

## A hardy crop ...

Because a vegetable needs either warm or cool weather, crops sort themselves into two distinct categories: the cool season (for spring and autumn) and the warm season (for summer). Planting in the proper season is the first step to a bountiful garden.

A good reliable vegetable is the Leek "Musselburgh", a firm gardening favourite, both as having a nice taste and also for standing up to our winters. Start them off in the greenhouse, but a windowsill will do. They will be ready for picking late summer, early autumn and will go through the winter, into the following spring.

Leek 'Musselburgh' (*Allium porrum*) Hardy Biennial

This variety produces heavy crops of short, thick stems with an excellent flavour and a tender texture when cooked. Leek 'Musselburgh' is exceptionally hardy and stands well in even the coldest winter weather, making it a popular choice for growing in cold areas.



The definition of "hardy" is being able to withstand difficult or adverse conditions, being courageous in the face of opposition or hostility.

Sometimes you must go through the valley to reach the top of the mountain.

Figuratively, the valley is what we call the times of adversity. These are those times when you may have some questions for your Heavenly Father. The hard times are when you should draw nigh unto God; He wants to hear from you (Hebrews 9 v19). In adversity I often call to mind a memory verse. One of my favorite memory verses in the valley is one that was written by the weeping prophet, Jeremiah: "Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning, great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, 'The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him'" (Lamentations 3 v22-24)

Here are some more words of comfort & reassurance:

James 1 v2-4 "Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

Matthew 11 v28-30 Jesus himself said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your soul. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

How can you imitate Jesus in showing courage?

WHEN we become disciples of Christ, we embark on a journey. That journey can lead us to life, whether in heaven or on earth. Jesus said: “But he who stands firm to the end will be saved.” (Matt. 24 v13) Yes, if we stick to a life course of faithfulness, we can come in line for salvation. How can we stay on course on our journey?

Our Exemplar, Jesus, led the way. His journey was recorded in the Bible. By studying that record, we learn what Jesus is like. We can come to love him and exercise faith in him. (Read 1 Peter 1 v8, 9) Recall that the apostle Peter said that Jesus left us a model for us to follow his steps closely. (1 Peter 2 v21) If we carefully follow his steps, we will reach “the goal” of our faith—salvation.

### JESUS IS COURAGEOUS

Courage is a kind of confidence that can strengthen and sustain us. Being courageous has been described as “persevering in the face of adversity,” “standing up for what is right,” and “facing suffering with dignity or faith.” Courage goes hand in hand with fear, hope, and love. How so? Godly fear gives us the courage to rise above fear of man. Genuine hope helps us to see beyond present trials and to face the future with confidence. Self-sacrificing love impels us to show courage even at great personal risk. We get courage by trusting in God and following the steps of his Son.

Even as a 12-year-old boy, Jesus courageously stood up for what was right. Note what happened when young Jesus was “in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers.” (Luke 2 v41-47.) Those teachers were well-versed not only in the Mosaic Law but also in the man-made traditions that undermined it. But Jesus was not intimidated into keeping quiet; he was “asking them questions.” Surely he was not asking the typical questions of a curious boy. We can imagine Jesus asking thought-provoking questions that made those learned teachers sit up and take notice. And if the teachers tried to trip Jesus up by asking him controversial questions, they failed. Why, everyone listening - including the teachers - were in “amazement at his understanding and his answers”—answers that no doubt upheld the truth of God’s Word!

During his ministry, Jesus showed courage in various ways. He boldly exposed the religious leaders for misleading the people with false teachings. (Matt. 23 v13-36) He stood firm against the world’s contaminating influence. (John 16 v33) He continued to preach despite pressure from his opposers. (John 5 v15-18; 7 v14) Twice, he fearlessly cleansed the temple, driving out those who were defiling the worship there. (Matt. 21 v12, 13; John 2 v14-17)

It is faith-strengthening to trace Jesus’ courageous steps in the face of suffering.

Consider the courage he showed on the final day of his earthly life. He knew the chain of events that would be set in motion by his betrayer. Yet, at the Passover meal, Jesus told Judas: “What you are about to do, do quickly.” (John 13 v27) In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus fearlessly identified himself to the soldiers who came to arrest him. Although his own life was in danger, he spoke up to protect his disciples. (John 18 v1-8) When questioned before the Sanhedrin, he boldly affirmed that he was both the Christ

and the Son of God, even though he knew that the high priest was looking for an excuse to have him killed. (Mark 14 v60-65) Jesus steadfastly kept his integrity down to death on an execution stake. About to take his last agonizing breath, he called out in triumph: "It is finished!" (John 19 v30)

### IMITATE JESUS' COURAGE

How can we imitate Jesus in showing courage?

In our ministry - As true Christians, we need to "speak boldly for the Lord". (Acts 14 v3) What reasons do we have to preach with boldness, or courage? We know that what we preach is the truth because it is based on the Bible. We recognize that "we are God's fellow workers" and that we have the backing of Holy Spirit. We understand that by witnessing zealously, we demonstrate our devotion to God and our love for our neighbor. Imbued with courage, we will not be silenced. On the contrary, we are determined to expose the religious lies that blind people to the truth. And we will persevere in preaching the good news despite apathy, ridicule, or opposition.

In the face of suffering - Trusting in God gives us the faith and courage to face adversities. If a loved one dies, we grieve, but we do not lose hope. We confidently look to "the God of all comfort" for strength. If we face serious illness or injury, we may suffer pain, but we do not compromise. If we become depressed, "our hearts may condemn us," but because we trust in the God who "is close to the brokenhearted," we do not give up.

In 1 Corinthians 4 v8-9 we can be comforted by these words, "We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed."

So like the hardy leek, stand up to the cold and maybe you'll be part of the bountiful garden!