

**Title:** Sowing Seeds and Sleeping Well

**Passage:** Mark 4:26-29

**Context of passage:**

- Mark 4 - parables on evangelism (Parable of Soils, etc.)
- this particular parable is unique to this book.

**Passage:** Mark 4:26-29

And he said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how. The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

**Introduction:**

- In sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, our confidence is in God's purpose and power, not on any individual's ability and skills (including my own)
- Any person's salvation is not dependent upon man but God.
  - One need not be anxious or feel stressful burden that if only one had changed the message or presentation that results would be different.

2 Timothy 2:15

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

- our only responsibility is to be faithful in sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ

**Parable**

Mark 4:26

And he said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground.

*Kingdom of God*

- Meaning: God's perfect reign and rule, God's domain over the hearts of believers
- What is the sphere of salvation and how it works in hearts of people.

*Like a man who casts seed*

- Meaning: faithful person sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ
- no descriptive words on the person who sows the seed. No reference to qualifications
- Anyone who throws/sows seed, faithful in doing so. No special training or qualifications other than one in Christ.

1 Corinthians 2:3-5

And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

## *Seed*

- Meaning: the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (the life, death, resurrection of Jesus).
  - Not: It is not about feeling better or having a better circumstantial life in this world

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

Romans 1:16-17

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

Romans 10:9-10

because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

## *Soils*

- meaning: hearts of people/hearers
- Types:
  - Hard = resistant to Gospel
  - Rocky = emotional response of joy but real hardships lead to rejection
  - Thorny = choose the world instead of Jesus over time
  - Good = multiplicative fruit is borne supernaturally

### **Seed: The Power of The Gospel**

Mark 4:26-27

He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how.

Spiritual birth (from heart) is a divine miracle!

1 Corinthians 1:23-24

but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

1 Corinthians 3:7

So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.

John 1:12-13

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

- only God changes heart

- Not by emotion or by human effort

John 3:2-3

This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him." Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

John 3:4-8

Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

- born again = born from above/spiritual birth

*Man alone is spiritually blind*

John 12:40

"He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them."

God alone changes hearts and allows one to understand and respond to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Ezekiel 36:26-27

And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

### **The Effect of the Gospel**

Mark 4: 28-29

The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

- the Gospel changes hearts. We leave the result to the work of the Holy Spirit of God

Acts 12:10 (word: automatically - God's work that leads to another result)

When they had passed the first and the second guard, they came to the iron gate leading into the city. It opened for them of its own accord, and they went out and went along one street, and immediately the angel left him.

- You cannot individually start or stop it where or when God works.
  - But once it starts, it will continue to its full effect.

Philippians 1:6

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

## **Illustration: Luke 23**

Luke 23:39-43

One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."

- Criminal recognized
  - Sinfulness of himself ("sentence of condemnation", "receiving the due reward of our deeds")
  - Sinlessness of Christ ("but this man has done nothing wrong")
  - Sovereignty of Christ ("kingdom" = king who reigns)
  - Second coming of Christ ("when you come into your kingdom")

## **Application:**

*For Christians: H.O.P.E.*

1 Peter 3:15

but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,

**H:** Sow the seed humbly

- it is not dependent upon you but God alone

**O:** Sow the seed obediently

- we are all commanded to share the Gospel (not just pastors/ministers)

2 Corinthians 2:14-16

But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life.

Who is sufficient for these things?

**P:** Sow the seed patiently and prayerfully

- Patiently wait for the result.
- One does not reap in the same season that is sowed
- continually pray to God

1 Corinthians 15:58

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

Galatians 6:9

And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

**E:** Sow the seed expectedly

- there will be a harvest.

Isaiah 55:10-11

"For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

*For Non-believers: H.O.P.E.*

H: Humbly receive

- In humility, recognize you are a sinner and need a savior

O: Obediently

- Command: Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ

P: Prayerfully

- Pray: Lord Jesus, save me

E: Expectedly

- Once pray, expect to receive and sense the Spirit of God in you