

“I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.” I Corinthians 3:6

Paul humbly and correctly describes the necessity of our labor in God’s service and the necessity of God’s blessings upon our labors. As preachers ministering in Corinth, both Paul and Apollos had put in time and effort to lead the church there in the right way. Paul did the initial work of ministry there and Apollos followed. One might look at them and think the work was solely “their” work. But Paul was right in noting that it was God who had made their work fruitful. No matter how faithful and diligent we are in labor, we are still utterly dependent upon God to give the increase.

This is true of preachers and pastors, but the principle applies in other areas. Parents may find themselves frustrated at their lack of success in their children’s upbringing. Someone may be trying to warn a fellow believer from going down a dangerous path. We may have opportunities to communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ to an unbeliever. In all these cases, we *must* be faithful and do all we can by God’s grace to plant and water. The preacher must study and pray for God’s blessings on his labor. The parent must not neglect their duties to their children. In all these cases, let us be at work with great effort. But while we’re sweating in our worthy labor, remember to look to God for the increase.

Do we not need a great increase in our day? Certainly we do in our churches, in our families, in our nation. Let us look to the God of heaven and earth and petition Him to give a great increase for His glory!