

## PAUL PLANTED

**“I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow.” (1 Cor 3:6)**

Note! Paul planted the “seed”, not the church. Paul and Apollos were God’s fellow workers, but the church was the field, not the seed (1 Cor. 3:9). The “seed” was the word of God (Lk. 8:11). As Paul planted the “seed” some of it fell on good ground, and began to grow. It was then that Christ added them to His Body like living members (1 Cor. 12:12, 13). Christ is also the Word of God and through Him the “whole body is held together” so it can build up itself in love (Eph. 4:16).

There is something about “planting churches” that ought to raise a red flag to those concerned about unity.. When Paul wrote to the Corinthians there were relatively few “schisms” in the Body. Four groups, however, are mentioned in 1 Corinthians. One group said **“I follow Paul”; another, ‘I follow Apollos’; another, ‘I follow Cephas’; still another, ‘I follow Christ.’” (1 Cor 1:12)** Paul had planted “good seed” and yet the wicked one still seduced the Bride of Christ away from “One Husband” (2 Cor. 11:2). Remember! Those who divide you do not have the Spirit (Jude 19).

If these four groups planted churches, the second generation of believers would be even more divided than the first. Fast forward 1,900 years and there are literally hundreds of denominations planting churches in honor of men like Paul, Apollos, and Cephas. Paul proved that problems with division can occur when you only plant the pure and unadulterated Word of God. Today, church planters routinely contaminate the pure Word of God with denominational names, creeds, and distinctions. Can you imagine a Lutheran evangelist planting a Baptist church?

The Catholic Church sought to solve the problem of division with an “Infallible Interpreter”. At a time when Europe was reeling from the Reformation and rationalism, they officially declared the infallibility of the Pope. Catholics were therefore expected to park their brains in the foyer and accept what they were told from the pulpit without question.

Protestants sought to solve the same problem with an infallible interpretation. That’s why we have so many creeds in the denominational world.. So Protestants were also expected to park their brains in the foyer and accept without question what they were told from the pulpit.

Unity in Christ, however, transcends the flawed efforts of those who seek to improve the Bible with denominational creeds and dogmas. Trying to improve the Bible is like perfuming a rose or using a crayon to improve a picture of the sunset. Man’s additions to the Scriptures are not the solution to division, they are the problem.

It is the plan of God to unite all of the divergent factions of heaven and earth under the Headship of Christ (Eph. 1:10). Preaching Christ breaks down every barrier. In Christ there is no Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female (Gal. 3:28). In Christ even the barriers between barbarians and Scythians disappear for Christ is all, and is in all (Col. 3: 11). In Christ there is One Body, One Spirit, One Hope, One Faith, One Baptism, and One God (Eph. 4:4 - 6).

Today, as then, .the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few! Let us join with Jesus in praying that the Lord of the Harvest would send out workers into His harvest field (Matt. 9:38). As we go, let us plant only the Word of God. With the guidance of God some of this good seed will fall on good ground. We do not determine “how” it will grow, God does! Jesus explained that when a man scatters seed on the ground, though he does not know how: **“All by itself the soil produces grain — first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head.” (Mark 4:28)**

After the Ethiopian eunuch was baptized into Christ the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away and the eunuch did not see him again (Acts 8:39). Perhaps one reason for this was to permit the disciples in Africa to be guided by the Word, and not by Jewish traditions! Let us therefore plant in hope, believing that some “Apollos” will water it, and God will give the increase!