THE PARABLE OF THE SEED

**DATE: 7/19/2017 SS**

**TEXT: Mark 4:26-29**

**INTRODUCTION**

Being a soul winner can be discouraging at times

Often, it seems like your efforts are ineffective and fruitless

Preachers preach the Word and there is little or no response

The message of life is shared with those who are dead in sin, and they reject it out right

The light of salvation is given to those in darkness and they prefer their darkness to the light

You labor in the Word and Prayer, seeking God for Lost people, and then when the message is given, no one seems to care

The glories of Christ and of the Bible are preached to those who profess to know Jesus and they just sit there

They look at you as if you are sharing the most boring news imaginable

That can be very discouraging

These Lessons offer some Hope to those who take the time to share their faith with others

This parable teaches us that the Gospel Seed has power

It teaches us that, while we may not see immediate results (for our efforts) the Gospel will bear fruit in the Lord's time

When the Gospel is shared, whether it is from a pulpit or from a personal witness, a mysterious process begins to take place

-- This process is the sovereign work of God

-- This process is often hidden from the view of man

-- Yet, this process results in changed lives and saved souls

I would like to begin to look at the Parable of the Seed

I’d like to share some of the *processes* we see in our text that are involved in this business of sharing the Gospel,

As I Teach on this Thought …

***“The Parable of the Growing Seed”***

I pray you will let the Lord speak to your heart

**~~~Prayer~~~**

First, let’s see that there is …

**I. A “STEADY” WORK – vs. 26, 27**

**A. The Illustration of a Farmer**

Jesus depicts a farmer sowing seed in his field

**v. 26 – *“And He said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;”***

When he has sown the seed, he has done all that he can do

He returns home and goes about his business

**v. 27 – *“And should sleep, and rise night and day,”***

The image of him sleeping and rising night and day is a picture of the farmer living his life

He places the seed in the soil and then he leaves it to do what it will

For the farmer this is a work of faith

He does not return to the field every day to dig up the seed to see if it’s germinated

-- He may water the field

-- He may remove the weeds

-- He may keep the soil around the seed,

But he does not bother the seed

After it has been planted, the farmer has no control over what the seed does

He leaves the results in the hands of God

The farmer knows that the growth of the seed is God's business

Therefore, he sows it, and trusts the Lord to make it grow

**I Corinthians 3:7 –** ***“So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase”***

The farmer's task is to sow the seed

When he has done that, he has fulfilled his primary duty

**B. The Believer’s Responsibility**

There is a sense in which we are like that farmer

We have been called to sow seed

We have Not been called to sow actual seed into a plowed field,

But rather, we have been called to sow the Gospel Seed into the hearts of Mankind

This Great Commission is found in **Matt. 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15;** and **Acts 1:8**

Turn with me to **Romans 10:13-18** …

We have been sent into a lost and dying world to tell others about what Jesus has done for us

You may not be an Evangelist, a Missionary or a Pastor;

But if you are saved, you are a Testimony

You have been saved by the grace of God and you have a story to tell

We should be like the great examples found in the Bible,

People like …

-- The Woman at the Well in **John 4** who said …

**v. 29 – *“Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?”***

-- Or the Blind Man in **John 9** who said …

**v. 25 - *“….Whether He be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see”***

These folks were a Testimony

When we share the Gospel with another person, we have no control over the results

In fact, the results are not to be our worry

Our duty is to sow the seed; the results are in the hands of the Lord

Our job is to just get it out there

**C. We All Worry**

We all worry about our efforts

There is a temptation to check on the seed

We want to help it to grow and check on its progress

Our responsibility is to sow the seed, water it when we can

But letting the Lord do His work in hearts and lives

Like the farmer in this parable, we should be faithful to tell a lost world about a saving Lord

To be a witness for the Lord Jesus, keep sharing His story with others

He will honor our efforts

If you aren't sowing the seed as you should be,

Then I challenge you to make a personal commitment today to get busy doing what the Lord saved you to do

Faithfulness is the key

**Steady** as she goes

Next there is …

**II. A “SECRET” WORK – vs. 27b, 28a**

There are just some things we will not understand

**A. The Perplexity – v. 27b**

***“and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how”***

As the farmer goes about his business, an amazing thing happens

The earth that appears to be dead, suddenly begins to show signs of life

One day there is nothing in the field but dirt

The next day there are little sprouts everywhere

As the days pass, the blade appears, then the ear is formed and, eventually, the corn in the ear

How all of this happens is a complete Mystery to the farmer

All he did is sow some seed into the barren earth and now he is about to reap a harvest

He cannot see or understand the process the seed is going through underground

All he knows is that he is about to benefit from a Secret Work

**B. The Production of Life – v. 28a**

***“For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself;”***

No farmer, no scientist and no philosopher can …

… clearly explain how a dead, dormant seed can produce life

Yet, within an hour of being sown, the outer husk of the seed begins to swell because it is drawing moisture from the soil

Within 10 hours, the chemical makeup of the seed begins to change

And, often, in less than 24 hours the seed sends tiny roots downward and a stalk upward!

It’s a puzzling mystery, yet the seed produces life within a short time

Sowing the Gospel seed is the same way

When it is sown into a prepared heart, it is a mystery, but that seed begins to germinate

Sometimes in happens in minutes or hours

At other times, it may take months or years,

But there is life within that seed and it will begin to germinate within that heart

When it does, life will issue forth

This is the process we call conviction,

**John 6:44 *– “No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day”***

It’s a puzzling mystery, how simple words, received into a human heart … can bring about so profound a change

Yet, all those who have experienced it know the power of the Gospel when it touches the prepared soil of the heart!

When the Word of God is planted in a human heart,

The Spirit of God uses that Word to produce conviction in the heart of the hearer,

**John 16:7-11 …**

This process can be seen several times in the pages of Scripture

-- Paul conviction after the martyrdom of Stephen

-- The Rich Young Ruler who left without Salvation

This is a Secret process

**John 3:8 *– “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit”***

We never know where and how the Spirit of God is working

**C. The Promise**

Even though we cannot see the process …

We can sow the seed in confidence knowing that God is in control of what the seed will become

We are responsible for the Sowing, the Watering, and the Waiting, in faith

**I Corinthians 3:6-9 *- “I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase” “So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase” “Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour” “For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building”***

God alone is responsible for its germination and growth

We can rest assured that the Gospel seed will accomplish everything God intends for it to accomplish,

**Isaiah 55:11 *– “So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it”***

Thus, we can sow the Gospel seed with absolute confidence!

It will prosper according to the Lord's sovereign plan

And Finally, there will be …

**III. A “SUCCESSFUL” WORK – vs. 28b, 29**

***“…first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear” “But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come”***

If we will sow in Faith, we can be assured of a positive out come

All the farmer did was cast some seed into the soil

He went about his business and a secret work took place

While the farmer went about his day to day activities,

The seed germinated, and a little plant pushed its way to the surface

-- The sun favored that little, tender plant with light

-- The heavens gave the plant rain

-- The soil provided the plant with nutrients

-- And, the plant grew

It matured and, in time, it brought forth fruit

When the harvest was ready, the farmer entered the field and gathered his crop

He really did nothing, but he reaps all the benefit!

**A. Reaping the Benefits**

Never think that your witness for Jesus is in vain

You cannot see what God is doing!

He is working behind the scenes and beneath the soil of hearts to bring souls to Himself

Many godly parents have spent their lives praying for, and witnessing to, their children

Many have gone to Heaven without seeing their prayers answered

God, however, touched the seed that had been sowed in those hearts and He had saved multitudes because a mom or a dad dropped the Gospel seed in the heart of a child

Never give up!

Never stop telling a lost world about a saving Lord!

Never allow this world to silence your witness for Jesus!

Keep telling them about Him and trust Him to do His secret work in the hearts and lives of men, women, boys and girls

You never know, that barren life that you have been sowing seed into, might just spring to life one day!

You might just get to see them move through the stages of maturity as they grow in the Lord

Look at the stages of growth that are mentioned in these verses

**1.** The Blade

The new life is tender

As the days go by, it sinks it roots deeper into the soil and steadily becomes stronger

This speaks of the new believer

They are to be nurtured and loved as we wait for them to grow into maturity

**2.** The Ear

When the ear appears, the promise of future fruit is plainly seen

Still there is a lot growing to do

This speaks of the middle stages of the Christian life

The believer is stronger and shows the promise of a fruitful future, but is still growing

**3**. The Full Ear

Now the ear hangs over due to the heaviness of the fruit within

Here is the potential for multiplication and more growth

This plant can be used to build up men and it can be used to produce more plants

This speaks of maturity in the Christian life!

This is the stage of victory, usefulness and glory!

It’s here that the farmer receives his reward and his labors are compensated!

Remember the Woman at the Well and Saul of Tarsus?

The seed was sown in their hearts and God was doing His secret, sovereign work, within them

Soon, however, what God was doing on the inside began to produce fruit on the outside

**John 4:29 –** ***“Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?”***

**Acts 9:19b, 20 – *“Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus” “And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God”***

Some people ask me if I ever get discouraged about the lack of response I see

I will admit that there are moments when my flesh is weak and I get a little down

It seems there are not many souls being saved and there is a general indifference among the people of God

But, for the most part, I understand that my duty is to sow and to water

If the Lord chooses to let me reap a little here and there, it thrills me to no end

The business of saving souls is God's business, not man’s!

I’ll preach the best I can, as hard as I please and as often as I have opportunity, but I cannot save a single soul

If I am faithful to sow and water when I am given the chance,

The Lord will take care of the saving, in His time and in His way!

I am not wasting my time when I stand before a crowd of people and preach Jesus!

I am merely doing what He called me to do!

You are not wasting your time when you tell your friends, family and acquaintances about Jesus;

You are doing what the Lord called you to do!

Your job and mine is not to save them

Our job is to Tell them

The saving business belongs to the Lord and to the Lord alone!

**B. Our Labor is not in Vain**

There is a precious promise given to every child of God who faithfully sows the Gospel seed,

**Galatians 6:9, 10 *– “And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not” “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith”***

**Psalm 126:5, 6 *– “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy” “He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him”***

Therefore, child of God, keep sowing, keep watering

And in the Lord's time there will be a harvest!

**CONCLUSION**