

Introduction to Increase Lessons

These lessons have come from the Lord's sharing and working first in my own heart. I most often share with the children in this way; feeding them what I have been feeding on myself. To those who use these lessons to teach children, I strongly encourage you to spend some time with the material, waiting on the Lord to make the words Life, rather than just instruction.

Lesson 1 :Increase and Seed

Optional: Begin by reading to children the book *Harold and The Carrot Seed* by Ruth Krauss. (In the story, Harold plants a seed. No one thinks it will come up, but it does, of course. "Just as Harold knew it would.")

Will it come up? Will a seed that's planted come up? Of course it will. Why? Because it is the nature of a seed to grow and increase. It is also the nature of Christ in us to have His increase.

Mark 4:26-29 And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

What happens to a seed you put in the ground? It grows, and we don't even have to know how, but it is just the nature of a seed to grow. How long should we let a seed grow? Do we pluck it up when it first pops out of the ground? Why not? How about when it makes a flower? Should we pull the whole plant up when we get a flower? Did you know that if you keep pulling the flowers off of plants, those plants couldn't make seed. Flowers are for the purpose of making seed. Peach blossoms turn into peaches, with peach seeds for new trees inside. Green bean blossoms turn into green beans, with seeds inside. Marigolds and zinnias and many kinds of flowers, if left alone after they bloom, the dead blooms dry out and become seeds for new plants to grow from. So, really, we plant seeds until the plant that grows gets big enough to make more seed. Sometimes that seed is hidden in the fruit. "But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come." The plant has done its job when it has made fruit, with seed within. Then we have more plants and more seed and more plants and more seed.... Seed is for making more seed.

When we have more seed, we save some for a new crop. Then that little bit we started with grows into more and more. Seed is made to grow. It is made to increase. One corn kernel planted grows into a stalk with a whole ear of corn, having maybe 100 kernels!

God has purpose in His creation. He created and designed seed in a special way, and we can see God's seed, Jesus, is also made for increase. He came and died and was buried and rose again- just like a seed is buried and comes up and grows into something full of seed. Jesus is called "the first born of many brethren." He is the beginning of a harvest of more children of God. Psalm 126:6 says, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing

precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.” Jesus’ death was the death of the precious seed and His resurrection has brought “many sons to glory.”

Seed is for increase. Jesus is the seed. The increase is Him. His Life in our hearts is a part of His increase in the earth. He has a place in this earth when we let Him plant Himself in us. Now that His seed is in us... what is next? He is in us for what purpose? What is the very nature of a seed? Increase.

How does that increase work? We don’t even have to know how. The first scripture we read says that if the man should sleep and rise (death and burial, resurrection), passing from the night into the day, he knew not how, but the seed grew. This is His work, His increase. He does it. We stay in union, fellowship, connected to Him like a seed stays in the ground.

Where do you think God’s increase is? It is in us. We have “inhabitants” in our hearts. When we were born we had a king ruling our heart- it was self. Self is a strong king and doesn’t like anyone to tell it what to do. It does what it wants. When we ask Jesus to live in us, we are asking Him to be the king of our hearts. It’s the same heart, but a new ruler. There may be places in our heart where the old ruler, Self, thinks he can still control. But Jesus the King doesn’t share his rule with another. He is the King of Kings- that means He is the King above all Kings, ruler over all rulers. He is pushing inhabitants out of our hearts- places where maybe our emotions try to control us, or our anger, or our minds, or anything of self. There is a new king in our hearts- that part is settled and accomplished, but daily there are places in our hearts that are coming to know and understand what it means to have Jesus as the King.

So, we may sometimes wonder, “Will it come up?” Wondering if the seed of Christ in us is going to finally bear some fruit, or be evidenced in our hearts, wondering if He is taking land in us. God is certain. His Son WILL increase. It will mean a decrease of Self (“He must increase, I decrease,” said John the Baptist). But it is not us fighting ourselves that accomplishes this. Just abide in Him and let Him have His perfect work.

“And of the increase of His government and peace, there shall be no end... the zeal of the Lord will accomplish this (Isaiah 9:7).” There is no end to His increase in our hearts if we will let Him do His work in us. It is His doing.

Follow-up Activity

Print or copy one *Increase & Seed* booklet (next page) for each child to color. Teacher may want to cut out and fold each booklet ahead of time, depending on size and age of students.

Directions for making booklet:

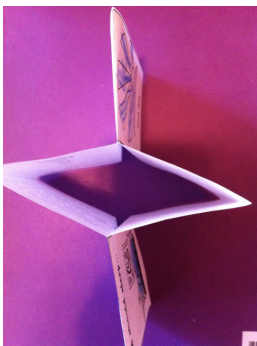
1. Cut on the border of the booklet, then cut on the dotted line in the center (This is easiest if you fold the paper in half “hamburger-style”, then cut through).

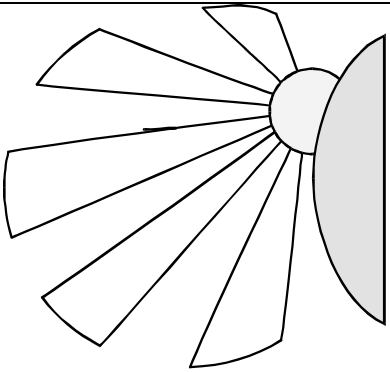


2. Fold booklet “hotdog-style” and then fold like an accordion, with the page “The Kingdom of God...” on the front cover.



3. Pull center pages apart, then wrap last page (“And of the increase...”) around the back and fold into a booklet.

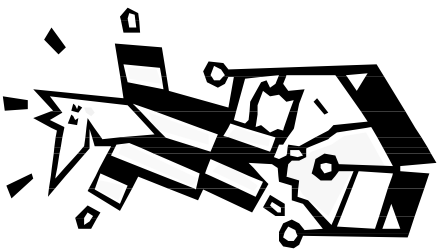




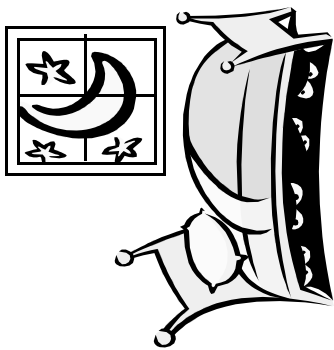
And day



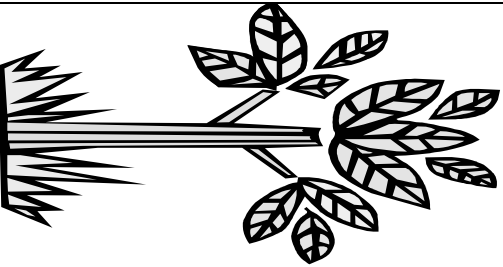
Night



And rise



And should sleep...



And should spring and grow up



He knoweth not how.

Mark 4:26-29

And of the increase of His government and peace, there shall be no end... the zeal of the Lord will accomplish this.

Isaiah 9:7



The Kingdom of God is as if a man should cast seed into the ground;

For further teacher study, I've included the following condensed version of ***Certainty of Expectation*** from *Contrast* (CMI's online magazine).

I'm finding that much like a seed is planted with the expectation of harvest, this King comes expecting increase in His land. He does so, not because the land makes an inviting gesture for increase (in fact, that land is filled with uncircumcised heathens who have no understanding of the true King), but rather because WHO The King is demands increase. The Lord's very nature is one that increasingly eliminates all that isn't Him.

"As surely as I live, my glory shall fill that land." That boggles my mind, because I'm thinking, 'heathens are presently filling that land!' But the Lord has really begun to direct my heart to see the nature of Christ...that He never ceases to function outside of WHO HE IS. And that right there is where the expectation is born. Because the Father knows that His Son will never deviate from Who He Is, and as a result, the expectation is always increase — because increase, expansion, growth, knowledge, light (the list goes on), is never something that He chooses to do. It is always Who He is. The Cross was not necessarily a choice for the Son, it was simply the Work of His very nature. That where He is, there is no flesh. He will never not be the taking away of the first and the establishing of the Second, because that is Who He is, not merely what He's done. As a result of Who He is, our expectation can always be one of "His glory must fill this land"...because if our hearts are truly set on knowing Him, he won't do anything else but increase. That's a guarantee of His nature. The issue lies in a darkened heart that has yet to see The King of that very heart. When you see the King, expect that He's carrying a sword—because only One lives in this land. He will let you know it, if you let Him.

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