

# Connect360: Fishing, Farming, and Families

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Farming as a metaphor emphasizes the importance of patient cultivation. Just as a farmer must sow seeds and tend to them with care, disciple making involves nurturing new believers in their faith.

The work of disciple making is not instantaneous. It is a process of growth that takes time and care.

Just as a farmer cannot rush the growth of a crop, neither can a disciple maker rush the spiritual development of a believer.

The apostle Paul's analogy highlights the collaborative nature of disciple making— different individuals may be involved in various stages of the process, but it is God who causes the growth.

In Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23, Jesus told the Parable of the Sower, where he compared the gospel to a seed that is sown on distinct types of soil. Some of the seeds fall on rocky ground and do not take root, while other seeds fall on good soil and produce a great harvest.

This parable illustrates the importance of the soil—the hearts of those who hear the message of the gospel.

The work of farming, therefore, involves not only sowing the seed (the gospel) but also cultivating the soil (the hearts of the hearers) through prayer, teaching and discipleship.

In John 4:34-38, Jesus further emphasized the harvest metaphor when he spoke to his disciples about the spiritual harvest that is ready to be gathered.

He compared the labor of disciple making to the work of farming, calling his disciples to join in reaping what others have sown.

Evangelism is a cooperative task—one that involves sowing the seed of the gospel, nurturing the relationships and then reaping the fruits of God's labor in due season.

But remember ... without a season of sowing, a season of harvest is not possible.

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