



**SERVICE TIMES:**

Sunday : 9:30 AM  
10:30 AM  
5:00 PM  
Wednesday: 7:00 PM

**ELDER**

Todd Cox Jimmy Griffith  
Travis Everett Paul White

**DEACONS:**

Derek Anderson Bret Cox  
James Dow Patrick Gaughan  
Ryan Griffith Dan Harbin  
Craig Hecht Danny Meek  
Skyler Meek Phil Parker  
Jay Silvers Jason Stannard  
Travis Starling Bryan Tacker  
Steve Turquette Eric Wise

**EVANGELIST**

Paul White

CEDAR PARK CHURCH OF CHRIST



God's work in God's way  
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January 31, 2021

**Spiritual Gardening**

One of the things that I love to do is garden vegetables. Over the years that I have been gardening, I have made just about every mistake you could imagine. I could write a book of what NOT to do. Have I planted without any kind of fertilizer? Yes. Planted a sun loving plant in the shade? Yep. Planted onions in hard clay? Shaking my head, yes. Planted perennial herbs right in the middle of an annual bed? Check. Planted vegetables too close to a tree? Uh huh. Planted during the wrong growing season? Looking down and nodding. And the list goes on.

As you can see, I have had my fair share of gardening misfortunes. Thankfully, I have at least learned that if I want to take a plant and get what I want from it, then I better consider the needs of the plant. The plant is not going to succeed and produce quality fruits or vegetables, if I do not provide it with what it needs.

There is a spiritual application to make here. We are compared to a plant and instructed to bear good fruits.

Romans 7:4 "Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God."

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Two horizontal lines for a signature or message.

John 15:7-8 “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.”

Just like a plant has certain needs that must be met to provide fruit, we also have needs that must be met, if we are to show “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” (Galatians 5:22-23).

### **We need light.**

John 8:12 “Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

### **We need water.**

John 3:5, “Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”

### **We need nutrients.**

1 Peter 2:2 “Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation.”

2 Timothy 3:16-17 “All scripture is breathed out by God, and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

Before a plant gets to maturity, it must survive windy days, cold snaps, pounding rain, and times of drought and heat. For us, we will face times of discouragement, sin, disease, loss, and persecution. But God promises to be with us and help us grow stronger during these times.

James 1:2-4 “Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds. For you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”

During the growth process, there are a lot of important lessons for us to learn. We learn to value the importance of tending to our garden, so the cares and weeds of this world do not take over. We humbly rely on God and his care and provision to protect us from the elements of life. We learn patience, as growth is often a slow process and does not happen as quickly as we would like. We learn trust as we look to God to establish us and to use us for His purpose. We learn to experience setbacks, but we know that we are not defined by them. We learn to give God the glory, because positive change is never the result of our efforts alone. We learn how sweet it is to bear the fruits of the spirit! May each of us be encouraged to seek growth that comes from the Lord so we may bear much fruit!

Lettuce do good, squash the bad, and turnip to where we need to be.

Psalm 1:1-3 “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.”

- Derek Anderson

### **YOU DON'T HAVE TO APOLOGIZE FOR...**

- |                          |                                 |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Doing your best          | Being true to the Lord          |
| Telling the truth        | Acknowledging your sins         |
| Living a pure life       | Thinking before speaking        |
| Thinking before acting   | Being honest in business        |
| Forgiving your enemies   | Being courteous and kind        |
| Hearing before judging   | Harboring only pure thoughts    |
| Helping a fallen brother | Sympathizing with the afflicted |

*“There is a God shaped vacuum in the heart of every man which cannot be filled by any created thing, but only by God, the Creator, made known through Jesus.”*

- Blaise Pascal