CITYWEST CHURCH
15.11.2026 10 AM
SOW THE SEED, SEE THE HARVEST

Ok, Church, we are here in November; the year is on the downhill run. We have covered a lot of ground this year as a church.

Jesus replied, “Now the time has come for the Son of Man[l] to enter into his glory. **24** I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat is planted in the soil and dies, it remains alone. But its death will produce many new kernels—a plentiful harvest of new lives.

John 12:24 (NLT)

A seed must die for it to live on. The seed must cease so the plant can live. Nature testifies to the resurrection of Christ.

Jesus also said, “The Kingdom of God is like a farmer who scatters seed on the ground. **27** Night and day, while he’s asleep or awake, the seed sprouts and grows, but he does not understand how it happens. **28** The earth produces the crops on its own. First a leaf blade pushes through, then the heads of wheat are formed, and finally the grain ripens. **29** And as soon as the grain is ready, the farmer comes and harvests it with a sickle, for the harvest time has come.”

Parable of the Mustard Seed

30 Jesus said, “How can I describe the Kingdom of God? What story should I use to illustrate it? **31** It is like a mustard seed planted in the ground. It is the smallest of all seeds, **32** but it becomes the largest of all garden plants; it grows long branches, and birds can make nests in its shade.”

33 Jesus used many similar stories and illustrations to teach the people as much as they could understand. **34** In fact, in his public ministry he never taught without using parables; but afterward, when he was alone with his disciples, he explained everything to them.

Mark 4:26-34 (NLT)

SOWING - GROWING - HARVESTING.

“The difference between a good farmer and a bad farmer is the farmer’s sense of the possible.”

Wendell Berry

This parable only appears in Mark's gospel, and the audience was not just the disciples but the multitudes.

Mark 4 starts with the parable of the sower, the soil the seeds fall on, and what that means for our lives. It speaks to the necessity of our spiritual growth.

Everyone wants to follow the way of Jesus and yield 30, 60, or 100 times.

That's the goal.

But as we see in our reading from today towards the end of Mark 4 we see it has some more elements to it that just a necessity.

We find out that the role in which we play in the growth and fruit of our lives is small but it also necessary for the work to be made manifest.

A seed has no potential until it's planted into the ground.

I love ancient history and I read a story once that archeologists found seeds in one of the pyramids, buried for a long time. They were planted and they grew despite their long dormancy.

We do the sowing of the seeds. God does the growing and he graciously invites us to be a part of the harvest when the time is right.

I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow. **7** It’s not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What’s important is that God makes the seed grow. **8** The one who plants and the one who waters work together with the same purpose. And both will be rewarded for their own hard work. **9** For we are both God’s workers. And you are God’s field. You are God’s building.

1 Corinthians 3:6-9 (NLT)

God makes it grow. The seeds are not sown into things or objects but into people.

Paul echos this to the Thessalonians when he says in 1 Thess 2:19

After all, what gives us hope and joy, and what will be our proud reward and crown as we stand before our Lord Jesus when he returns? It is you!

1 Thessalonians2:19 (NLT)

For us to be committed sowers there are few things I'd love to highlight today to help us know what our part is and to help us think across generations not just our generation.

From our reading today there is three key parts:

1. **MYSTERIOUS GROWTH.**

Night and day, while he's asleep or awake, the seed sprouts and grows, but he does not understand how it happens.

Mark 4:27 (NLT)

Spiritual growth is necessary but also mysterious. Not spooky or in some weird way but there are things that go on that we don't understand.

Jesus makes it clear that even when we are on and off he is not.

But Jesus replied, "My Father is always working, and so am I."

John 5:17 (NLT)

Jesus is always working, we sing about it sometimes. Even when I don't see it you are working.

THis is important for us and in our modern world mysterious growth reminds us that spiritual growth is not self-help or done in a striving manner.

Book stores are filled with how to help yourself, but Christianity offers an even more challenging prospect.

Surrender your life to Christ and see him work in ways that don't make sense.

Then he said to me, “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts.

Zech 4:6 (NLT)

2. **GRADUAL GROWTH**

The earth produces the crops on its own. First, a leaf blade pushes through, then the heads of wheat are formed, and finally the grain ripens.

Mark 4:28 (NLT)

No farmer plants in the late evening and wakes up expecting to see a mature plant, let alone a sprout.

This is the work of faith, to sow the seed and see the harvest.

GROWTH IS SLOW BUT EVENTUALLY, IT WILL SHOW.

For it is precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little.”

Isa 28:10 (ESV)

3. **CERTAIN GROWTH**

He does not understand how it happens and speaks to the mystery and also to the one who does the work.

We are the ones left scratching our heads as to how it grows, but God knows what he is doing.

The Greek word for by itself in verse 20 is ***αὐτόματος****. - automatos - automatic by it self.*

The only other place its used is in Acts 12:10

They passed the first and second guard posts and came to the iron gate leading to the city, and this opened for them all by itself. So they passed through and started walking down the street, and then the angel suddenly left him.

Acts 12:10 (NLT)

Peters's miraculous escape from prison. The door automatically opened. It was not of his doing but two things were certain:

God was not done with Peter

It was God who made a way for Peter to escape.

It is the same with my word. I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it.

Isa 55:11(NLT)

CONNECT GROUP QUESTIONS

1. We don't always see what God is doing or understand the timing. Where do you find it difficult to be patient with God's work in your life, and how can you keep trusting Him through the process?
2. What might it look like for us as individuals and as a church to sow seeds today that will bless and strengthen future generations?
3. Where is God asking you to step out in faith, keep sowing and trust Him for a harvest that you may not see immediately?