

- Rev. Grant Mangold, www.RiversideChurchIowa.com

REDONKULOUS FAITH ?

How are your crops? Whether in your garden or in your field, are you looking forward to harvest? After all, the point of sowing seeds is so you can reap the rewards.

In the same way, faith in Jesus yields a harvest. Jesus talked about that in John 15. Verse 17 says "**I appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide.**" When your roots of faith go deep into Christ, your life will bear the fruit of that faith. The principle goes like this: If root, then fruit. No fruit, then no root. You can use this principle to diagnose your spiritual life.

Jesus also talked about this in Matthew 13, the parable of the four kinds of soil. The seed is the word of God. Seed sown along the path bears no fruit because birds snatch it away. This happens to YOU when you believe the lies of the world, the flesh, and the devil, instead of the truth of God's Word.

When the seed of the Word of God is sown on rocky ground, a plant springs up. But it withers under the blazing heat of trouble or persecution, because of shallow roots. And seed sown among thorns gets choked out by weeds, just like the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches. No fruit.

But seed sown on good soil is like a person hearing and understanding God's Word, then bearing the fruit of faith. The roots of faith go deep into Christ, yielding a hundredfold, sixtyfold, or thirtyfold.

"Faith" is not a religious concept. Everyone has faith every day. You get up in the morning, expecting sunrise. At stoplights, you have faith the other guy will stop. You have faith in recipes, restaurants, and rocking chairs. Hunters, fishermen, gardeners, and farmers all have faith. You have faith in gravity.

Faith is putting your trust in something you believe to be true and reliable, and acting on it. The Bible puts it this way in Hebrews 11:1, "**Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.**"

But your faith is only as good as how true and reliable is the OBJECT of your faith. Christian faith is **IN** the only completely trustworthy person, the Lord Jesus Christ. He paid the penalty for your sin on the cross of Calvary, then rose from the dead to live and reign from Heaven. But "faith" doesn't save you, Jesus saves! The object of your faith is Jesus. You are saved "by grace through faith" by trusting Jesus - not because of the strength of your faith, but because of the strength of the Savior.

That's why Jesus expects to see the fruit of faith in your life. Like the seed of God's Word sown in good soil, you hear what God says and understand it. You put your trust in the One who is true, reliable, and trustworthy. Just like the good soil in the parable, faith in Christ will result in fruit in your life. As you tell others the Good News, there's a bountiful harvest as other people also put their trust in Jesus.

All this is what Jase Robertson calls "redonkulous faith" in a new "Faith Commander" Bible study series put out by the "Duck Dynasty" family. Faith in Christ starts out as a little seed, but as you trust and obey the Lord Jesus Christ, and live out His new life through yours, you grow - and you will bear His fruit.

Your faith is in Jesus, the only trustworthy One! He is your Creator and your Savior. He is bigger than any problem of this life, including birds that peck away at you, rocky soil that impedes your growth, and weeds that threaten to choke the life out of you.

The world thinks faith in Jesus is ridiculous, even "redonkulous." But those who trust in Jesus know the reality. As you trust Jesus, and obey Him, reading the Bible and living it out - your faith grows, because it's His power lived out through you.

So what is sown is also reaped - the harvest of God's Word. Want a bigger harvest? Then feed and water your faith by trusting Jesus and obeying the Bible. That's not ridiculous, it's REAL. Try it!