

God does too exist!

A man went to a barbershop to have his hair cut and his beard trimmed. As the barber began to work, they began to have a good conversation. When they eventually touched on the subject of God, the barber said: "I don't believe that God exists." "Why do you say that?" asked the customer.

"Well, you just have to go out in the street to realize that God doesn't exist. Tell me, if God exists, would there be so many sick people? Would there be abandoned children? If God existed, there would be neither suffering nor pain. I can't imagine a loving God Who would allow all of these things."

The customer thought for a moment, but didn't respond because he didn't want to start an argument. The barber finished his job and the customer left the shop. Just after he left the barbershop, he saw a man in the street with long, stringy, dirty hair, and an untrimmed beard. He looked dirty and unkempt. The customer turned back and entered the barber shop again and he said to the barber: "You know what? Barbers do not exist." "How can you say that?" asked the surprised barber. "I am here, and I am a barber. And I just worked on you!"

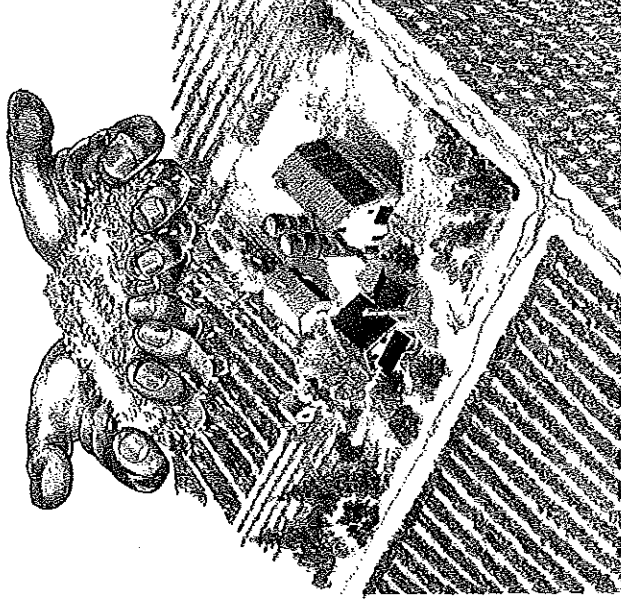
"No!" the customer exclaimed. "Barbers don't exist because if they did, there would be no people with dirty, long hair, and untrimmed beards, like that man outside." "Ah, but barbers DO exist! What happens is, people do not come to me."

"Exactly!" affirmed the customer. "That's the point! God, too, DOES exist! What happens is, people don't go to Him and do not look for Him. That's why there's so much pain and suffering in the world." (*-- from the internet; shared by Gerald Schmidt*)

*Northeastern Iowa Synod Rural Life Task Force, 2009
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A Blessing of the Seeds and Soil

Soil and Water Stewardship Week
April 26 through May 3, 2009



Northeast Iowa Synod

Rural Life Task Force

2009

A Service of Blessing of the Seeds and the Soil

This Service should take place outside, gathered around a tractor or two, with tillage or seeding equipment attached. Pails of seed corn, oats, and/or soybeans should be there, as well as a pail of soil, if the service takes place in the parking lot & not a field.

PRAYER FOR SEEDS:

Pastor holds up the seeds and prays: CREATING GOD, YOU HAVE GIVEN SEED TO THE SOWER AND BREAD TO THE PEOPLE. NOURISH, PROTECT, AND BLESS THE SEEDS WHICH YOUR PEOPLE SOW IN HOPE. BY YOUR LOVING AND BOUNTIFUL GIVING, MAY THEY BRING FORTH THEIR FRUIT IN DUE SEASON, THROUGH CHRIST OUR LORD.

CONGREGATION: AMEN!

PRAYER FOR THE SOIL AND MACHINERY:

Pastor holds up soil and prays: GIVER OF LIFE, WE GIVE YOU THANKS THAT IN THE RICHNESS OF THE SOIL, NATURE AWAKENS TO YOUR CALL OF SPRING. WE PRAISE YOU FOR THE SMELL OF FRESHLY TILLED EARTH AND THE BEAUTY OF A WELL PREPARED FIELD.

Pastor turns to the tractor and prays: WE ASK YOU TO BLESS OUR MACHINERY THAT HELPS US TILL THE SOIL AND PLANT THE SEEDS. WE ASK THAT YOU HELP US TO BE GOOD STEWARDS OF THIS LAND. IN THE NAME OF THE ONE WHO GIVES US NEW LIFE, CHRIST OUR LORD.
CONGREGATION: AMEN!

PRAYER FOR WATER AND RAIN:

Pastor prays: SUSTAINING GOD, WE RECEIVE THE FRUITS OF THE EARTH FROM YOU. WE GIVE YOU THANKS FOR THE SMELL OF THE EARTH AFTER RAIN, FOR ITS WELCOME COOLING, AND ITS NECESSARY HYDRATION FOR THE LAND. WE ASK THAT THE RAIN COME AS OFTEN AS IT IS NEEDED SO THAT THE CROPS MAY FLOURISH AND THE COMING HARVEST BE INDEED BOUNTIFUL.

CONGREGATION: AMEN!

Pastor: WE PRAISE YOU, O LORD, FOR THE GOOD LAND, WITH ALL ITS RESOURCES WHICH YOU HAVE ENTRUSTED TO US.

CONGREGATION: FOR THIS WE PRAISE YOU, O LORD!

Pastor: O GOD, YOU HAVE BLESSED US WITH TREES THAT PROVIDE SHELTER FOR BIRDS AND ANIMALS, SHADE FOR ALL CREATION, PROTECTION FOR THE SOIL, AND BEAUTY TO OUR LANDSCAPE.

CONGREGATION: FOR THIS WE THANK YOU, O LORD!

Pastor: WE GIVE YOU THANKS, O LORD, FOR OUR SPRING-TIME BEAUTY, SERENITY, AND PEACEFUL SURROUNDINGS, ENVIRONMENTS THAT LIFT OUR SOULS AND GIVE US LIFE FROM YOUR LIFE. AND WE THANK YOU FOR JESUS OUR SAVIOR WHO GIVES US ETERNAL LIFE, AND IN WHOSE NAME WE LIVE LIFE,

CONGREGATION: AMEN!

The Benediction

The Dismissal:

Pastor: GO IN PEACE! SERVE THE LORD!

CONGREGATION: THANKS BE TO GOD!