

## PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM - PART II The Growing Seed

Test: Mark 4:26-29

**Key Word:** Growth

**Key Thought:** God's Word Will Grow If We Plant it in the Right Places

It's interesting that only Mark records this parable. This causes us all to wonder why that is so. There is no question about the tremendous lesson in this parable. There is value in this parable that is not found in any other parable. **I believe as many others do that this parable impressed Mark because it helped him to identify his own character.**

His life was guided by the difference of opinion between Paul and Barnabas. A definite quarrel caused Paul to depart with Silas while Barnabas took on a bewildered Mark. Paul was right that Mark had deserted them at Pamphylia, which indicated an element of weakness in his character. This made Barnabas' decision even more difficult - but he chose to set out with Mark the deserter.

**Barnabas set out with Mark right into the same area that caused him to lose heart earlier.** He gave the young lad a second chance. This parable would speak volumes to a young man that needed someone to have patience with him.

**Our last parable dealt with the subject of a sower going forth to sow seed that fell upon a variety of places - along the hardened pathway; upon a shallow soil; among weeds; upon good soil.**

This week we again want to consider the question of a seed but **this time during its growth stage not its sowing stage.**

The question arises as to whether the harvest depends upon the farmer's skill and determination, his diligence or perhaps his wisdom. **The central matter covered in this parable is that of growth.** The question that is addressed in this parable is -

**What Will Produce the Harvest?**

- I. THE SEED MUST BE SOWN**
- II. THE SEED MUST GROW ALONE**
- III. THE SEED MUST BE LEFT ALONE**
- IV. THE SEED MUST BE UNDERSTOOD**

## I. THE SEED MUST BE SOWN

In this parable the sower is **NOT** God. This sower is a farmer in the real sense of the word. We know this to be a fact because God knows all things but it is said of this sower in reference to knowing how the seed is growing that . . .

*"he does not know how (it grows)"*

*Mark 4:27*

**It is simply the duty of the farmer to prepare the soil and sow the seed.** We, like the farmer, are required to do what we can to prepare people to receive the Word of God. Then we must sow the seed of God's Word into their heart. At that point we go on with our life. Much of the next part goes on without our involvement. **It is our duty to sow the seed. It is God's duty to have it grow into full maturity.** Every farmer carefully considers the type of seed that will produce the best crop for his area.

\*\*\* Years ago as we travelled in the country, the children asked why the fields had signs with names and numbers on them.

I explained that many fields are used to experiment with different kinds of seeds. Since our weather changes from year to year in its amount of sun and rain, these companies often conduct their studies over several years.

When it comes to corn they study the amount of yield that is produced by each type of seed. The different seeds are grown for several rows next to other seeds.

Once their studies are complete, they determine which seed is best to sell in that particular area. This information is used to help in the research and development of new kinds of seeds which are called hybrids. \*\*\*

As disciples of Christ, we also need to make sure that we are sowing the right seed for the areas we live in. **This is why it's not wise to try to fully reproduce the success of another church which is located in another area.** We must remember that once we plant the Seed, our main work is finished. Whether it takes root or not is not determined by us. God may call us back into the picture once it does germinate to help it grow (i.e. - discipleship). Therefore, it is of upmost importance that we sow the **right seed** in the location we are in.

## II. THE SEED MUST GROW ALONE

*"Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how."*

*Mark 4:27*

One of the most difficult things for the Church to learn is to let the Seed of God's Word be untampered with. The sower had to go on with his ordinary life. The growth of any seed gets carried on without the help of the farmer. It is during this time, he must put his trust in the hands of **Father God not Mother Earth.**

We must all come to the fact that we really have nothing to do with the growth pattern that takes place because of the Word of God. No farmer can truthfully say, **"I made it grow."** It is only the life that God put into the Seed that causes it to grow. Even when we can do nothing more - something is happening!

## III. THE SEED MUST BE LEFT ALONE

We so often want to get involved with people because we say,

"We must do something or else . . ."

This is where we must put our trust in the life which is within the Seed that will cause it to germinate, grow and then to produce its fruit. **Fruitfulness depends upon the Word itself, not our human intervention.**

\*\*\* One of the most difficult things I must do as a pastor is to step back and let God do His work. It's not easy to stay away from people you see going wayward. But I've had to learn that there are times when my intervention will cause more harm than good.

It's important to understand that some people will never grow if we keep interfering with God's process of growth. Some won't produce a good harvest no matter what we do. If we have taken seriously the sowing of the Word of God into someone's life, then it is up to them to allow it bring forth life.

The person must learn to die to their old desires before real life will take place. If we try to manipulate their choice, we will only **produce an imitation growth.** \*\*\*

### III. THE SEED MUST BE LEFT ALONE (Contd.)

We are simply to do two things - WATCH & WAIT.

Just because we go on in life (sleeping & rising) does not mean that no action is taking place. **The hidden work must be done before the visual work will be seen.** As the seed dies and germinates then the roots begin to take their place as well as the sprout begins to shoot out of the ground.

**In every seed is its God-given principle for life.** There is therefore, **the God-part and the man-part of growth. The God-part would not take place unless we did our part. God does not sow His Word into our hearts. This is the duty He has placed upon His disciples to do. This is the man-part. We must sow the Seed into the hearts of mankind that is prepared to receive it.**

**It then becomes God's part to bring forth the increase. Nature cannot sow or reap. We cannot bring forth the increase.** This shows the importance of working with God.

\*\*\* During a convention several years ago, I remember the message from one of our senior pastors. He spoke about the God-part and the man-part of missions. That message left a deep impression in my life.

During the message my heart began to burn with the words that were finding root in my heart. As the message ended, I went to the prayer room as others went to the fellowship hall for lunch. I began to cry out to God to make me sensitive to my part in the harvesting of men's souls. God performed a deep work in my heart that morning. I became very assured as to what God's will was for my life. I also became very aware of when I was crossing the line into God's territory. I began to become much more sensitive to the God-part and the man-part of ministry from that day on. **It was now my duty to surrender my will to God's plan.**

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Just as Paul had to learn his place in the harvest alongside many great people, so did I.

*"I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow.  
7. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow."*

*I Corinthians 3:6,7*

#### IV. THE SEED MUST BE UNDERSTOOD

1. **It is our duty to understand the Word we sow into the hearts of others.** We will all learn from our mistakes. A person who doesn't make mistakes is not doing anything.

2. **It is our duty to become patient.** If we walk in areas that we shouldn't we may step on the blade that is beginning to sprout from the ground. Lets not be impatient with those whom God is patient with.

3. **It is our duty to let God determine the growth of the seed.** Interference may be destructive.

"We are very much given to digging up what we have planted, instead of resting content to scatter the seed, and leave it to the forces of God to bring in the harvest."

G. Campbell Morgan  
"The Parables & Metaphors of our Lord"  
F. H. Revell Co. p. 167

4. **The harvest will come in its time.** We have no part in the actual harvest. Fruitfulness will come as a result of the Word itself, not the human agent bearing it and sowing it.

\*\*\* Back in the late 70's, Sharon and I had her brother Mike staying with us. We really wanted to see him saved. Our zeal got into the way of our trust in God.

Finally he told us, "*I will get saved when I want to, not when you want me to.*" He was right.

Our love and concern for him was getting in the way of his choices. If he had been saved to please us, the motive would have been wrong and eventually his Christian growth would have been hampered.

Our misguided zeal added many years to the process and perhaps has caused it never to grow as it once could have. Oh that we would have known the important teaching of this parable back then.

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#### IV. THE SEED MUST BE UNDERSTOOD (Contd.)

##### 4266 Tears in the Night

\*\*\* In Western Africa, it was fourteen years before one convert was received into the church. In East Africa, ten; in New Zealand, nine years before one baptism and two more years before one communicant; in Tahiti, it was 16 years before the first harvest.

William Carey laboured 7 years before the first Hindu convert was baptised. In Burma, Judson toiled for 7 years before he had one. Once writing England he said,

*"Beg the churches to have patience. If a ship were here to carry me to any part of the world, I would not leave my field. Tell the brethren success is as certain as the promise of a faithful God can make it."*

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Date: Feb 10/19

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: Father God - F

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