

Depth of Good Soil

Thoughts on Stewardship of Life

In the parable of the sower (Matthew 13) we learn that ***depth of good soil*** is necessary for us to bring forth good fruit in this life. We give thanks for all the saints who have labored to prepare this soil for us. We must all do our part to leave this soil in even better condition for the next generation and for all the generations yet to come.

In the months ahead, we will hear from some of these saints, starting with Saint Augustine. Augustine lived for a short 76 years on this earth. He was not physically here for a long time. But he was here for a *good time*.

He sowed ***good seed in the name of Jesus*** in the midst of calamity after calamity. Vandals and Visigoths and Huns, oh my! Now almost 1600 years after his passing, we reflect on what it means for us Christians to be here for good in the 21st century. From *City of God - Book X*:

“For our good, about which philosophers have so keenly contended, is nothing else than to be united to God.... We are enjoined to love this good with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength. To this good we ought to be led by those who love us, and to lead those we love.”

***I’m not here for a long time;
I’m here for a good time***



Augustine
Bishop of Hippo
in North Africa
A.D. 354 - 430

More Depth of Good Soil

Thoughts on Stewardship of Life

In the parable of the sower (Matthew 13) we learn that ***depth of good soil*** is necessary for us to bring forth good fruit in this life. We give thanks for all the saints who have labored to prepare this soil for us. Augustine tells us that ***good means to be united with God.*** From *The City of God - Book X*:

*Thus are fulfilled those two commandments on which hang all the law and the prophets: You shall **love the Lord** your God with all your heart, and with all your mind, and with all your soul; and You shall **love your neighbor as yourself** (Matthew 22:37-40). For, that we might be intelligent in our self-love, there was appointed for us an end to which we might refer all our actions, that we might be blessed. For one who loves oneself wishes nothing else than this.*

And the end set before us is to draw near to God.

And so, when we who have this intelligent self-love are commanded to love our neighbor as ourselves, what else is enjoined than that we shall do all in our power to commend to our neighbor the love of God? This is the worship of God, this is true religion, this right piety, this the service due to God only.

***We're not here for a long time;
We're here for a good time***



Augustine
Bishop of Hippo
in North Africa
A.D. 354 - 430

Sacrifice for Good Soil

Thoughts on Stewardship of Life

Good soil is necessary for us to bring forth good fruit in this life (Matthew 13). Augustine tells us that ***sacrifice is the good we do for the purpose of uniting with God.*** From *The City of God* - Book X:

And who is so foolish as to suppose that the things offered to God are needed by Him for some uses of His own? ...God has no need, not of cattle, nor any other earthly and material thing, but even of man's righteousness, and that whatever right worship is paid to God profits not Him, but man.

For no man would say he did a benefit to a fountain by drinking, or to the light by seeing. And the fact that the ancient church offered animal sacrifices, which the people of God now-a-days read of without imitating, proves nothing else than this, that those sacrifices signified the things which we do for the purpose of drawing near to God, and inducing our neighbor to do the same. A sacrifice, therefore, is the visible sacrament or sacred sign of an invisible sacrifice.

*The sacrifice of God is a broken heart: a heart contrite and humble God will not despise
(Psalm 51:17)*

***You're not here for a long time;
You're here for a good time***



Augustine
Bishop of Hippo
in North Africa
A.D. 354 - 430

Sacrifice for God

Thoughts on Stewardship of Life

Augustine tells us that ***sacrifice is the good we do for the purpose of uniting with God.***
From *The City of God* - Book X:

*The sacrifice of God is a broken heart: a heart
contrite and humble God will not despise
(Psalm 51:17)*

*God does not desire the sacrifice of a
slaughtered beast, but He desires
the sacrifice of a contrite heart.*

*God does not require these sacrifices for their
own sakes, yet He does require the sacrifices
which they symbolize.*

*Thus a true sacrifice is every work which is done
that we may be united to God in holy fellowship,
and which has a reference to that supreme good
and end in which alone we can be truly blessed.*

*He has told you, O man, what is good;
And what does the LORD require of you?
To do justice, to love kindness,
And to walk humbly with your God.
(Micah 6:8)*

***You're not here for a long time.
Give of your strength. Give of your Love.
Walk humbly with Jesus!***



Augustine
Bishop of Hippo
in North Africa
A.D. 354 - 430