It’s garden season! And here are some tips that “The Garden Helper” site offers for planting and growing your garden for a bountiful harvest:\(^1\)

Choosing an area that gets at least six hours of sunlight a day is best. Also, the soil should drain well and not have puddles after it rains. If your garden has been cultivated in the past, all you’ll need to do is plow in organic material and fertilizer. If it’s never been worked, you’ll need to till in organic matter, lime, and commercial fertilizer. You may want to purchase a pH kit to test your soil.

Thoroughly water your plot the day before planting. Then map it out by using stakes to mark the rows. Be sure to leave a path between rows for walking. The depth you plant your vegetables, as well as the spacing between, is critical, so make sure you follow directions.

If you’re planting seeds, stretch a string between two stakes for a straight row. Then, using the corner of a hoe, make a “V” shaped furrow. For small seeds, open the corner of the packet and tap seeds out as you walk the row. Larger seeds can be planted individually. Cover seeds with soil that’s free of clogs and rocks, and water with a fine mist. If you’re planting starter plants, dig a hole slightly deeper and wider than the root ball, place the plants in the ground, and firm the soil around them before watering thoroughly.
While your plants are maturing, make sure they get plenty of water, especially during dry periods. Mulching between the rows will help to control weeds and conserve moisture. Watch out for insects! Discovering a bug problem early will prevent major harm to your garden. And weed regularly, since weeds rob your plants of light and water.

Understanding the timeline and care involved in planting a garden helps us better understand Jesus’ parable in Luke 8:4-15. Just as there is a time frame and sequence in gardening, people’s spiritual journeys must have the right time frame and sequence.

As evangelists we prepare the soil, but often move too far too fast with those we’ve witnessed to. This tactic will either scare them away, or lead to new members who aren’t rooted in the truth, because they were rush through the process.

Jesus’ parable talks about what happens to seeds that aren’t planted and watched correctly. They die from one cause or another. But those planted in good ground spring up and yield a hundredfold crop!

It would be wrong of us to think that our work on this earth is to simply sow seeds and then move on to the next garden. After sowing, we need to sequentially nurture and care for people the way a good gardener cares for his or her garden. In order to do this, we need to have a plan: programs, teachers, and mentors ready to help these new converts. Then they will grow, and grow strong.

~ nc

Additional resource: YouTube
1. The Garden Helper

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