

# Nurturing Faith... Every Day in Every Way

June 14, 2015

Third Sunday after Pentecost

*Ezekiel 17:22-24*

*Psalms 92:1-4, 12-15 (12)*

*2 Corinthians 5:6-10 [11-13] 14-17*

*Mark 4:26-34*



## Planting Seeds-Watching Them Grow Object: An Apple

Look what I have! A nice, big, juicy apple. Do you like apples? Today I am going to tell you the story of a man called Johnny Appleseed. As you might guess, Johnny Appleseed was not his real name. His real name was John Chapman. He was born in 1774 in the state of Massachusetts. When he was in his early twenties, John became a nurseryman. A nurseryman is someone who works with plants, trees, and shrubs. John Chapman especially loved apple trees and he planted them all around the town where he lived. But that wasn't enough for John, He wanted people everywhere to enjoy apples just as much as he did, so he traveled all around the country planting apple trees and giving away apple seeds.

John Chapman was a simple man. He traveled all around the country on foot, usually without shoes. He often wore a shirt which he made from a seed sack with holes cut in it for his head and arms. He had a beard and wore a tin cooking pot as a hat. In fact, he often took the tin pot off of his head and used it to cook his supper. John Chapman was a kind and gentle man who was liked by everyone he met. He became well known and people began to call him Johnny Appleseed.

Johnny Appleseed's life wasn't easy, but he loved what he was doing. He never married, but he had more friends than he could count. He lived a long and happy life enjoying the great outdoors and the beauty of God's creation until God called him home in March of 1845.

You may be asking, "What does the story of Johnny Appleseed have to do with our Bible lesson for today?" Well, the story of Johnny Appleseed is a bit like the parable that Jesus told in our Bible reading for today. Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is like a man who scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he is asleep or awake, the seed sprouts and grows, but the man doesn't know how it happens."

Just as Johnny Appleseed was passionate about planting apple seeds, God wants you and me to be passionate about planting seeds of the Good News everywhere we go. If we will take the Good News of Jesus to people, it will take root in their life and begin to grow. We may not understand it, but that is the way the kingdom of God grows -- by people like you and me planting the seed and watching it grow.

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia. Welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls. Alleluia (James 1:21)

Father, just as John Chapman planted apple seeds everywhere he went, let us plant seeds of faith in Jesus Christ wherever we go. In Jesus name we pray. Amen -Used by permission, sermons4kids

## Word Search Puzzle

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P C O S D G H X C Y G R O W S
C X C K U T R S P R O U T D V
N P Y G R R U O M O H Y K A V
R K P R A I Y K U J L W D Y M
T W D A G P X Y J N K J G O T
M Q F I V E L E M N D F D K O
M H X N U H H T F Y Q G L K H
D K Q L N E Y Z N W N A S D T
J C J Q L A E V U I T T O E D
C F V F S D X D K S D H I V Y
D E S Q N I G H T O I E L B O
D D B L X C I N G P D E F B M
L Z S E E D O T N N W K F N S
O H A R V E S T Q W E W D L O
R X R G O P P S C A T T E R W
    
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RIPE	KINGDOM	SOIL	SPROUT
DAY	GROUND	SEED	GRAIN
HEAD	GROWS	NIGHT	GOD
SLEEP	HARVEST	SCATTER	STALK

**APPLE STICK RELAY:** Divide the children into teams or let each child have an apple and a painter's stirring stick and run a relay with the stick pushing the apple to the finish line! If you wish, you can collect the apples and wash them for the apple snack treat today.

**WATERING CAN:** If inexpensive watering cans are available, give each child a watering can and stickers or permanent dry markers to decorate their watering can and to write PLANTING SEEDS OF FAITH IN JESUS.

**JESUS SEEDS:** Give the children a piece of construction paper and a large number of seeds to glue on the paper to spell out JESUS! They can then decorate the paper with seeds along the border as the children desire.

He also said, "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how.  
Mark 4:26-27 (NIV)

