

The Harvest – *John 4:27-42*

Introduction – In the Gospel of John, we are seeing that Jesus, the Word made flesh, was the creator of the world and He is the redeemer of the world. Isaiah 49:6 says, “*Indeed He says, ‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.’*” There were fields “*white for harvest*” right there in Sychar and it never crossed the minds of the disciples. There are fields here as well, “*white for harvest.*” Do you see them?

What Disciples Don’t See – Even the best of the followers of Jesus can miss what Jesus is doing in the most mundane times. There was no evangelism strategy as they came into Sychar; it was just a place to rest and get food. They left Jesus sitting and resting beside a well and went into the city to get some lunch. When they return, they find Jesus speaking to a Samaritan woman and they are flabbergasted (v27). The woman leaves and they tell Jesus to eat (v31). They do not see what has happened.

Food to Eat – Jesus said, “*I have food to eat of which you do not know*” (v32). And again, He is misunderstood (v33). He then explained, “*My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work*” (v34). One of the things most striking about Jesus is His certainty of who He is and what He was here for (v34, 5:30, 6:38, 9:4, 17:4). To be about His Father’s business filled Him with such satisfaction that it acted like food and drink to His body; His weariness, thirst and hunger were forgotten. Remember, it was for the joy set before Him that He endured the cross (Heb 12:1) upon which He said of His Father’s work and will, “*It is finished*” (19:30). Jesus really likes saving souls; it is like food for His soul.

Life in the Father’s will was satisfying and yet there was no personal pride in it. Jesus didn’t care who He was seen with, here or elsewhere (Matt 9:11, 11:19, 19:13-14). He did not take offense when rebuffed (v9, 11) but kept the conversation going. And He knew that the kind of living water He had would flow out of those who received it into the lives of others (vv13-14, 28-30).

A Readied Harvest – Jesus tells the disciples that this kind of food is all around them, a harvest readied for reaping (v35). The following verses prove that Jesus was right in Sychar, but certainly God has been and is at work sowing in all kinds of ways. The world was turned upside down in the days of these apostles (Acts 17:6) and the whole world has been changed through the preaching of the Gospel and the conversion of souls over the centuries. Therefore, we too should heed Jesus’ words, “*lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest*” (v35). This also takes eyes of faith and can be a part of your daily prayers with expectations that God would lead you to those ready to see Christ in you and hear the good news.

What the Samaritans Receive – The learned Nicodemus might have been the expected choice to be a witness for Jesus, but he seemed to go away silent and burdened (3:9). This unnamed woman hastens away in joyful certainty to be the herald of Jesus’ name (4:28-29).

The Word of The Woman – A woman’s testimony was not considered valid in a court of law. This woman appears to be shunned by her community, an unclean fornicator. How does this make her a great witness to the grace of God? What does this teach us about who God is willing to save? And what does it teach us of our ability to witness to Christ’s saving grace? And while Jesus has not spoken to you face to face as He did with her about her personal life, certainly His Word preached has spoken to you personally about your life. “*Come see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?*” Pretty simple (Psalm 66:16).

Blessings Multiplied – In the Parable of the Soils, Jesus speaks of the seed-Word which is sown among the good soil, those who hear the Word, “*and bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty*” (Matt 13:1-23). Imagine the disciples surprise when men from the city of Sychar came out to see Jesus (v30). Would they have expected such a group to come to faith in Jesus? Would they care to see them come? Would we? We are told many believed in Jesus because of the word of the woman who testified (v39), they urged Jesus to stay and He did for two days (v40) and through that time many more believed because of His own word (v41).

The Savior of the World (v42) – Over and over we see the confidence with which John portrays Jesus and the scope of His ministry (1:12, 29, 3:16-17, 35). Jesus is Savior of the World in the sense that He is the Savior to both the Jews and the Gentiles, to all peoples, races, tongues, and tribes. John is writing his gospel as the growth of the church continues to go out to the Gentiles more and more and so this is important. He also writes in a political atmosphere where “*Caesar is Lord*” and “*Caesar is the Savior of the World*” is touted. And so, this claim is political as well, even in our day. He is the King of kings and Lord of lords, His Word is true for all his creation, and every knee is going to bow. All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Jesus (Matt 28:18-20).

But this claim also has to do with the extent of Christ’s saving, and in two ways. First, the extent goes down to the dirtiest, most unclean, most rejected sinner. His forgiving grace surpasses any sin we could imagine or commit. Where sin reigned in death, even more His grace reigns through righteousness to eternal life (Rom 5:18-21). No one is too dirty. Second, the fields are ripe for harvest and we need to see this world the way Jesus does (Matt 9:35-38). With the same confidence as this Gospel is teaching, we can be agents of this reaping even in these days. What is that confidence? “*Indeed He says, ‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth’*” (Isaiah 49:6).

How do we first participate in the harvest? This world wants to see authenticity. Your humble, normal self, rooted in the waters of everlasting life, springing out all through the parts of your life, gives you confidence to know who you ultimately are and what your life purpose ultimately is to be. As you give yourself to Jesus, unfazed by the things and circumstances of this earth, knowing where you are going to go when you die, equipped with words of everlasting life for others, you have a sickle in your hand that can be used by God to eternally change your neighbor’s life. “*Lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest*” Who will God bring into your life tomorrow, in the most unlikely places and at the most unlikely times among the most unlikely people?

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