

harvest time  
(a repeat daily)

"but when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come." mark 4:29

i was communicating with a friend the other day. she is an avid gardener and we talked about how we loved to watch things grow and how amazing it was. there is a planting and there is a harvest. "to everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven."  
eccl 3:1

a dear friend keeps my yard for me but i like to have a few indoor plants to grow and watch the wonder of God's Word at work. years ago i used to grow african violets because i think they are pretty. (a former boss got me started on them.) someone reminded me of that recently and i was enticed to order three again to grow.

i told my friend that one is very healthy and growing. one is semi-healthy and struggling to put forth new growth. the final one is very sickly with just a tiny blob emerging. i told her it was on life support and i had begun talking to it and commanding it to "live," in Jesus name. (you may think that silly but that name has all authority.) unless i am being deceived, i think i see a tiny leaf struggling to grow.

you may ask why i am speaking so much about plants. well the truth is we are all much like these three little violets i am attempting to grow. of course, we all know the parable Jesus told about sowing seeds and how some prospered and some did not. see mark, chapter

four if you need refreshing.)

speaking of my violets again - the healthy one is looking good and i expect to see blooms from it before too long. that's how "healthy" christians are too. they may have gone through times of pruning before, but now they are walking purposefully with God and are ready to bloom and produce the fruit He wants from their lives.

then we have the semi-healthy ones. perhaps they want to do better, to be better, but they keep getting distracted by various things. i know we must all be diligent to perform the needed tasks, but not to the neglect of the Lord. i have often thought before that there just wasn't time to pray. i have since learned better. it's amazing how God can multiply your available time when you put Him first. time is like the parable of the loaves and fishes. He can multiply anything.

the worry i have for these brethren is that they might be perceived by God as those who are "neither hot nor cold." and because of that, "so then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth." rev 10:10 i don't want that for them. God doesn't want that for them, but He doesn't want some mealy mouthed, uncommitted christians. He wants "choosers." (do you remember the message i wrote about the fence?)

then we come to the sickly ones on life support. they have believed in the grace God offers and rejoiced in it at one time. then, perhaps slowly, they began to be

deceived by the message the world was offering. things like real love means being free to love anyone. after all, we were given free will and just maybe we want something different from the norm - different from God's way. God's wants us to be happy and you just can't be happy living His way.

soon their spirit becomes calloused like tough skin on one's hands or feet. it becomes so hardened that it mat be cut away without any pain whatsoever. friends, it is that pain that lets us know there is a problem; that lets us know something is wrong and danger lies ahead.

"then you returned and wept before the Lord, but the Lord would not listen to your voice nor give ear to you." deut 1:45 one cannot come to the Lord unless the Holy Spirit draws them. perhaps He has spoken and spoken and you would not listen. now He will not listen to you.

life support indeed. venturing close to the firey fires of hell. a place there is no coming back from. "between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us." luke 16:26 and we're talking forever.

heavenly Father, in Your great, abundant mercy i pray that You call again to those standing of the brink of eternity. grant ears to hear, eyes to see and a truly repentant heart. speak once again to their spirit before the plunge into that great abyss - separation from You forever. in the name of Jesus i pray.

addendum: all my violets have died since. they just need more attention than i was willing to give them without blooms that gave me pleasure. perhaps that should be a lesson to us all. it reminds me of the parable in luke, except the vinedresser asked for one more year. "then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, 'look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. cut it down; why does it use up the ground?'" luke 13:7 something is either useless or producing fruit. His Spirit shall not always strive with man.