complete individual* called, "The body of Christ" and not mature men, plural, each standing on their own.

All of our experiences and trials together are tools of contribution to the growing of this body.



Plant Food:

The frustration in our lives that stems from experiences we "don't have room for" can be countered by the feeding of fellowship and belonging.

Encouraging hearts go a long way.



Do not underestimate the power of a word or a gesture to someone who you know is struggling. It can help give them the strength to bloom through the difficulty.

We have God's eyes, hope and the encouragement of others to help us bloom. What are we missing?

These three ingredients are huge factors in learning to bloom where God has planted us. The next element in some ways ties all of these things together, for it combines all of these things with compassion and clarity. The work of Christian growth cannot even begin to happen without focus on Jesus.

Dr. P. and 100 bucks, *The Opportunity of Adversity*, Aimee Mullins, TED

- *And one day, he came in to my session (exhaustive and unforgiving, these sessions) and he said to me, "Wow. Aimee, you are such a strong and powerful little girl, I think you're going to break one of those bands. When you do break it, I'm going to give you a hundred bucks." Now, of course, this was a simple ploy on Dr. P's part to get me to do the exercises I didn't want to do before the prospect of being the richest five-year-old in the second-floor ward, but what he effectively did for me was reshape an awful daily occurrence into a new and promising experience for me. And I have to wonder today to what extent his vision and his declaration of me as a strong and powerful little girl shaped my own view of myself as an inherently strong, powerful and athletic person well into the future.*

He reshaped her by giving her something bigger to focus on.

Sometimes we think we just cannot follow through and we feel like:

"ANXIETY LOOMS WHERE YOU'RE PLANTED."



This anxiety can be debilitating as a long road of recovery or adjustment or coping seems overwhelming. Blooming requires FOCUS, and the primary target of that focus is Jesus.

My great concern is not whether you have failed, but whether you are content with your failure. — Abraham Lincoln

Hebrews 12:2-3: (NASB) ²*Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³For consider him (meditate on him) who has endured such hostility by sinners against himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*

Focus on Jesus - what he did, how he did it and why he did it. He is our model and inspiration.

What if you are trying to bloom in a church you are planted in for spiritual growth, but you are finding disagreements and contradictions? Should you stay there, or could God be directing change? The question to ask yourself is, "Did God plant me there, or is God giving me an experience there?" The church is the people, not a building. The idea of "church" is to be fed. The experience may lead you to the next level but requires a lot of thought and prayer.

Acceptance in loss, Deb's Story

- *My earthly "love of my life" is gone, and yet, just last weekend I went to his gravesite to "visit" him. As I was leaving, an overwhelming feeling of gratitude came over me. With tears in my eyes, I literally said out loud, "Thank you, dear Father, for letting me visit Mike at the cemetery, and not in a facility where he would be unable to function because of the brain cancer." I realized God's mercy and love for us. It would have been unbearable for Mike to live an inactive life, and the Lord knew that and would not give us more than we could bear.*

Deb understands the mercy of God, and that is how we learn to bloom when it is difficult.

Take your anxiety to these verses, and let them shine the light of Jesus' example on it:

Colossians 3:12-24: (NASB) ¹²*So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; ¹³bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. ¹⁴Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. ¹⁵Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. (Be thankful God gives us the difficult experiences to grow.)*

We are planted in the school of Christ, and that is where we are supposed to bloom.

Allow the peace of Jesus to rule - proper focus gives permission for peace to rule:

¹⁶*Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.*

The heart can get in the way of the peace and word of Christ.



Allow the word of Jesus to dwell in you - focus brings permission. Then ACT in Jesus' name.

The next verses discuss having mutual respect - wives, husbands, children, parents. This is how you bloom:

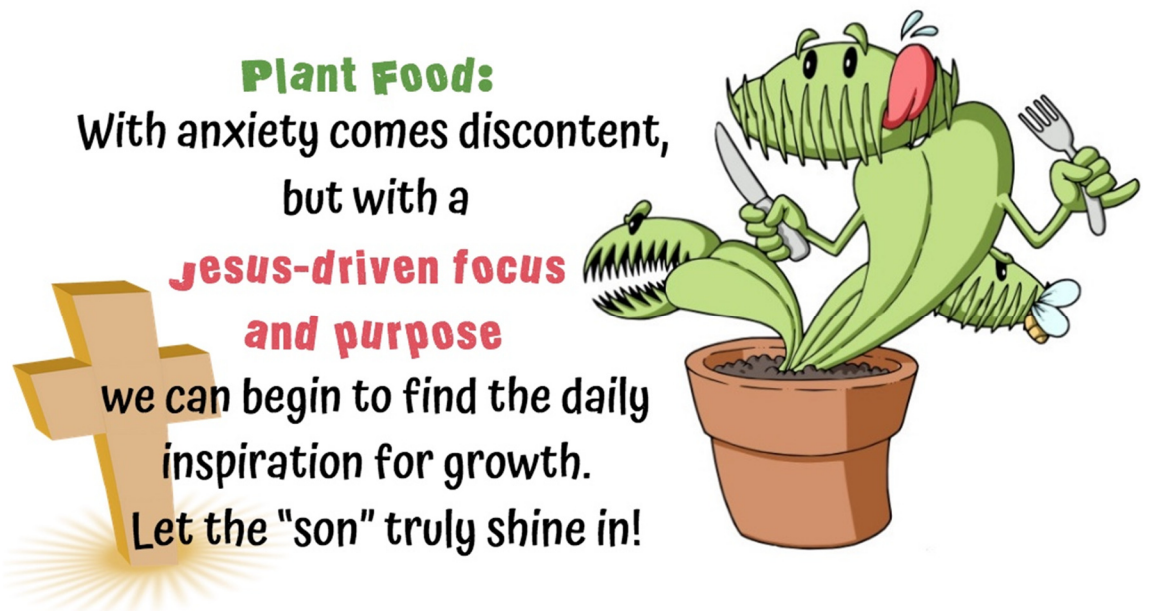
²²Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. ²³Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, ²⁴knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

Focusing on Jesus helps to alleviate the anxiety that looms in our lives.

Joseph is a great example of blossoming in difficult conditions. He blossomed in prison and in Potiphar's house because he gave God the glory in everything he did. Whatever the effort is in front of us, we need to do it as unto the Lord.

Anxiety can be turned towards growth when we know the "why" of all we do:

Hebrews 4:15-16: (NASB) *¹⁵For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need*



**Christian blooming happens best in a well-cultivated environment.
What can trigger us to ruin that?**

The next challenge to our Christian growth plan can act as a trigger. We can see things through God's eyes, have solid Christian hope, engage the help of others and powerfully focus on Jesus. One thing that can blow all of this up is anger - it creates a reactive temptation that is hard to counter.

Ephesians 4:26-27: (NASB) *²⁶Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷and do not give the devil an opportunity.*

God is not telling us we cannot get angry. He is saying, do not let your anger lead you to sin. How do we do this? Re-label the experience.



Redefine adversity, *The Opportunity of Adversity*, Aimee Mullins, TED Talk

- *Adversity isn't an obstacle that we need to get around in order to resume living our life. It's part of our life. And I tend to think of it like my shadow. Sometimes I see a lot of it, sometimes there's very little, but it's always with me. And, certainly, I'm not trying to diminish the impact, the weight, of a person's struggle. There is adversity and challenge in life, and it's all very real and relative to every single person. But the question isn't whether or not you're going to meet adversity, but how you're going to meet it. So, our responsibility is not simply shielding those we care for from adversity but preparing them to meet it well. There's an important difference and distinction between the objective medical fact of my being an amputee and the subjective societal opinion of whether or not I'm disabled.*

The objective medical fact is she does not have lower legs, but she is not disabled.

Re-label the experience because God wants us to grow through the difficulty.

Sometimes we get so angry:

"WE JUST WANT TO GO BOOM WHERE WE'RE PLANTED."

Countering this serious reaction takes a serious effort which begins with boundaries and choices for our thoughts and actions. We then re-label what the experience is all about.

Contentment is natural wealth; luxury is artificial poverty. — Socrates

Anger's boundaries:

1 Corinthians 10:23-26,31-33: (NASB) ²³All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful, but not all things edify. ²⁴Let no one seek his own good, but that of his neighbor. ²⁵Eat anything that is sold in the meat market without asking questions for conscience' sake; ²⁶for the earth is the LORD'S, and all it contains.

I will not cross into areas that are unprofitable to my Christianity - too bad about my emotions:

³¹Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. ³²Give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God; ³³just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit but the profit of the many, so that they may be saved.

Blooming, Deb's Story

- *So, I was planted in a whole new life. I am trying hard to bloom in my new garden of experiences. And I think with the Lord's love and guidance I am doing pretty well. I learned to appreciate all that I do have, not be sad for what I don't have, and to cherish what I did have at one time. And especially to appreciate the blessings I have today. There are others that miss a beloved spouse. I would hesitate to tell them how to feel or face their loss, but I would tell them that I am so grateful to the Lord for the time He gave us together. Just imagine if that never happened!*





Deb labeled each part of her experience. She learned to appreciate all she has, not be sad for what she does not have, and to cherish what she had at one time.

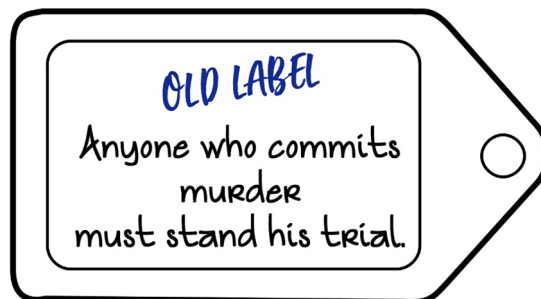
Putting the right labels on the right parts of our experiences helps us begin to bloom.



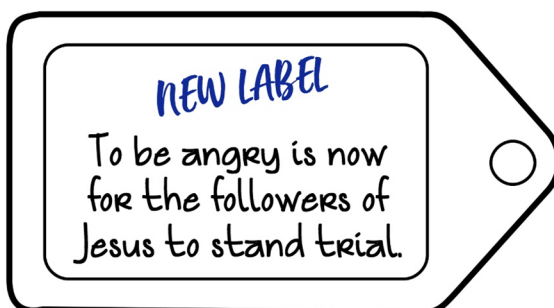
When I was a young man in my 30's, my Uncle Steve gave a sermon on labeling our experiences. When life would get a little difficult, he would say to me, "Now Rick, what is the label you are putting on this?" When he became ill and was being absorbed by cancer at the end of his life, his labeling was dramatic. The last few days of his life, I went to visit him and to say goodbye. He was not able to speak anymore. His favorite Scripture which he quoted frequently was Matthew 11:26: (KJV) *Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight.* As I was getting ready to leave, he couldn't speak but was making noise which was the rhythm of the way he would always quote that Scripture. He had labeled his dying experience "for so it seemed good in Thy sight." He was acquiescing to God's will.

The context in Matthew 5 is Jesus setting the groundwork for his higher teachings by referring back to the Old Testament Law or some interpretations of it:

Matthew 5:21-22: (Phillips) ²¹*You have heard that it was said to the people in the old days, Thou shalt not murder, and anyone who does so must stand his trial.*



²²*But I say to you that anyone who is angry with his brother must stand his trial...*



This is an internal sin that has not necessarily done anything against one's brother except within one's own heart.

In the text, the judges were a court of seven (some say 23) men empowered to judge some classes of crimes.

...Anyone who contemptuously calls his brother a fool must face the supreme court...

Of the council - The High Council or Sanhedrin, of 71 men, the highest court of the Jews for the gravest offenses.



...And anyone who looks on his brother as a lost soul is himself heading straight for the fire of destruction:



The new label is a higher standard! We must abide by the higher standard to bloom.

Plant Food:

Anger suffocates the cycle of growth.

**to intentionally
weed it out**

we need clear boundaries
of thought and action and a
convincing re-labeling of our
experience's purpose.



Put God's way and His will first, above anything else we may want, say, do or think. It is all about blooming in Christ.

*So, how do you bloom where you are planted?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*



Join us next week for our podcast on October 8, 2018:
Ep. #1042: "How Does Faith Actually Work?"



Bonus Material!

The world is full of people looking for spectacular happiness while they snub contentment.
— Doug Larson

The Apostle Paul and a "Gloom/Bloom" challenge:

2 Corinthians 12:7-10: (NASB) ⁷Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, (Great reason to bloom - God has given you SO much!) for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself! ⁸Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me.



Gloom can set in - why would God allow me to be stifled? I can do SO much more:

⁹And He has said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

Blooming again - once we see things from a heavenly perspective it ALWAYS makes sense:

¹⁰Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Contentedness reigns, and that is an environment in which to bloom. True happiness NEEDS contentment to flourish!

Jesus knew this and showed us what the road to contentment and happiness looks like:

Luke 12:22-32: (NASB) *²²And he said to his disciples, For this reason I say to you, do not worry about your life, as to what you will eat; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. ²³For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing.*

Contentment perspective: Our human life and body must be seen in light of the kingdom. If we are followers of Jesus, then our life and body are bent towards his footsteps.

²⁴Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap; they have no storeroom nor barn, and yet God feeds them; how much more valuable you are than the birds!

The birds and animals go about their instinctive business and are provided for as a result. Our contentment will instinctively flourish when we are about our business of following Jesus.

²⁵And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life's span? ²⁶If then you cannot do even a very little thing, why do you worry about other matters?

We are small in the big picture of God's plan. Our contentment comes in acknowledging that God does watch over and care for our lives.

²⁷Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; but I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. ²⁸But if God so clothes the grass in the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will He clothe you? You men of little faith!

The flowers - God's creations that simply grow because they are planted - are stunning evidences of God's care for His creation. Our contentment can take root in this beautiful example of God's care for detail.

²⁹And do not seek what you will eat and what you will drink, and do not keep worrying. ³⁰For all these things the nations of the world eagerly seek; but your Father knows that you need these things.

We, as "the called" of Jesus, are different, and our contentment depends upon our being reminded of this important, basic and life-changing fact:

³¹But seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you. ³²Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom.

Our contentment is a result of our focus and our application of that focus. Once we set our lives in order, we can then begin to truly develop deep and abiding happiness.