

The Harvest; Mark 4:26-29

- I. Harvest Time
 - A. Bringing in the crop which the farmer (sower) has spent much time and effort nurturing and helping it to grow
 - B. Apple seed plus water plus minerals equals an apple tree!
 - C. We understand that a seed will grow into a tree, but do we really understand how that all works?
 - D. How does water and minerals turn into wood? Leaves? Apples?
 - E. We don't really understand the growth of the very food that sustains us
 - F. We know it works, though.
- II. The Kingdom
 - A. Mark 4:26–27; 26 And he said, “The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. 27 He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how.
 - B. We must remember the Kingdom of God refers to the age of the church
 1. Mark 9:1; And he said to them, “Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.”
 2. Either Jesus is talking about His resurrection and the day of Pentecost, or there are some people that are over 2000 years old walking around this earth today
 - C. The “man” in the parable cannot be God or Jesus seeing that the “man” does not know how the seed sprouts and grows
 - D. The “man” has to represent Christians
 1. The age of the church is Christians spreading the Gospel
 2. The Gospel doesn't spread without man
 - a) John the Baptist
 - b) Peter (to the Israelites)
 - c) Paul (to the Gentiles)
 - d) Barnabas, Timothy, Titus, Epaphroditus, John Mark, even Demas before he went back to the world
 - E. We must remember our primary role is to reveal the Gospel to those we come in contact with
- III. Scatter Seed
 - A. We often have a very narrow understanding of what it is to spread the Gospel
 1. We think of the Preacher
 2. We think of door knocking
 3. To evangelize - used 15 times in Acts
 4. To herald - used 8 times in Acts
 5. To speak - used 60 times in Acts (referring to speaking about the wonderful things of God)
 6. Acts 18:9; And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, “Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent,
 7. Sure, we can stand up before a crowd (in a building, market place, or on a street corner and herald the gospel to all that will listen
 8. Sure, we can evangelize the community by knocking on doors and trying to generate interest in the Gospel
 9. But, clearly, the most used method to tell people the Gospel is to simply speak about God in your life... your testimony

10. The book of acts records 60 times when different people simply told others about the mighty works of God

B. Friends and family

1. Cornelius

2. Acts 10:24–27; 24 And on the following day they entered Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. 25 When Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. 26 But Peter lifted him up, saying, “Stand up; I too am a man.” 27 And as he talked with him, he went in and found many persons gathered.

3. Lydia

4. Acts 16:13–15; 13 And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. 14 One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. 15 And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.” And she prevailed upon us.

5. The Jailor

6. Acts 16:27–34; 27 When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. 28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, “Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.” 29 And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. 30 Then he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” 31 And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.” 32 And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. 33 And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family. 34 Then he brought them up into his house and set food before them. And he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God.

C. Most people don't care what you know until they know that you care

1. To speak the mighty works of God is not only verbal but also physical

2. Jesus fed 5000 then 4000 seeing that they were hungry (as well as feeding them spiritually)

3. Jesus healed many, caring for their physical ailments, then their spiritual ones

D. We are the ones who scatter seed, whether it is heralding, evangelizing, or simply speaking about the mighty works of God

IV. The Sickle

A. Mark 4:28–29; 28 The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. 29 But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.”

B. We do not know how the Gospel grows inside someone, but we often say, “we have planted a seed”

C. But we do know if the soil (heart) is good then there will be a ripe field

D. What do you with ripe fruit, you harvest it

E. “Puts in the sickle” represents the person's choice to take off the old self and put on the new

F. They have decided to be united in a death like Jesus' so they can be united in a resurrection like Jesus'

- G. The parable of the mustard seed follows this one indicating the growth of the kingdom comes from the harvest of mankind's hearts.
- H. The sequence of chapter 4
 - 1. The parable of the soils (not all will accept the Gospel)
 - 2. The lamp is not hid (we must preach regardless)
 - 3. The parable of the harvest (we don't know how, but people do respond to the Gospel)
 - 4. The parable of the mustard seed (The Kingdom will grow and be an extremely significant part of humanity)
- I. We (all of us), as those called by the Gospel, have a significant role in the Kingdom, that of "seed scatterer"
- V. Harvest Time
 - A. We scatter seed... spread the Gospel
 - B. God causes the increase... we don't know how
 - C. We reap the harvest of new Christians and teach them to scatter seed