

## TALL CORN

What's it take to grow "tall corn"? Jesus tells us in Mark 4. This parable about the seed and sower is also in Matthew and Luke, so we know He wants us to pay attention.

A parable is a short story with a powerful punch. Jesus tells us the big idea in this one as He repeats the key concept : producing, growing, increasing, yielding. Then He says "he who has ears to hear, let him hear" (and that's how we know He's talking about tall corn!)

The principle is simple: "Root yields fruit." If there's no root in Christ, there will be no fruit from Christ. But if there is root in Him, there will be fruit.

The soil represents different types of hearers. Some seed falls "along the path" and immediately gets snatched away. Many people pay no attention to God's Word. Even for many who attend church, it makes no difference in their lives. They are in the pew, but not in Christ. They are not listening, and they are lost.

Jesus calls you to believe the message of the Good News – that whoever puts their trust in Him will be saved (Romans 10:9-10). You can be born again (1 Peter 1:23), and receive new life in Christ (Colossians 2:6-8).

Some seed falls on "rocky ground." These people seem to respond enthusiastically. But they have no root. As soon as the scorching sun of suffering or trials or persecution comes because of the Word, they fall away.

Many people today fool themselves about their faith, perhaps even flatter themselves. They hear the Word, but remain un-transformed. Former things have not passed away. They are not born again.

In John 15 Jesus says "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit." If our roots go deep into Him, He promises to give us the strength to persevere, and bear fruit.

"Abiding" in Jesus means living, dwelling, intimately and continually, depending, growing, sending our roots down deep into Him. That's "spiritual photosynthesis" – taking in nourishment by reading the Bible, prayer, worship, and fellowship – receiving from Him what we need to yield His fruit.

Some seed falls on "thorny ground." These people seem to respond to the good news, but fail to bear fruit. They may intellectually understand the Gospel. They may have an emotional conversion experience. They may make changes in their lives as a matter of their own will.

But true saving faith involves the whole person – believing with all your mind AND all your heart AND all your will – not just your mind or just your heart or just your will.

Incomplete faith gets choked out by cares of the world or deceitfulness of riches or desires for worldly things. We are under constant assault from the world, the flesh, and the devil. We're attacked by worldly wisdom and values, by the incessant inner pull of lusts of the flesh and the pride of life. We're tempted by the subtle twisting of truth by the devil and his demons.

But seed that falls on good soil bears fruit, 30-fold, 60-fold, 100-fold. This seed takes root and by faith is transformed and yields the fruit God intends. This seed abides in the Savior and grows up by His strength (Colossians 1:9-11), and produces the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-25).

Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. He is the bread of life. He is the living water. He is the sun of righteousness, and our shade, and our strength. If our roots go deep into Him, He promises His fruit !

If you have ears to hear, listen! Hear the good news! Receive new life in Christ! Send your roots deep into Him and His Word. He promises you will bear His fruit – yielding a harvest of righteousness that only He can bring. That's good news !