

SHIFTS HAPPENS, on to my NEXT SEASON

Week 2 -Day 1

Lesson Title: Seed time and Harvest!

As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease. Genesis 8:22

Today's lesson will start a series of lessons regarding SEEDS OF THE HEART!

READ Mark 4:1-20 and fill in the chart below.

Soil Descriptions from Mark 4:3-8	Explanation from Mark 4:14-20
1. Path	1. They hear the Word, Satan comes and takes it away from them.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.

The Word of God is like seed planted in the soil of our hearts. The seed has the potential to produce a fruitful crop; however, the condition of the heart in which it is planted determines it's level of productivity or yield.

Let's look at what Scripture has to say about sowing seeds and reaping a harvest.

READ Genesis 1:11-12

According to these verses, when you plant a seed in the ground, what kind of fruit can you expect to harvest?

Seed produces fruit that contains additional seeds, which bear fruit of the same kind. Likewise, God's Word (spoken or written) sown in our heart always has the potential to produce a harvest (another heart more conformed to the image of the Word made flesh.) It is the principle of seedtime and harvest.

Now READ Genesis 8:22.

How long will the principle of seedtime and harvest continue?

Jesus was preparing Peter and the disciples, specifically the twelve apostles, to go out and spread the seed of His Word. Jesus wanted to prepare the inexperienced crew to encounter on their journey each of the four types of people described in His parable. The apostles could control how much seed they planted, but they could not control the harvest.

READ Mark 4:14-20

Those with hearts like a path (hard and difficult to penetrate) have Word scooped up by Satan so it never has the opportunity to take root and bear fruit. Those with hearts like rocky places accept the Word with great enthusiasm on the surface, but do not allow it to take root and grow. They fall way quickly when circumstances get tough.

According to Mark 4:17, what can people encounter because they have God's Word planted in their hearts?

Some trouble and persecution actually comes because of the Word. As a matter of fact, during seasons of tremendous spiritual growth, it is predictable that one will also encounter many difficulties and trails.

What does James 1:2-4 reveal to us about trials?

Take a moment to reflect on some of the trails you have endured in recent years. Write down some way you have matured as a result of those experiences:

Jesus said that, in addition to paths or rocky places, sometimes the seed we sow falls among thorns – those with hearts that desire the things of the world more than the things of the spirit. A thorny heart hinders a person's ability to truly focus on the Word. The result is much like that of planting a seed among thorns. It is choked out, unable to grow.

Thankfully, in the course of our planting we will discover that some seed falls on fertile soil, which represent those with hearts ready for the message and aware of their need to change. People with fertile hearts allow the Word to penetrate deep, take root, and grow.

According to John 1:1, 14, who is the Word?

The WORD Jesus Christ, is the Seed planted in us who takes root and bears fruit according to His kind, transforming us into His image. We, in turn, spread seed by sharing the Word with others, and the process continues. Seedtime and harvest. This is the mark of a mature Christian, the goal for every one of the apostles, and the goal for all of us as believers in Christ.

There is a difference between a disciple and an apostle. Disciple implies the acceptance in mind and life of the views and practices of the teacher. But apostle denotes a messenger or delegate, dispatched with orders. Many disciples followed Jesus during His ministry, but He appointed only twelve as apostles.

Re-read Mark 3:13-19

The apostles were disciples who had learned and accepted Jesus' teachings and were commissioned by Him to be messengers of the Good News of salvation available through Him. They were dispatched to sow seeds that would in turn bear more fruit according to it's kind. The journey Peter and the other apostles took with Jesus began with discipleship but prepared them for their ultimate role as apostles.

Jesus is preparing apostles, which included Peter, to sow the seed (God's Word) and He would do the harvesting.