

Getting ready to plant

...the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.

Matthew 9:37-38

In late winter, while I am still eating jam from summer, I am compelled to use a gardening or farming illustration in my preaching and writing. My mind and body begin to long for first sprouts, first buds, and first fruits. Again this year as Jen and I make plans and order seeds, the memories of past seasons seem to infuse the darkness-filled days of winter with hope. Because of so many of you who have partnered to resource BCP through prayer and giving, BCP sits in a similar hopeful place with memories of an abundant fall, the fruits of which are still being enjoyed. We have an eager anticipation of coming fruit even as plans and tools are being constructed and personnel trained.

This hope is real even as we see the dismal disarray of the culture around us. Churches whose members have allowed themselves to be “of” that culture instead of vibrantly living “in” that culture share in the disarray. When the church does not obey its call to reconcile the world and disciple, it becomes as debilitated as the world around it. In contrast, how hope-infusing it is to see churches who, having received the gospel with power, have obediently taken up their commission to introduce the world around them to Christ and to disciple them to join in this mission of worship. Our missionaries and directors find themselves in the middle of this spiritual spring, fighting against dead winter. Their work often leads them to fields that require workers to rework and revitalize the soil so that seeds may be sown. Out of a season of deadness, hope thrives anew as life is springing out!

I write to you at this critical juncture so that you might share in the joy of partnering with us in the first sprouts, first buds and first fruits of God's blessing. BCP has the potential of **five new church revitalization launches** in the first half of this year, as well as four new intentional discipleship training churches. We haven't forgotten the blessings of the new church plant from late fall, and these seeds and sprouts excite us about more fruit that will come!

Please continue to partner with us in prayer for our ChurchCare ministry, which will be walking several churches through the difficult work of closure. Even in this difficult task we are reminded of the hope of spring and that we serve a God of resurrection! By seeking to honor God through the ChurchCare closure process, close to 50 people could be more engaged in gospel outreach and upwards of \$500,000 re-invested in camps, missions and church planting.

Many of you were already a part of all this as you have prayed and given toward this work. Thank you! Your partnership has allowed us to regularly work with 70 churches. I wish I could update you on all the amazing stories taking place in each church, but I will settle for sharing the encouraging work taking place in a few.



Jon Jenks, President



One such church that is investing in intentional discipleship for their men and women is now experiencing the fruit God brings as His churches seek Him, disciple, work together with other churches, and see God multiply their impact.

This church is now helping train several new churches in discipleship this spring. They are also building up a BCP missionary couple between assignments so that they might be relaunched into what God desires for them in the coming year. To us, this is akin to the impact that Ephesus had on Epaphras who then helped plant and serve the churches in Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis. In Colossians 4, we see a team that included Tychicus, Onesimus, Philemon, Nympha, Mark, Archippus, and others...propelled by prayer, faithful service, a love for one another, and the high calling of the gospel of Jesus Christ!

Another restart church plant that BCP is serving was able to begin intentional discipleship and is also now getting ready to train their own men and help another local church near them with theirs! They have begun training to reach the large Hindu population in their town. They have prayed earnestly as a core, and they have seen a stream of their contacts coming to church with **13 different ethnic groups in one service recently**. Another church that some of you have invested in has, in the last five years, begun intentional discipleship, trained their own new assistant pastor, begun to grow numerically, developed a culture of care and encouragement, helped train other churches in intentional discipleship, and now has begun to invest in another church to help them in revitalization. Your investment in a church like that has multiplied into their directly impacting six other churches!

Sometimes the investment one makes in gardening or missions seems mundane or uninspiring. Laying out a garden, sharpening a hoe, writing missions' strategy or process, depositing gifts in accounts and sending receipts can go unnoticed. Likewise, many of those who invest hours upon hours in prayer or who resource the work of missions through giving may not see the full effect of the impact they are having. But these faithful investments in ministry, in whatever form God enables His people to use their giftings and resources, are all part of what it takes to create a fertile mission field that bears fruit.

As we anticipate assisting almost 20 new churches this year, you can feel the hope of spring and its coming fruit. I trust you can also see the necessity of our preparation and the need for funding that helps us put prepared personnel in place. These churches, some of whom are struggling, invest \$1500 toward their own coaching. Would you help us close the gap? For every three churches or families sacrificially giving \$125 a month, BCP is able to serve one church. It takes over \$6000 a year per church to cover the coaching, training, and background support work needed to nurture the multitude of fruit that can last and multiply for years from that one church. **Would you join us again to further the work of the gospel and strengthen churches with a gift today?**

Thank you for helping us nurture these sprouts and reinvest the fruit, whether it be through your prayers or your financial partnership. May God raise up another of these churches or a team of churches to plant another church this year from your investments.



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