

my Father's planting

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Eternally Speaking Now



*"For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven,
And do not return there,
But water the earth,
And make it bring forth and bud,
That it may give seed to the sower
And bread to the eater,*

*So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth;
It shall not return to Me void,
But it shall accomplish what I please,
And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it."*

Isaiah 55:10-11



One of the many ways God confirmed our move to Illinois was through **trees**.
Yes, really.

Hang in there with me, and I'll explain:

- Off and on throughout the past year, the Lord quickened my spirit to various references to **trees** in the Bible
- Alongside that, the Holy Spirit caught my attention through several supposedly 'unrelated' references to the phrase, '**tree of life**'. You know how He does that: you hear it in a sermon, then you see it on a book cover, then you read it in a devotional, all within a short period of time...
- Then, when we came to Illinois to interview for the job, a **huge tree** on a piece of art at the church caught my eye; the home where we slept also had a painting of a **large tree** on the bathroom wall; and the kitchen in their house literally had a '**tree of life**' wall hanging

Sure enough, within the month after we returned home from the interview, the Lord confirmed and reconfirmed that we were to take the job. So, we moved by faith to this little rural town.

Only two weeks after moving to Illinois, I had my birthday. I was clueless how to celebrate it and asked the Lord. Guess what He whispered in response? *Indiana*. I happened to **grow up** in Indiana, and the town where I **grew up** is less than an hour away from our new home, so, that's where we went!

It turned out to be such a fun day, taking a drive (or two or three) down memory lane: my elementary school, high school, university, sorority house...

The last place we went was my childhood home. When we approached the mailbox, what greeted us was a sight to remember: all the **trees** lining the driveway were **tall** and **grown up**! This was shocking, because the last time I'd seen those **trees**, they were *small, young, and delicate*.

My dad had planted those **trees** 35 years ago-
every last one of them-
and now, there they were,
thriving, strong, tall, and beautiful.

The timing on this was a sweet blessing-- like a birthday gift from Jesus.

When we moved to Illinois last March, I left behind 9 years of **planting and watering seeds** for God's kingdom in Texas. Before that, when we moved to Texas 9 years ago, I'd left behind 16 years of **planting and watering seeds** for Him in California.

Some of those seeds I'd seen **grow and blossom**. *Others seemed to have died.* And now, He presented a picture of what happens when we **faithfully sow seeds** for His kingdom—they **grow**.

Soon thereafter, I had a discouraging day
and heard myself mutter,
*"Everything I do feels like a drop in a bucket...
a drop that evaporates."*

I was immediately convicted, as that statement is a *lie*. Sure, some efforts may evaporate, but not *everything*. This utterance revealed my heart, so I confessed to the Lord my unbelieving, grumbling attitude. Do you know how the Holy Spirit responded? I sensed Him say to my spirit,

*"Child, your words may return void, but not Mine.
Yours may evaporate, but Mine won't.
Mine will accomplish the purpose for which I send them.
So speak My Word."*

If our work, our words, our service, and our lives aren't **led** by God's Word (which He has spoken in the Bible), then yes, they may be like drops in the bucket-- drops that *evaporate* before they can **accumulate and run over**.

On the other hand, if what we do, say, and think is **fueled** by the truth of God's Word, then His promise in Isaiah 55 is **done**. He **will accomplish** the purpose for which He sends His word through us.

CHALLENGE

As you look at the picture above, notice the six front **trees** on the right. Over thirty years ago, my brother accidentally *mowed those down* after my dad had **planted** them. Yet, look at those trees now-- they're as **tall** as all the others. I had no idea those trees had survived. Now, years later, they are **thriving**.

Sometimes the **seeds we plant and water** seem *hopeless, even dead*. It isn't up to us to decide what will happen in the future-- it's our part to do what the Lord calls us to do, when He tells us to do it.

Growth takes time. After the **planting**, it takes **watering**. Alongside that, it takes **nurturing and care**. Then, once the plant is **mature**, it often takes leaving it on its own to receive **nourishment** from its natural sources.

In God's good timing, your **planting and watering** will flourish,
if it's **watered and nurtured** by the Word of God.

All of us are **planting seeds**. All day.
Our words, actions, motivations, facial expressions, even our thoughts.

Into what kingdom are you sowing?



Last week, we saw this rainbow
outside our front door.

*Notice how it serves as the
"backdrop" for the church's
fruitful community garden!*

God **gave** His rainbow to humanity
as a sign of His **faithfulness** to His
Word. (Genesis 9)

Let this picture remind you:
Not only will He keep His word **TO**
you, but He will also keep it
THROUGH you.

**Let's plant, water, and
nourish for God's Kingdom.
He is faithful to accomplish what
HE pleases, and His Word will *not*
return void.**

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