

GROW: Church Planted to Flourish

Dr. John Carmichael

[Psa 92:12-13 NASB95] 12 The righteous man will flourish like the palm tree, He will grow like a cedar in Lebanon. 13 Planted in the house of the LORD, They will flourish in the courts of our God.

[Heb 10:25 NASB95] 25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging [one another;] and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

[1Ti 3:15 NASB95] 15 but in case I am delayed, [I write] so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.

[Act 20:28 NASB95] 28 "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

- In the natural world, nothing thrives without being planted.
- A tree in a pot can survive...but not flourish. A plant constantly moved never develops roots.
- "When we see a noble palm standing erect, sending all its strength upward in one bold column, and growing amid the dearth and drought of the desert, we have a fine picture of the godly man,..." Spurgeon commentary on Ps 92 as to being faithful to church.
- "The words, *not neglecting to meet together*, presumably refer to worship meetings, ... the Greek word (episynagoge) suggests some official assembly." (Guthrie)
- And spiritually, many people live like that: Visiting but not planting. Attending but not belonging. Sampling but not committing.
- Yet Scripture says: "Planted in the house of the LORD...they will flourish."
- Flourishing is not random. It is rooted.

If I truly want to grow in Christ, can I flourish spiritually without being planted in a church community?

The Word of God shows us that growth is not designed to happen in isolation; God has ordained the local church as the environment where believers are planted and flourish.

I. GOD DESIGNED GROWTH TO HAPPEN IN COMMUNITY

- a. [Psa 92:13 NASB95] 13 Planted in the house of the LORD, They will flourish in the courts of our God.
- b. [Act 2:42 NASB95] 42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.
- c. God did not design you to grow alone.
- d. The early church: Devoted themselves, Gathered consistently, Grew together
- e. Growth is not just personal; it is corporate.
- f. Practical Application: prioritize gathering with believers; engage, don't just attend; build relationships within the church
- g. Isolation weakens; community strengthens.
- h. There is no NT model of a church-less Christian.

II. BEING PLANTED IS DIFFERENT THAN ATTENDING

- a. [1Co 12:18 NASB95] 18 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired.

GROW: Church Planted to Flourish

Dr. John Carmichael

- b. Believers need each other, especially in view of their trying circumstances and as they “see the Day approaching” (10:25).
- c. There is a difference between: Showing up; Being planted
- d. Planted means: Positioned by God; Connected to a body; Rooted over time
- e. Practical Application: Make a decision: “This is my church”; Stop church-hopping; Invest your time, heart, and gifts.
- f. You cannot grow deep roots in shallow commitment.
- g. Attendance is occasional; planting is intentional.

III. THE CHURCH IS GOD’S PRIMARY GROWTH ENVIRONMENT

- a. [Eph 4:11-16 NASB95] 11 And He gave some [as] apostles, and some [as] prophets, and some [as] evangelists, and some [as] pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until 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. 14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; 15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all [aspects] into Him who is the head, [even] Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.
- b. [Col 2:19 NASB95] 19 and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God.
- c. God uses the church to grow you through: Teaching, Relationships, Accountability, Spiritual gifts
- d. Growth is not self-produced. It is body-produced.
- e. Practical Application: Sit under the Word consistently; Receive correction and encouragement; Allow others to speak into your life
- f. You need what God put in others.
- g. God didn’t design you to grow by yourself. He designed you to grow with a body.

IV. COMMITMENT CREATES STABILITY

- a. [Heb 10:25 NASB95] 25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging [one another;] and all the more as you see the day drawing near.
- b. IGNATIUS says, “When ye frequently, and in numbers meet together, the powers of Satan are overthrown, and his mischief is neutralized by your likemindedness in the faith.” To neglect such assemblies together might end in apostasy at last.
- c. Commitment produces: Stability; Consistency; Strength
- d. The enemy’s strategy: Disconnect you → weaken you → defeat you
- e. Practical Application: Be consistent in attendance; Show up even when you don’t feel like it; Value gathering as essential, not optional
- f. Commitment protects your growth.
- g. What you treat as optional will never become transformational.

V. PLANTED PEOPLE PRODUCE FRUIT

- a. [Psa 92:14 NASB95] 14 They will still yield fruit in old age; They shall be full of sap and very green,
- b. [Jhn 15:5 NASB95] 5 "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.
- c. Flourishing is not just survival. It is fruitfulness.

GROW: Church Planted to Flourish

Dr. John Carmichael

- d. Planted people: Grow steadily; Remain strong; Produce lasting fruit.
 - e. Practical Application: Stay planted long enough to see fruit; Serve and give into the house; Expect growth over time.
 - f. Fruit doesn't come quickly. It comes consistently.
 - g. If you stay planted, you will see fruit."
-
- **You don't grow best alone; you grow best planted.**
 - God has already decided where growth happens: In His house; In His people; In His design
 - You don't flourish by accident. You flourish by being planted.
 - So, the question is not: "Do I go to church?" The question is: "Am I planted?"