

Judah was surrounded, outmatched, and on the brink of collapse as the Assyrian army threatened Jerusalem and mocked their trust in God. In his desperation, King Hezekiah prayed, and God responded—not first with an army, but with a promise. Through Isaiah, the Lord used the image of agriculture to show that what looked like devastation was actually the beginning of restoration. God assured His people that if He rebuilt their roots, fruit would come in time—and history would soon prove Him right. It was during this context that we read this verse:

Isaiah 37:31, “Once more a remnant of the kingdom of Judah will take root below and bear fruit above.”

2026 Vision for Cornerstone: It’s “a year to take root below, so we can bear fruit above for years to come.” We’re going to focus this year on strengthening our foundation so we can support the growth we’re experiencing.

MATTHEW 13:

1. The seed of the gospel is perfect, but the soil determines the outcome.

- In the parable, Jesus says the seed is the Word of God.
- The soil can be both our heart and the environment we’re in (our home, people, what we listen to, etc.)

2. The messages we live under shape the soil of our heart.

- HARD SOIL (4+19) — Closed heart.
- SHALLOW SOIL (5-6+21-22) — Unformed heart.
- THORNY SOIL (7+22) — Crowded heart.
- GOOD SOIL (8+23) — Humble heart.

• THE DISCIPLESHIP GOSPEL

The Discipleship Gospel is the good news that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, who died for our sins, was buried, rose again, and now calls us to follow Him. It is not just a message of forgiveness—it is a call to lifelong discipleship under the reign of King Jesus.

• GOSPEL DECLARATION:

God’s kingdom is here (Mark 1:14)
Jesus is the Christ (Mark 8:29, 1 Corinthians 15:3)
He died for our sins (Mark 8:31, 1 Corinthians 15:3)
He was resurrected (Mark 8:31, 1 Corinthians 15:4)

• GOSPEL RESPONSE:

Repent of sin (Mark 1:15)
Believe the gospel (Mark 1:15)
Follow Jesus (Mark 1:17)

• GOSPEL BENEFITS:

Forgiveness of sins (Ephesians 1:7)
Born again & adoption (John 1:12–13)
Sealed with the Spirit (Ephesians 1:13)
New creation (2 Corinthians 5:17)
Spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:7)
Eternal life with God (John 3:16)

• What is a disciple? Matthew 4:19, *He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”*

A person who is following Christ, being changed by Christ, and is committed to the mission of Christ.

3. Healthy growth requires intentional gospel environments.

- 1 Corinthians 3:6-7, 6 I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. 7 So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.
- We can't force growth, but you can choose where you're planted and if you're being watered.
- In 2026, choose to attend church consistently, stay around to meet people, build community in groups, study deep at Bible studies and discipleship groups, attend classes to grow and through that build deep roots in Christ.
- We have two more week's in our vision series with big announcements. See you next week!