

Elder Bobby Willis



9-2-14 God Gives the Increase

I Corinthians 2:6, **“I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.”**

Several years ago a freshly ordained young man asked me what the process was of my preparing a sermon. I gave him basically the following short version of what I try to do when praying and asking of the Lord what text to use at any given time. There are three basic steps: 1- Search and study the scriptures. 2- Rightly divide the word of truth. 3- Pray that God adds the increase. II Timothy 2:15 teaches this in order for it to be approved of God (increase given). Normally I would not necessarily list it this way, but did so in answer to his question. When I mentioned the praying part for God to give the increase, he told me he had tried that ONE time and it didn't work and he wasn't going to do that any more. Time proved that he was a man of his word. The Apostle Paul, in I Corinthians 2:6 is stating a process which had taken place in laboring with the Corinthian church during a time when there was much envying, strife, and divisions among them (I Cor. 3:3). He went on to say they were carnal (in the flesh) and were not walking (or led) by the spirit of God. We see this way too much today in all denominations, both by ministers and the congregations. Supposedly called men of God spend too much time preaching canned, dry (spiritless) sermons void of God's approval, that they are starving God's people to death. I am in no way an authority on preaching, but I do know when I hear a man preaching **“in demonstration of the Spirit of God and of power”** (I Cor. 2:4). You see, Paul had **“planted”** (taught the foundational truths of God's word to the Corinthian church), Apollos had **“watered”** (re-taught and confirmed what Paul had taught), and then God had **“added the increase”** of His Spirit that it might be profitable to the glory of God. When a man is to feed the sheep (preach the word), he must remember three important things found in verse 7, **“So then neither is**

1. **he that planteth any thing, neither**

2. he that watereth; but
(3) God that giveth the increase.”

Did I mention that all of this must begin and end in humble prayer that whatever we may say will be to the glory of God? Each humble servant of God must find the way and manner in which he can feel the approval of God and not rely on commentaries, man taught preacher schools, or his own private interpretations; but to rely on the Spirit of God to guide his efforts to study and proclaim God’s word **“in demonstration of the Spirit of God and of power”**. Relying on God beats self anytime. *Think about it!*