

I Am An Environmentalist

(leadership in kids ministry)

I am an environmentalist.

Some farmers are only concerned about planting the seed, and hoping for the harvest. They figure, the more seed they throw, the more they will reap. So they toss piles and piles of seeds at the ground. Doesn't matter what kind of ground it is...they just keep throwing seeds.

Sometimes the seed falls on a hard path, and the birds come and eat it. Sometimes the seed falls on soil that's full of thistles and thorns and the planting that grows is choked out and never flourishes. Sometimes the seed falls on rocky soil and it springs up quick, but rapidly withers away. Thankfully, some does fall on good soil, and it grows and multiplies and brings a good crop.

My thought is—I need to be an environmentalist. I need to help the soil become good soil. I need to add nutrients to it, water it, till it, care for it, so that when the seed is planted, it can go deep in and the seed can flourish.

It's not enough to simply hurl more seed at rocky soil. Instead of throwing the seed harder, pull the stones! Become a landscaper.

It's not enough to pile seed on top of the hard path. Till it. Water it. Break up the hard ground and water it and help it become soft. Then it can receive the good seed. But until you have addressed the soil condition, the seed will not flourish.

Throwing seed into a thorn patch, and "hoping for the best," shows lack of understanding. Before you fling the seed into the plot, remove as many thorns as you can.

As you can see, I'm not just a planter. I am concerned about the harvest in children's lives, and that's why I'm concerned about the environment which these children come from, the environment we are maintaining in our children's ministry, and the attitudes with which the children enter our ministry groups.

If we truly desire a great harvest, we must not only plant seed (teach the Word), but we must also create an environment where children's hearts will be open, soft, responsive and disencumbered BEFORE we plant. Burying children in seed will not ensure healthy spiritual growth. But if we will create an emotionally, socially and spiritually healthy environment, even a little seed will flourish.

-by Randy Christensen, January 4, 2006