

Sowing to the Culture 2

Compiled by Kirk Irwin

Scripture:

John 4: 27-38

Quote:

“...how does the Christian *specifically* begin to sow...? I believe that sowing to the American culture will be the great missionary strategy of the next century...”

Note: Downs lists seven specific ways that sowing to the culture can happen. In previous weeks we dealt with the first 4, this AM let's talk about the final three..

5 through 7:

1. *We must revalue the role of the sower*
2. We must talk within our churches (and groups) about how to sow
3. *We must train our youth in the philosophy and basic skills of sowing*
4. *We must encourage training and education for advanced areas of sowing*
5. *We must create support structures for our sowers*
“Nothing is harder than the task you have to do alone – and no word describes the sowers current status better.”

Note: This seems like a “no-brainer”. Why else would we be meeting together? Do you think the church in general – the greater universal church – gets it? Do you think the church in the city gets it? If not why not? If so how can we take responsibility to “assist” our brothers and sisters?

6. *We must prepare for the long haul*
“The most difficult change in attitude for Christians will be the shift from the short-term to a long-term view of ministry – in some cases, a **very** long term view...It's interesting to note that many of the sixties radicals who once advocated revolution and the overthrow of the system are now **part** of the system. That isn't to say that they gave up all of their radical ideas; some of them simply chose to go about their goals in a different way. They chose to sow, and to do so they had to agree to invest their lives in a slow, long-term process of working from within the system. Perhaps we can learn something from them.”

Note: Again, why has it been difficult for the church universal to adjust to or even to accept? How can we “assist” our brothers and sisters in this process?

7. We must be willing to accept unmeasurable results
“A basic axiom of ministry is: *If you work in ministry, you must be willing to accept the fact that you will never know exactly what you are producing.* Jesus reminded us that tares are almost impossible to distinguish from wheat, and it will take God to sort it all out in the end. That shouldn't discourage us from harvesting – and it shouldn't discourage us from sowing either. *All* forms of ministry are ultimately *unmeasurable*, but that doesn't render them *unvaluable*. To embrace the ministry of sowing, we will have to recognize the value of something that refuses to be quantified or measured.”

Exercise: Take the list of seven suggestions that Downs proposes and write down some action points. Rather than talking about why there are these problems in the church lets think about ways to fulfill our responsibilities as being a part of "the body of Christ".