

Sunday, October 23, 2022

Scripture Reading: Luke 18:9-14

Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant.
—Robert Louis Stevenson

T*he Man Who Planted Trees* is a short story published in 1953 by French author Jean Giono.

The main character is a shepherd whose name was Elzéard Bouffier, and he lived during the 20th century. His home was in the countryside near the French Alps, where mountains and meadows come together. He had lost his wife and son and farm during the terrors of World War I and sought solace in the silence of his aloneness.

The country Bouffier settled in had once been beautiful — but no more. War machines had crushed it, armies had deforested and devastated it. There was barely enough grass to nourish his small flocks — and even then he had to keep moving them on to new pastures. Gradually, Elzéard became convinced that it was the terrible lack of trees that was keeping this land so blighted and all who lived within it struggling to survive.

Elzéard began to plant trees. Every day, as he wandered the empty, pitted land, he carried with him the seeds of a new forest. He used his shepherd's crook to poke a planting hole for each seed, and thus dropped in the potential for a new tree with every step he took. On a good day, the shepherd could plant nearly a thousand seeds. He continued to plant trees from seed for the next 50 years. He planted different types of forests — beech, oak, birch, maple. Slowly the seeds took root and matured.

Gradually, a miracle was born over the face of that devastated land. Where there had once been barren wastes, there stood forests. Streams that had clogged with eroded earth began to flow again and feed the meadows. Farms and whole communities were once again able to claim this region as a fruitful, joyous home.

Elzéard was neither saint nor sinner — he was both. Though he intended to cut himself off from his fellow human beings, he succeeded in shepherding a reborn creation into existence and brought a new possibility for life to his neighbors.

We, too, can plant seeds of life every day in the soil of every human heart we meet.

—Adapted from HomileticsOnline.com. Used by permission.

*Prayer: Lord Jesus, help me to shepherd new life into each day I am given. In your name.
Amen.*

*Blessings,
Lisa & Pastor Ben Motz*

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday: 1 Corinthians 13-16

Monday: Ezra 1-4

Tuesday: Haggai 1-2; Zech. 1-2

Wednesday: Zechariah 3-6

Thursday: Zechariah 7-10

Friday: Zechariah 11-14

Saturday: Psalms 120-123

Germany Scramble

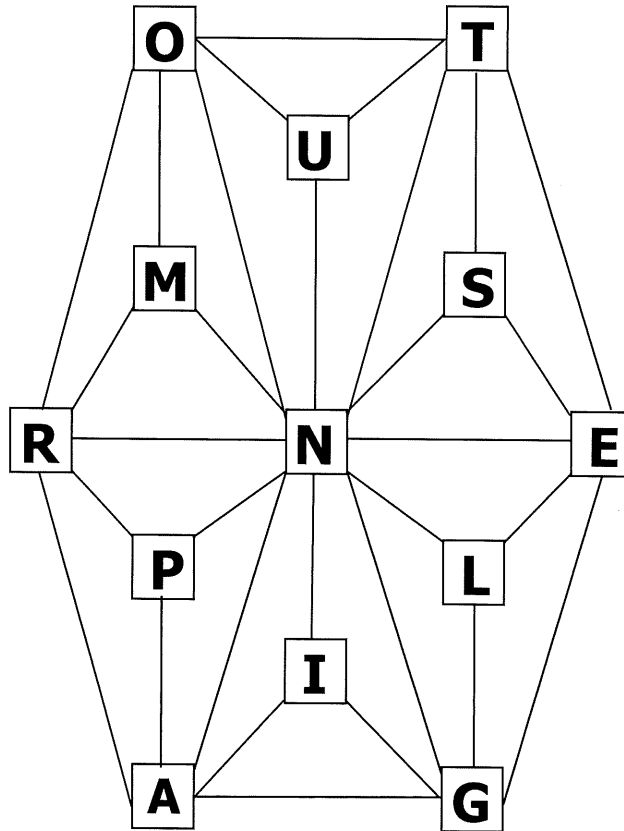
Here is the alphabet with some letters omitted. When you find all the missing letters, unscramble them to spell the name of a well-known German city. Write your answer on the line provided.

P Q S T C D E
 F X Y Z I J K V
 W L N O

WORD MAZE

Directions: Spell as many words as possible by starting anywhere in the maze and moving along the connecting lines. Do not skip letters.

For example, you cannot form the word **must** since to get from **m** to **u** you would need to skip either **o** or **n**. You may return to use the same letter twice as when you form the word **noun**, but you cannot use the same letter twice in succession.



Four-letter words

Five-letter words

Longer words

Word Maze, possible words:
 4-letter words: gain, pain, lens, mote, page, nuts, nest, sent, rant, rain, pant;
 5-letter words: giant, paint, tents, notes, stone, stout, motor, mount; **Longer words:** morning, raging, routes, giants, mounts, promote. **German Scramble:** German Hamburg.