



PART 4: MAKING ROOM FOR GROWTH

Sermon Notes

Text: Mark 4:26-34

Intro:

We are not just about filling a Church building with people. We are about filling people with God.

A church full of growing people, will be a growing church.

Jesus spoke many parables about farming, as a way to speak the language of the people who followed him.

Mark 4:26-32 - the parables of the growing seed and the mustard seed: principles of growth in God's kingdom

1. Growth in God's kingdom is both expected and unexpected

Both of these parables present an expected result along with an unexpected twist.

The mustard seed is small, but grows large enough to make room for many birds.

The seed grows expectedly, but it is a wild seed without need to tending.

1 Corinthians 3 - church leaders "plant" and "water" seeds, but God makes them grow.

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We should expect churches to grow

Acts 16:5 "So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers."

"These mainline churches that have conservative Protestant doctrine are like a peach: really easy to get into. They're playing contemporary music, it's family friendly, the pastor dresses in casual clothes, but there's a hard core at the centre...The declining churches were more like a coconut. From the outside hard to access, and then once you were in, there really wasn't anything in the middle." ~The Globe & Mail

2. Planting seeds comes at a cost, but not a loss

Spending money typically buys you a liability. Sowing seeds is an investment in a harvest that multiplies your seed many times over.

John 12:24 "Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds."

If you want to experience a harvest, you have to be willing to part with your seeds.

Our 10am service is a seed that will be planted on October 14. On October 21, it will multiply into two services (9am & 11am).

It's not about Church growth. It's about kingdom multiplication.

If we want to see more growth, we need to plant more seeds

Conclusion:

2 Corinthians 9:6 "Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously."

Bethel Church Penticton - Sunday Sept. 30, 2018 - Pastor Dave Funk

Life Group Discussion

Warm up:

1. Do you enjoy gardening or farming? Why or why not?
2. What stood out to you about Sunday's sermon? What was interesting? Confusing? Weird? Thought provoking?

Study & Discussion:

1. Read Mark 4:1-20. What stands out to you in this parable? This parable sets the context for the two parables we studied on Sunday, and also tells us what the "seed" represents (the word of God - v. 14). Have you seen this parable play out in real life? What do you think it means practically to "sow" the word of God? Do you think we have the ability to change the "soil" (people) to make it more suitable to receive the word? How would we do that?
2. Churches across Canada have experienced a decline in attendance in the last 50 years. Why do you think that is? What can be done about it?
 - Read the quote from the Globe and Mail article in the notes. What do you think of this metaphor of peaches and coconuts? What does a coconut church look like? What does a peach church look like? What is the "hard core"? How can we ensure we remain peachy?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 3:1-15. What stands out to you? Here Paul describes the "co-labouring" relationship we have with God in the building of his church. What is our job, and what is God's job? Think as practically as possible - make a list! Don't just think of what the pastors' jobs are...what are the jobs of everyday church-goers?

Application:

1. What are 1 or 2 practical ways you can sow more seed? Can your Life Group work together on it?

Prayer:

- Pray for continued growth and health in our church

Other Requests

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