



... Heart to Heart ...

I grew up in West Texas where cotton was the major crop. We lived in an agricultural area and I drove a tractor for several years helping different farmers. One thing the farmers would talk about, and it seemed to be repeated every year, was their cotton crop. One farmer talks of how he has all stalk with little cotton. Another talks about how small his stalks were, but they produced an abundance. In all of this talk, not once did a farmer blame the stalk! A stalk will only produce what nutrients it brings in. The more water and nutrient intake, the better the stalk will produce. That's the nature of all growth. Farmers around here that grow their crops will tell you the same thing. We go through droughts and in the drought, have you ever heard a farmer blame the stalk or vine for their lack of produce? The stalk or vine is always at the mercy of what it takes in.

Take some time and read Ephesians 3:14-21. Look carefully at what Paul prays for the saints. Look closely at the intake. Our intake will determine our output. Notice: strength comes from the Spirit to our inner being (v.16). Christ is to dwell in the heart through faith (v.17). We are to be rooted and grounded in His love. It's all about taking in what's provided. What we see is we can have all of Christ we want to take in, it's up to us. God provided us access to Himself through Jesus and wants to work within us to grow His fruit (Gal. 5:22-23). Our intake will determine our output!!

Being in Christ is not a "self help" program or a "self improvement" course. It's not about the power of positive thinking or pulling ourselves up by our own strength. The output of all this thinking will be misery and failure. Do we really want to grow? Are we willing to let Christ rule in our heart (Col. 3:15)? Are we allowing His word to richly dwell within us (Col. 3:16)?

The cotton stalk, corn stalk or bean vine bears as nutrient is provided. I never have seen a stalk or vine quit because it couldn't bear with the right nutrient. What about us? Why do some fail and give up? Why is Christianity a burden to some? Why do people quit? What do you think is missing? Think about it!!!

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