



Dig Deeper Study Guide

Stroudsburg United Methodist Church - August 19, 2012

Sermon

"Farming in the Bible"

Mark 4:3-8 & Matthew 9:37-38

by Bob Shank

Things I want to remember
about this sermon...

Monday 8/20/12

Mark 4:3-4

"A man went out to put seed in the earth..." This farmer was planting a crop! We all see farmers in the fields today with tractors and seed drills planting corn, soybeans, oats, or spelts. Planting was done much differently in Bible days because there were not tractors or mechanical planters yet. Sowing was the method of distributing the seed onto the ground. Typically, the farmer used his hand to grab the seed and throw it onto the field. You can imagine that some seed ended up everywhere! How do you sow seeds of good deeds? Where do they end up?

Tuesday 8/21/12

Mark 4:5-6

Some of the seed ended up in the stoney areas alongside the field. The crop grew quickly here but because there wasn't adequate soil, it soon dried up and died. The soil depth is critical for a good crop to survive. Similarly, we need to have deep soil into which to plant our seeds of faith. Is the soil of your soul deep or shallow? How do you know? Does your soul need some cultivating?

Wednesday 8/22/12

Mark 4:7

Some of the seeds ended up in the thorns. Both the thorns and the crop grew up together, but the thorns choked out the new crop because there wasn't enough room for it to grow up. One metaphor here is that we must be careful who we hang out with. If we hang out with the wrong types of people, then we are going to be choked out, too. We need to plant our seeds and ourselves in the proper places where there is rich soil and room to grow and bear fruit. Are you doing this in your life now?



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Things to do this week in response to the sermon...

How is farming different today than in the Bible days?

How is farming a metaphor for our spiritual growth?

Are you willing to be a farmer for Jesus?

Thursday 8/23/12
Mark 4:8

This story has a good ending. Some seed fell on good earth and grew. It grew strong and yielded a productive crop. We all know that while we can plant the seeds, God is the one who nurtures the crop and produces the yield. In this case, the yield was thirty, sixty, and a hundred times as much! God's blessings multiply beyond our human understanding! This is true both in farming and in our spiritual lives. We grow like plants grow because God blesses us and nurtures us along the way. Are you growing spiritually now?

Friday 8/24/12
Matthew 9:37

Farming is a hard and difficult task sometimes. In simple terms, farming is hard work! This might explain, in part, why farming is not as popular as it once was in our communities because some of us have become comfortable with less demanding jobs. Jesus told the disciples that there was much grain but not enough workers to get it in from the fields. He said this right after he went through many towns and small places teaching the people. "The harvest is plenty, but the laborers are few." Are you willing to work for the Lord? What do you need to do today for Jesus?

Saturday 8/25/12
Matthew 9:38

Prayer is needed at the very least. Good ole sweat and hard work are needed, too! Jesus needs laborers to work in his vineyard. Are you willing to be one of his faithful workers? What tasks do you see that need to be accomplished in the church or our community? Are you willing to step up and work in these areas? Pray to God today and tell him where you are willing to work and labor in the Lord's vineyard of our present time!