



6. The Harvest Time TRANSCRIPT OF VIDEO

The Parable of the Growing Seed found in Mark 4:26-29 is among the shortest parables Jesus told. It is disarmingly simple and gives us a glimpse of the way God works things out.

Jesus says, “God’s kingdom is like a man who scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how.

All by itself the soil produces grain. First the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel. And as soon as the grain is ripe, the farmer comes and harvests it with a sickle, for the harvest time has come.”

This parable reminds us that humans cannot make the seed grow. In fact, we cannot even explain how it really grows! That is God’s mysterious work. The farmer’s role in the growth of a seed is only to wait patiently in faith.

In this parable, Jesus reminds his disciples how the gospel seed germinates and grows when planted in the hearts of men. It is entirely the Lord’s doing and it is marvelous in our eyes.

This has been so true in my experience. Like the man, all I can do is to plant the seed of God’s word in the hearts of people I meet.

I can also water the soil of their hearts with my prayers and Bible verses. After that, all I can do is wait in faith.

I cannot make God’s kingdom to sprout, take root and bloom in another person’s heart. That is ultimately and exclusively God’s work.

While that is true, let me also clarify one important thing. My work of planting and watering is both important and essential for God’s work to begin.

I love the phrase Jesus uses when describing spiritual growth in the parable. He uses the phrase “all by itself” to signify God’s work. An amazing and mysterious work!!

While Jesus spoke this parable in the context of how the seed of God’s gospel grows, it also clearly gives us a glimpse of how God works that can be applied to other areas of our lives.

The three observations from this parable on how God works are:

- 1. God is always at work:** His work is unseen, unnoticed and happens whether we know of it or not.
- 2. There is a waiting time before the harvest.** It is our choice how we wait. Patiently, while faithfully doing other things well or impatiently grumbling and doing nothing till things change.
- 3. One day God’s harvest time will come.** The wait may be long before the day to harvest the crop arrives,

but the Lord of the Harvest will come through fully that day.

Let me illustrate these observations with an example from the Old Testament and another from the New Testament.

Things seemed to have finally worked out for Joseph, while he was in Potiphar's home in Egypt.

Then, a false accusation gets him thrown into prison, as per Bible scholars, for about ten years. But, as he spent time in prison God's unseen love was present with Joseph.

He becomes the favorite of the prison warden and earns a reputation and the respect of other prisoners.

Then when the season for harvest in Joseph's life arrived – the patient prisoner becomes Pharaoh's proxy ruler.

In the New Testament Paul is put in prison several times. Paul, I imagine may have spent long evenings in his prison cell thinking of all the things he could accomplish, if he were free.

But, as Paul spent over five years in prisons or under house arrest, God's work was being accomplished far beyond what Paul would have ever imagined. The epistles he dictated while in prison, have for about 2000 years been a tool that has planted the seed of God's word in hearts of billions of people. Paul's impact would have been much, much, lesser but for them.

Have recent events and times made us wonder why our lives seem to be "on hold" or for some like a prison?

Do we feel like victims of unanswered prayers? Have we wondered why God doesn't seem to be in a hurry to answer our desperate prayers? Why doesn't He drop everything and respond to them?

Of course, most of us can also count many benefits we have experienced during this time - like reconnecting with loved ones and acquiring new skills etc.

But, it has not been easy losing jobs, losing life savings and losing loved ones.

Still, I hope this small parable encourages you. Though we may feel we are trapped in a prison, let's be certain that God is working in the unseen background.

Like Joseph and Paul, we must be patient and trust God. We cannot hurry God's timing for the harvest. If we do, we will be dealing with an unripened harvest.

Let's wait for God's proper timing however painful our present prison may feel.

Be assured when God's harvest time comes – the harvest will be unmistakably good.

Most importantly rest assured that God's harvest time will come.

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