

May 15, 2020

Good Morning, Everybody.

It's about 8 a.m., and I just came in from watering our little garden. Four tomato plants (two of which already show tiny tomatoes), fifteen to twenty lettuce plants (three varieties; all doing great!), six or seven kale plants, and three small beds of dilapidated beans.



Anybody is supposed to be able to grow beans. That's what I've read, and that's what I keep reproaching myself about whenever I look at our sorry stands of beans. I've replanted them twice already. There are still enough bean seeds in the last big package to replant some of the rows a third time. So I might as well make use of them and try again.

Somebody shared with me a few weeks ago that Al Ellison says not to plant beans until after May 1, because before that the soil is still too chilly for the seeds to sprout well. So I probably made a fatal mistake this year, not once, but three times already, because many of our seeds never broke out of the ground.

My gardeners for inspiration are Layton Talbert and Sarah Brazeal. They don't know that (smile). But whenever I get a tiny chance, I sort of furtively inquire about how their plants are doing, and then as they begin to describe the bounty each year I try to listen really carefully to see if I can learn anything. From Dr. Talbert I generally come away thinking that I just don't dream big enough. I should plant fifty or a hundred tomato plants. Or an acre of beans. When I listen to Sarah, I feel like gardening must just be sort of pleasant for some people; almost like a nice rewarding year-round hobby. Her garden actually keeps growing things in the winter!

I wish that it could be that way for me, but the weeds, the ground hog that ate the tops off all the beans two years ago (one audacious time right while our family was staring incredulously at him through the window!), the mosquitoes starting to swarm about this time every year, and the baffling variety of leaf eating bugs and tomato blights all sort of dampen any of the hobby-like feelings for me. I'm truly into gardening to try to put a little something edible on my plate.

Sometimes it happens. Enough at least to keep me trying again each spring; sort of like the old trick of a carrot's being dangled in front of a horse's nose.

I thought I could show you the "carrots" I'm seeing each morning that have me hopeful again this year.



I also should show you Linda's lettuce patch. She's doing great.



I'm too embarrassed to show you the beans. But if something comes of the next replant I might send a picture; just to let you see that you might want to check with brother Ellison before you start going around planting things (smile).

Many are the Afflictions

There was a Puritan pastor named Oliver Heywood, whose best-known work is entitled, *Heart Treasure*. It was a series of sermons which he preached on the basis of Matthew 13:52, *Every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a head of a household, who brings out of his treasure things new and old.*

Heywood encourages Christians to be like Joseph, and to lay up an abundance of spiritual corn in years of plenty, so that in a time of scarcity they may have much upon which to feed. By this, he means that Christians should lay up in their hearts the things that they've seen with their eyes and the feelings that they've had in their souls that have taught them the vanity of worldly things and the excellency of heavenly things.

You cannot be too young to collect experiences; you cannot be too old to recollect and improve them. If your green heads would use diligence, your grey hairs would arrive at large experiences. By which means the works and loads of old age would be easy which were almost intolerable in your younger years.

When a soul is at a pinch, and the heart struck dead with a sudden surprisal, so that the thoughts are puzzled, experience comes in to bring relief. It represents the matter as feasible, since it calls to mind as arduous a case [from the past] which yet was not insuperable. "Why mayest thou not get through [this new trial] as well as formerly," asks experience?

And thus it marshals the soul's faculties . . . and brings it through the present . . . with order and victory.

*Every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a head of a household, who brings out of his treasure **things new and old.***

Tomorrow I want to give you an example of the kinds of "treasures" that Heywood laid up for his own use as years went by. But for today, I thought I'd just lay before you his suggestion that **experiences** are **treasures** to be valued and laid up to meet needs in the future that we know nothing about right now. What might be the application of that to you or to your children today?

Praying for You this Morning,

Pastor Minnick