

The Growing Seed (Mark 4:26-29)

26[Jesus] also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. 27Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. 28All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. 29As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

1. In Jesus’ parable, what role does the farmer play?

He makes the seed sprout.

He plants the seed.

He quickens growth by gently tugging on the young plant.

He determines the moment when the seed will sprout.

All of the above.

None of the above.

2. In Luke 8:11, Jesus explains: “The seed is the word of God.” What, then, does the ground/soil represent? What does the sprouting of the seed represent? What is meant by the growth of the seed into a mature plant?

3. When a seed is planted in the soil, it sprouts and grows to maturity “all by itself” (the Greek word means “automatically”). It does so even though the farmer “does not know how.” Apply these truths to the seed of God’s Word.

4. Why will (and can) a farmer plant seed in his field with confidence? After reading the following passage, talk about the confidence with which we can sow the seed of God’s Word.

“So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it” (Isaiah 55:11).

5. What is the main point of Jesus’ parable of the growing seed?

6. On what basis will a farmer rightly gauge “success” in his work? On what might he wrongly gauge success? Apply this to your personal outreach and evangelism work.

7. Does knowing that the growth of the “kingdom of God” is entirely dependent on the power of God’s Word move you to sit back and rest or to share the Word more zealously? Why?

8. **Agree or disagree** with the following statements:

- The efficacy of God’s Word is not dependent on the one who is speaking it.
- Since the power is in the Word, Christians don’t need to prepare their presentation of it.
- Because the power is in the Word, congregations need not be overly concerned about the appearance of their building or the type of programs they offer.
- More people would become Christians if our worship services had more things that excited and stirred the emotions.
- Having more guidelines and rules help Christians grow and mature in their faith and life.
- After a certain period of time has passed, it becomes clear whether a person with whom we have shared God’s Word has rejected that Word.