

Enjoying the Harvest

Scripture Reading — 2 Timothy 2:1-6

The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops. — 2 Timothy 2:6

A delicious joy comes with eating that first tomato or zucchini you have grown in your garden. People who grew up on farms or with gardens know this joy intimately. And it is intensified when you have been involved in the beautiful and strenuous process of helping plants grow.

In our verse for today, the farmer is rightly described as “hardworking.” As much as I enjoy gardening, I know it is hard work. I’ve learned that without a constant focus on planting and protecting the garden and doing the weeding and watering along the way, there will be a limited harvest at best. Joy comes from being intimately involved from start to finish, seeing the growth and being the “first to receive” and enjoy the bounty that comes from this hard work.

Paul, the writer of this letter, offers this comparison to Timothy (and all faithful witnesses) to make a larger point. Ministry is hard work. I’ve learned this from the aches, pains, and disappointments of serving as a Christ-follower and pastor. Like farming and gardening, it requires a singular focus and a disciplined love for the plants in the garden. Thankfully, God has given me joy in seeing people grow in “the grace that is in Christ Jesus.”

Work hard in serving others. You will find joy in sharing in the refreshing harvest of transformed lives.

Prayer

Christ Jesus, thank you for the strength of your grace to do the good and hard work of serving others. Refresh my spirit with the joy of sharing in the harvest of transformed lives. Amen.

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