

**Scriptures and Doctrine :: Farming verses hunting: Examples/stories/parables in the bible**

**Farming verses hunting: Examples/stories/parables in the bible - posted by Compton (), on: 2010/3/20 23:40**

Something for everyone to comment on,

I've noticed that the bible seems to have a favorable bias towards farmers over hunters. For instance, Esau the hunter gave up his birthright, while Nimrod the powerful hunter was rebellious towards the Lord.

On the other hand many of the parables of the Lord involve seed sowing and knowing a tree by its fruit. I can't seem to recall a single parable that likens the kingdom of God to hunting game. (Maybe I'm wrong.)

I'm not hinting at some vegetarian message here. (As we say in the country, if the Lord didn't intend for us to eat animals, why did he make them out of meat?) Rather, I was perhaps wondering if the farmer mindset is simply more in tune with the unseed wisdom of God. Is there something spiritually wise inherent in a planter's methodical diligence versus a hunter's bravado scoring for food. One relies more on effort and the other skill. One plans for the future, the other reacts to the opportunity.

I've been considering this issue for a while now in the business context. I've noticed there is a better wisdom in approaching business like a farmer who plants crops patiently and harvests them, versus a hunter who must rely on opportunism. Indeed, civilization didn't really begin until farming began.

I feel that the Kingdom of God touches and aligns all spheres of our lives, from home, church, community, and business. With that in mind, does anyone else see this favor towards farming, and not so much towards hunting in scripture?

My apologies to hunters:)

Mike

**Re: Farming verses hunting: Examples/stories/parables in the bible - posted by AlreadyMind (), on: 2010/3/21 8:48**

Your question is interesting, but I think you would have to play some serious biblical hopscotch to develop this into a system of theology. Romans 10, and Romans 14 would probably annul any old testament benefits because the kingdom of God is neither meat nor drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

The New Covenant is rarely concerned with external forms of spirituality. It is fundamentally concerned with a heart that can rejoice in Christ no matter what the person does with their vocation. Providing that vocation is not contrary to the word of God. I am not positive, but I am willing to bet that hunting in the area of Israel is not as lucrative of a pursuit as it is in European or American continents simply because of the amount of fauna to be found. Which could be a reason it is not mentioned as much in scripture. But one would have to ask an Anthropologist such things :)

**Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2010/3/21 12:43**

Thanks AlreadyMind,

Quote:  
 -----serious biblical hopscotch to develop this into a system of theology.  
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I agree it's a flimsy premise for a system:)

I wasn't so much interested in determining outward forms of spirituality or the merit of vocations per se. Just considering how often planting is used as a metaphor to explain spiritual truths.

Your thoughts of pointing out the regional cultural and ecological history of bible lands as an explanation for any possible agricultural bias makes sense.

File my question under casual coffeeshop talk. :)

MC

**Re: Farming verses hunting: Examples/stories/parables in the bible - posted by twayneb (), on: 2010/3/21 14:40**

Interesting post. Since we are just sitting around having a cup of java and talking about it...

I don't think I would have ever made that connection, but it is interesting. I don't think God has anything against hunters. My family's red meat consists almost entirely of deer I harvest during deer season here in Missouri, and I feel like God blesses my hunting. Sure, there is a little bit of water-cooler banter (or gun and bait shop banter depending on your stereotype) about the deer killed and the circumstances of each hunt.

But you make a great point in that the principle of sowing and in patience reaping is a major kingdom principle and the idea of corporate style dog-eat-dog opportunism is completely foreign to the kingdom of God. I have studied this same idea as I have considered leadership in the body of Christ. Diakonos vs. Archon leadership.

Interesting post.

Travis

**Re: More thoughts on the bias towards farming as a spiritual metaphor - posted by Compton (), on: 2010/3/22 0:14**

More coffee talk...

Within my profession of creative services, people often rely on their talent to produce results, which can be highly volatile. Creatives are infamous for living under 'feast or famine' cycles. Many Christians also seem to live in cycles of feast or famine when it comes to their spiritual characters. Just as many artists believe such struggle is part of their noble calling, many Christians come to accept their inward instability as part of spiritual warfare.

Our firm, which is managed by fellow Christians, has discovered a simple concept for creating prosperous stability: we consciously switched our primary metaphor for business development from hunting to farming. We do this by looking for ways to depend less on individual cunning talent and more on shared basic diligence.

The difference between talent and diligence is not unlike the difference between offense and defense in American football. It is traditionally held that offense relies much more on skill to 'make something happen', while defense can rely more on diligent execution. (Neither O or D is purely skill or diligence of course, but the ratios are different.) That is why it is often said that 'defense wins games.'

In our business, whenever we implement shared processes and systems that reduce the need for genius levels of talent, we enable the business outcome to be more predictable, and therefore more secure. We liken these processes to growing an apple tree. The metaphor goes something like this:

Most creatives, (and most small businesses owners) have a deeply ingrained 'scarcity mentality' because they approach business development like hunting woolly mammoths. When they bag one, they skin everything they can off the bones, make clothing out of the fur, and even lampshades out of the skin. In a short while they are hungry again, so they must begin the hunt all over.

In our small creative firm we finally agreed that this is a weary cycle. So we decided on a new metaphor for feeding ourselves: growing an apple tree. For us this meant no longer hunting for mammoths...or even hunting for apples, but developing a community of people who could grow apples. But even before looking for the right people we looked for the right soil to plant in. This is perhaps the most important point...we began not with looking for the juiciest apples we could find, or the ablest workers...but the richest soil we could find to build our community upon and plant our apple trees in. We decided on a God-honoring soil with basic servant, compassion, and integrity values that inspired people to build a lasting culture, not live as mercenaries.

Next we began building a cohesive set of shared systems and processes through every function of the company, from business development to product development. At first people struggled with this concept, because creatives naturally ha

ve their favorite hunting grounds so to speak, but after a few years we began to see a collaborative stable community emerge where previously only a tribe of opportunists lived together out of mutual advantage. Instead of eaters and looters, we began to see planters and builders. Finally the owners began to plan their personal compensation from end-result fruits like hopeful farmers, instead of skinning the top layer off of gross revenues like scarcity minded hunters.

Now this emerging culture in our company is more like a farm than a hunting party. Instead of the cynical cycle of feast or famine there is overlapping cycles of harvest from these investments. True there are seasons in our markets, but we see now we can have different harvests for different seasons.

To stay in the metaphor a little longer, I can say there are still hunters in our company. I am one of them. But the culture is not ruled by hunters, but by farmers...if people can understand my meaning.

The ultimate benefit for this cultural shift, is that our company, much like a farm or a vineyard, can actually become an asset that is handed down to the next generation of owners. Such an achievement is simply not possible with a hunting culture...which is why civilization began with the plow.

While I am not insisting that this is some grand theology, I do think there is some worthwhile correlations in spiritual things. Admittedly, I can only begin to surmise what they are. In general I do believe wisdom looks more like daily discipline than turbulent talent, and relies less on opportunity and more on planning. In our day we may have gained much scientific knowledge, but I often consider some 19th century wisdom we may have lost.

First off, the idea of "religion" has gotten a bad reputation in recent years. 150 years ago, religion was not a pseudonym for dead formalism as it is today, but a reference to the practice of disciplined spirituality. (Ex. "methodism") I think the wisdom of growing a seed into a harvest is a concept lost on many 'spirit-filled' people today in the 21st century. Perhaps the reason that disciplined cultivation of character and spirituality is viewed with suspicion in the 21st century is because we have lost some of the farmer ethic and ethos of earlier days.

Edit: just some thoughts..

Blessings,

MC

**Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2010/3/22 17:15**

Compton:

Pardon me while I get a refill...

OK! Fantastic. Kingdom principles do work in every area of life, not just behind stained glass windows. In fact, the church is the church all the time, not just behind stained glass windows.

It is interesting how the corporate mentality has invaded the church. This is the antithesis of Christ's intent. As a body we are called to operate differently than the world. We all contribute in our unique giftings and as a result we bear fruit. There can be no "lone rangers" in the body of Christ. We are called to dependence on the Holy Spirit and interdependence on each other.

Travis

**Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2010/3/23 1:49**

Thanks twayneb,

Quote:

-----Kingdom principles do work in every area of life, not just behind stained glass windows  
-----

Indeed, they do work. Besides that, we can add another reasoning; hopefully our conformity in every sphere of life with such verses as James 5:7 reflect Christ's character in quiet, but exemplary and instructive ways.

James 5:7 Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains.

How can a Christian express Christ in all spheres of life? One way is by patient diligence. Sometimes, by exercising such meekness to work hard with contentment in God while in outward areas such as business, we allow the Holy Spirit to yield precious produce in our own inward soil.

Blessings!

MC

**Re: Farming verses hunting: Examples/stories/parables in the bible - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/3/23 3:22**

I enjoyed pondering this question, What came to mind was Cain and Abel, Cain was a farmer yet His offering wasn't pleasing to the Lords. I don't think there is any bias but the spiritual thought of this looking at the attitude and spirit of a farmer and the attitude of a hunter those are two very different people. I look at this point from a spiritual stance and see how a farmer by faith plants a seed and takes care of it and trusts in God to let it grow, while the hunter who may still very well have faith in God goes for what He is after and kills it. I could say the Full Gospel is like a Farmer planting a field planting seeds even if it doesn't seem to "take root" in the hearts but faithful sowing seed, Then the hunter going right for the kill of an animal sometimes prematurely could be our modern day evangelism. I am neither farmer or hunter but I believe if I had to choose the correct attitude it would be the farmer but out of impatience and unbelief would be like the Hunter.

Just some thoughts  
God Bless,  
Matthew

**Re: Farmer or Hunter? - posted by NotMyOwn\_tm, on: 2010/4/6 22:33**

Whether farmer or hunter, animals (part of creation) suffer. They have all fallen under the curse of man's SIN. Rom 8: For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now...

This isn't an "either/or", in God's eyes, for we humans are all sinners. Neither farmer nor hunter are "better".

Even in farming, animals suffer: A righteous man has regard for the life of his animal, But even the compassion of the wicked is cruel. Prov 12:10

We are fallen creatures. The world is fallen. His creation suffers and cries out awaiting for His return. In complete humility, whether farmed or hunter, we should give thanks for the offering of their lives - a prototype blood offering (Leviticus), that we might live.

Read Job 40 and see the love, care, outpouring of concern and knowledge the Lord has over his creation - an intimate understanding of their lives. He breathes life into them...

And how much more so, ours.....

**Re: - posted by Miccah (), on: 2010/4/7 0:30**

Not too sure what you are trying to say. Animals were made that man would have dominion over them. This includes eating them.

Blessings

**Re: Why we eat animals... - posted by NotMyOwn\_tm, on: 2010/4/7 13:33**

Hi, Christiaan

We eat animals because sin came into the world. Answers in Genesis has a great article on why humans and animals suffer - that pre-fall, both were vegetarians. <http://www.answersingenesis.org/articles/nab/why-does-creation-include-suffering>

Do I eat meat? Yes. But I eat it with thanksgiving, knowing the price - life - that was paid. I once produced corporate/industrial films, and after touring slaughterhouses, I can testify to the fact that animals truly do suffer and die needlessly horrific deaths. As Christians, we only buy our meat from local farmers who provide a good life and good death for their beasts. It's all part of stewardship. For us to eat factory-grown and factory-slaughtered meat would be a sin, I guess is another way of stating it.

Prov 12:10 A righteous man has regard for the life of his animal, But even the compassion of the wicked is cruel.