

We must make sure that we, as a church, do not push everyone into a churchy alone gift. Let us not confuse our house gift with our field gift.

There can be surprises along the way

Cf. Philip & the Ethiopian Eunuch - Acts 8:27ff Here we have a flying visit, encouraged by an angel to go for God. Acts 6:3 gives us the criteria for the deacons - filled with the Spirit and Wisdom.

### 3. Even to you!

What an expression.

Why would Paul write such a thing?

Even to you. Well, they did get to Corinth. Some nations the Spirit stopped them going to but not Corinth.

Remember the first time he went to Corinth; he went there from Athens and resolved to know nothing but Christ and him crucified.

Acts 17:16ff full of idols. Vs.17 So he reasoned with them. Vs.22 I see you are very religious. Vs.23 unknown God. Vs.28 In Him we live and move and have our being. Acts 18:4 Every Sabbath Paul reasoned in the Synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks. Verse 7, he went next door and 'entire household' 'many'. Verse 9 A Vision - "I have many in this city!" Verse 11 So Paul stayed 1½ years teaching the Word of God.

1 Cor.1:18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Cf. 1 Cor.2:1-5 Jesus Christ and him crucified. Verse 4 a demonstration of the Spirit's Power.



*This is the fifth of the series, 'From the house to the field! In this session we will look at a text in 2 Corinthians where Paul talks about his field.*

#### **2 Corinthians 10:12-18 - The Message**

We're not, understand, putting ourselves in a league with those who boast that they're our superiors. We wouldn't dare do that. But in all this comparing and grading and competing, they quite miss the point.

We aren't making outrageous claims here. We're sticking to the limits of what God has set for us. But there can be no question that those limits reach to and include you. We're not moving into someone else's "territory." We were already there with you, weren't we? We were the first ones to get there with the Message of Christ, right? So how can there be any question of overstepping our bounds by writing or visiting you?

We're not barging in on the rightful work of others, interfering with their ministries, demanding a place in the sun with them. What we're hoping for is that as your lives grow in faith, you'll play a part within our expanding work. And we'll all still be within the limits God sets as we proclaim the Message in countries beyond Corinth. But we have no intention of moving in on what others have done and taking credit for it. "If you want to claim credit, claim it for God." What you say about yourself means nothing in God's work. It's what God says about you that makes the difference.

## 2 Corinthians 10:13

We, however, will not boast beyond proper limits, but will confine our boasting to the **field** God has assigned to us, a **field** that reaches even to you.

### 1. Proper Limits - God's Limitations

We were created for fellowship with God and with each other; that's why there are limitations placed upon us.

Hebrews 11:40 God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.

God never intended for us to do it all on our own. We are part of a team, both past, present and future.

cf. Elijah in 1 Kings.19:3 he was worn out & afraid.

In O.T. Rarely did a man work on his own.8

Jesus + 12; SENT 2X2; Peter+John; Barnabas+Saul;

Paul,Silas.Tim+Luke

The reason for this is that we have LIMITATIONS.

*GOD HAS ALWAYS WORKED IN ORDER & WITHIN LIMITS.*

- He created the world logically, in phases & with thought
- He set limits for the sea; cf. Job 38:8-11
- He set limits for the devil cf. Job 1:8 Have you considered my servant Job? Job 1:12 "very well, ....but on the man himself do not lay a finger." Job 2:6 "Very well, he is in your hands, but you must spare his life."
- He set order in the church cf. Early 'church' meeting in Nehemiah 8.. all the people assembled... listened attentively...all the people bowed down... the book was explained...they wept & rejoiced.
- He set limits for man; cf. Job 14:5 man's days are determined... you have set limits. cf. the parable of the Talents - the reward was the same only the '1 talent' man misused his.
- *God has no favourites.*
- Jesus chose 12 disciples - a mixed crew with different characters & talents - *to work together.*

## **WE NEED TO RECOGNIZE BOTH OUR POTENTIAL & OUR LIMITATIONS.**

Paul recognized both.....

In Philippians 4:13 'I can do all things through Christ.....'

Yet in ch.1:12 he describes himself as in chains for Christ.

ie. LIMITATIONS !

- Rom.12:5 In Christ, we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.
- 1 Cor.12:18 God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.
- Eph.4:11ff. Christ gave gifts and offices to prepare God's people for works of service.....
- Phil 2:4 ..Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.
- Peter wrote...1 Peter.4:10 ..Each one should use whatever gift he has received to help others.

### 2. Our Field

God has a plan for each of our lives; confined to our own field God has assigned a field for each of us.

We have gifts and God wants us to use those gifts, just as he said to Moses in Exodus 4:2 "What is in your hand?"

In the Scriptures we see many giftings at work. Natural talents and skills.

- Cf. Exodus 35 Building the Tabernacle  
Ex. 35:5 From what you have, take an offering for the Lord. Everyone who is willing...  
Ex. 35:35 He has filled them with skill to do all kinds of work.  
Ex. 36:2 Every skilled person to whom the Lord had given ability and who was willing to come and do the work.  
Ex. 36:6&7 So the people were restrained from bringing more , because what they already was more than enough to do all the work.  
Ex. 39:43 Moses inspected the work and saw that they had done it just as the Lord had commanded. So Moses blessed them.