

LIFE IN THE CHURCH

The Gospel-Centered Life — Mark 4:26-29
November 25, 2018

The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how. **-Mark 4:26-27**

I. WHAT WE CAN AND CANNOT DO

- Seeds and soils are common themes in Jesus' kingdom parables (Matt. 13:8; Mark 4:30; Luke 8:15).
- We can sow seed, and we can watch it grow (Matt. 13:3; Mark 4:26, 31).
- We have little power over the potential productivity of soil where seed is scattered, if the seed will grow, or if it will produce (Matt. 13:4; Mark 4:27; 1 Cor. 3:7).
- The kingdom is God's, not ours. He determines when and where the word will produce "fruit" (Deut. 30:6; Luke 10:22; 1 Cor. 3:7; Phil. 2:12-13).
- Our work is to sow the gospel. We are not responsible for, nor able, to produce anything, even in ourselves (John 15:4-5).
- Relax, you are not in charge of the harvest.

II. LIVING OUT A "GOSPEL-CENTERED LIFE"

- The gospel, once sown, never fails to produce a result, either negative or positive (Isa. 55:10-11; Heb. 4:12).
- When God's word is working in us, it produces fruit (Mark 4:8).

III. RECEIVING THE GOSPEL

- Ask God to open your ears (Mark 4:9; Matt. 13:23).
- Ask God to open your eyes (Matt. 13:11-16).
- Ask God to open your mind (Matt. 13:23).
- Ask God to open your heart (Heb. 3:15).
- Ask God to open your hands (Eph. 2:8-9).

KNOW: When we allow God to work in our lives, he always improves them and always leads us to a great harvest, both in the present and the future.

DO: Receive and live out the gospel-centered life.

Suggested Reading:

God Is the Gospel by John Piper (LifePoint Library #231 PIP and DVD PIP)

Questions/Discovery Points for Life Groups/Families

1. What is the "theme" of this parable?
2. If the seed (gospel/word of God) grows by itself, does this mean we do nothing?
3. When the crop is ready in this parable, what does the farmer immediately do? Why?
4. What does this parable teach us about patience as it relates to sharing the gospel with others?
5. Is there anything in this parable that challenges you?
6. What can you learn from this parable of Jesus?
7. Is the gospel growing in you?