

Don't Underestimate the Power of the Seeds You Sow

Read Time: 4 Minutes 11 Seconds

When I was seven years old, my father took me to a Billy Graham crusade held in Montgomery, Alabama, at the Cramton Bowl, the site of the prestigious Blue-Gray football classic. It was 1965. I don't remember much of what Billy Graham said. What I remember vividly is that my grandfather, who was visiting us at the time, got up and went to the stage when Graham invited people to make a decision to follow Jesus.

My grandfather died two years later. But the decision he made in that stadium changed his eternal destiny—all because Billy Graham came to Alabama and planted a powerful seed.

Graham died in 2018, but it is estimated that he preached to 215 million people in live events. At least 2.2 million made decisions to follow Christ as a result of Graham's meetings. It is fascinating to look at history and discover how this powerful evangelist made his own decision to follow Jesus. The short synopsis of the story goes like this:

- In 1858, a humble Sunday school teacher in Boston named Edward Kimball shared the gospel with a young shoe store clerk. That young man's name was Dwight L. Moody, and he became one of the greatest evangelists of all time.
- Moody then inspired a preacher in England to become an evangelist. His name was F.B. Meyer. He then went to Massachusetts, where a young minister named J. Wilbur Chapman heard Moody speak and responded to the call of God on his life.
- Chapman then mentored a young man named Billy Sunday, who became one of the most prominent evangelists of the 1920s after a successful baseball career. Some people in

Charlotte, North Carolina, were so inspired by Billy Sunday's evangelistic meetings that they organized a campaign in their city, and invited a Kentucky-born revivalist named Mordecai Ham to preach.

- A young teenager named Billy Graham listened to Mordecai Ham from the back of a pickup truck during that weeklong series of meetings in Charlotte in 1932. Graham decided to follow Christ.

The chain reaction from Edward Kimball to Dwight L. Moody to F.B. Meyer to J. Wilbur Chapman to Billy Sunday to Mordecai Ham to Billy Graham is just one example of the way the message of salvation spreads. I hope you understand that you are a part of this story. Who sowed the seed in your heart? And more importantly, who is being affected now by the seeds you sow?

Jesus constantly talked about seeds. He compared preaching the gospel to seed-sowing, and He warned us that the precious seed must be planted in "good soil" (Mark 4:20). He also said the kingdom of God "is like a man who casts seed upon the soil" (4:26), and He compared the gospel to a mustard seed because it seems insignificant at first but "grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants" (4:32).

We often think of evangelism when we think of sowing seed, but everything we do for the Lord is sowing. Whether I teach a class, preach a sermon, witness to an unbeliever, mentor a disciple, minister to kids, write a book, compose a song or send an encouraging text to someone who is sad, I'm sowing a seed. When we do this through the power of the Holy Spirit, that seed has power.

You are full of seeds! And God designed you to not only sow those seeds and water them, but to bear much fruit. Whether you just started planting seeds in others, or you have been sowing for years, God's promise stands: "...in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary" (Gal. 6:9).

Many Christians today are weary of sowing. They look at negative trends in our culture, or at the disappointments of their own lives, and they throw up their hands. Even a large number of pastors and ministry leaders are giving up because of financial, cultural and spiritual pressures. And the devil rejoices when he convinces Christians to stop sowing the eternal seed.

Please keep investing. Never quit sowing. Your feeble efforts today may produce a Dwight L. Moody, a Billy Sunday or a Billy Graham in years to come.

Harvests don't appear overnight. Farmers must patiently endure the rigor of plowing; they experience painful setbacks and dry seasons. We sow in tears, but joyful shouts come when we reap! Don't be discouraged by the barren fields. In due time you will be amazed by the size of the fruit that comes from the seeds you sowed.

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J. Lee Grady was editor of *Charisma* for 11 years and now serves as contributing editor. He directs the *Mordecai Project* ([http://www.mordecai.org](#)), an international ministry that protects women and girls from gender-based violence. His latest book is *Set My Heart on Fire* (Charisma House).