

“God Has Promised There Will Be a Good Harvest”

Philippians 4:6-20

The harvest is over for most of our farmers. From what I have heard, there was nothing to be anxious about. The Lord provided his bounty. The Lord provided much more than anyone thought would be provided (oh say) around late July. It seemed like He did not provide enough rain. It seemed like He was ignoring our prayer, “Give us this day our daily bread.” The Lord provided. There was no need to be anxious.

Now, this does not mean that our farmers had a good harvest because they prayed “hard enough” – whatever that means. Scripture says “the rain falls on the righteous and the unrighteous.” Luther rightly states in his Small Catechism that “God indeed gives daily bread to everyone, even to all evil people.”

It is not a question of what do I need to do to get God’s attention to make sure that He provides. The reality is: God provides – period. The reality also is that you will have years like our farmers did this past year. In the spring of the year, it would not stop raining. The farmers couldn’t get into the fields. For the ones who started extra early and got some seed in the ground, it would not get warm enough for the early seed in the ground to bring forth life. When it finally did dry out, it

seemed like planting crops so late could be a disaster. That seed has a cost.

There was much anxiety. Many prayers were made for the rain to stop. God heard your prayer. The rain stopped; and stopped; and stopped some more. Then we got anxious; and then we prayed for rain.

It was a year filled with stress. God did not answer our prayer in the way that we wanted Him to answer. We prayed for good weather for planting, and we got rain. We prayed for rain in the middle of summer and we got “good planting weather.” It seemed like God had it all wrong. If He really wanted to bless us, why did everything seem backwards? Why wouldn't He just bless us in the way we wanted to be blessed? It would be easier on us all. We wouldn't have to be anxious, and He wouldn't have to listen to all our complaining that we call “prayers.”

We had a year filled with anxiety and stress. But the problem was not with God not listening. The problem was with us not listening. Paul says, “Do not be anxious about anything.” The secret to joy in this life is to be content in all situation – whether you are faced with hunger or an abundance. Be content and know that God provides. Just because He does not answer you prayer in the way you want or in the timeliness you desire, it does not mean that He does not hear and provide according to His good and gracious will.

This growing season was a microcosm of our lives. We faced the unknown. We were filled with fear and doubt. We were anxious. And all of this was unnecessary. But it was not until the harvest that God revealed that He had answered the prayers of our farmers and gave them a yield far beyond anything they could have expected.

This past year is a lot like your life, except we have a clear advantage over the farmers. God has promised there will be a good harvest. We get anxious about many things. We pray for what we think we need. And then we pray for things to get back to the way they were before. Paul says, “Do not be anxious about anything . . . but pray for everything . . . let your requests be made known to God . . . and do all of this with thanksgiving.”

Rain will come. Sunshine will come. Rarely will they come exactly when you want it. Even when it seems like the opposite of what you are asking for keeps happening, it does not mean that God is not hearing and answering your prayer. He has promised there will be a good harvest. Amen.