

## Cell Notes 17 Sept 2017

Please see story attached (loosely based on several of Jesus' 'Parables of Growth'!)

- 1) Our lives (hearts and minds) are like a garden, constantly receiving 'seeds' (words, thoughts, ideas, atmospheres etc.) from our environment. Where specifically are some of these 'seeds' coming from?
- 2) How long each day do you spend:
  - a) talking to friends, neighbours, work colleagues etc?
  - b) listening to the radio and watching television?
  - c) on the internet and social media?
- 3) 'What you sow... grows.' Are the things listed above reaping positive or negative harvests in our lives?
- 4) How can we counterbalance some of the negative messages with the 'good seed of God's Word'?
- 5) Have you taken up 'Allan's Bible Challenge' (the ABC)? If so, how's it going?!
- 6) If you have children or young people in your care, what form might 'ABC' take for them?

### Harvest 2017 Jack's garden

Jesus told lots of stories about gardens, farms, seeds, soil, rain, wheat and vines. It was his favourite subject. I'm going to have a go at telling my own story today based on several of Jesus'.

This is a story about a boy called Jack who was 10 years old. His family had quite a big garden and one day Jack asked his Mum, *'Can I have the little bit in the far corner to grow vegetables and flowers for myself?'* His mum thought it was a great idea (less for her to look after!) so all through the Half Term Break, Jack marked out his patch with stones, dug it over and got rid of all the weeds. But then he had to go back to school and didn't have time to go to the Garden Centre and buy any seeds to plant. To make things worse, one day a strong wind got up and blew dandelion seeds from the overgrown garden next door into Jack's patch. What do you think happened?

Jack was really disappointed. *'I worked so hard preparing my garden and all that grew were weeds!'* 'Never mind' said his Mum, *'we've got the whole summer holidays coming up, here's what we'll do. We'll clear those weeds, then we'll buy some marigold and sunflower seeds and some lettuce and runner beans, and plant them'*. Every day, Jack watched his garden and pretty soon the seeds began to sprout. If it didn't rain, he'd water them and if weeds grew, he'd pull them up. Day by day, the plants got bigger and stronger, and Jack felt really proud when they had his own beans and lettuces for tea. By the end of the holidays, the marigolds and sunflowers were coming on nicely too.

DO you think there's a lesson in that story? **What you sow... grows!** And if you don't put in any seed, stuff you don't want will grow instead. Here's the thing: **Your life is like a garden.**

Seed words and thoughts are being sown there all the time. They mainly come in through our eyes and ears (but also taste, touch and smell). Let's think about some of the places those seeds come from?

- **Friends.** How long do you spend talking to friends each day? All good?
- **School.** They're trying to plant knowledge and skills you need for life.
- **TV and Radio.** How long each day? Good or bad seeds?
- **Internet and Social Media.** How long each day? Good or bad seeds?
- **Music.** Carries messages and ideas into your soul.

Thinking about all those – how many of those seeds that come into our lives every day cause good things to grow in your garden?

Can anyone remember what Jesus said causes good things to grow in our lives? **God's Word.** Lots of ways God's word can come into us (church, groups, Christian friends, TV/radio) but there's no substitute for reading the Bible!

#### **Allan's Bible Challenge (ABC)**

- Challenged adults to read whole Bible in 1 or 2 years
- Why should young people be left out?
- Start to finish? Don't recommend! (You'll get stuck for sure)
- <11 Ever been given a children's Bible (best stories... simplified)?
- 11+ Mark's Gospel (whole life of Jesus) by half term? All four gospels by Christmas? Set your own challenge. Tell someone!