

Reaping the Harvest

We started out talking about Preparing the Ground. We talked about how we have to prepare our own ground. The sower went into the field and sowed seed but he had to prepare. The sower had to prepare to sow seed so that he was doing the most efficient and effective job. We like the sower need to prepare ourselves to be the most effective we can be for the kingdom of God.

We need to have a dedicated prayer life. We need to prepare our ground with fasting in our life, to put the flesh into subjection. We need to study the word of God.

We are preparing our ground so that we are ready to sow seeds of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We prepare our ground so that we are ready to teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We all can teach and we discussed the various tools we have at our disposal.

We talked about Planting the Seed. The seed that we plant needs to be good seed. We must be sowing the proper seed to the ground around us. The world is going to plant tares in the field so we must be ready to plant the good seed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are sometimes watering and sometimes planting

1Co 3:6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

1Co 3:7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

God gives the increase!

The seed is never cast unless the sower gets up and gets moving for God!

Tonight we are going to talk about Reaping the Harvest.

We have Prepared our Ground and Planted Seed now what?? We see a crop beginning to grow and we see the harvest all around us.

Joh 4:35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and *then* cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

Joh 4:36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

Joh 4:37 And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

Joh 4:38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

Jesus told us not to say the harvest is sometime in the future. The harvest is not something is coming in the future. Jesus told us to look up.

If all we do is keep our head down and cast seed. Or we keep our head down and walk down the path we are missing out. Jesus said lift your eyes and look on the fields.

He was saying the harvest time is now. The fields are already white and ready to harvest. Lift up your eyes. Church we have to lift up our eyes. We have to see the harvest field.

We have to look beyond the family playing at the park, we have to look beyond the couple walking down the street, we have to look beyond our neighbors cutting the lawn. We have to see the harvest. These are not just people going about their everyday business but they are souls.

The fields Jesus spoke about was all the people that were just going about their business. The harvest is white, which means it is ready for the picking.

Church we have to reap the harvest field that God has given to us. We can't be jealous of the neighboring farmer. We cannot compare ourselves with other congregations. They are not our harvest field.

The city of Big Rapids and the surrounding community church the harvest fields are white. We have to reap the harvest.

We have worked on our ground and began preparing ourselves. We have begun to cast some good seed. Now we have to reap the harvest. If we let the harvest just sit in the field it will ruin. A farmer does not work hard all year preparing his equipment and planting seed, watering and fertilizing, only to let the crop rot in the field.

Everything we do for God is with purpose. We purposed to prepare our lives so that we can go out and plant good seed. We purpose to cast the seed evenly all around us not being a respecter of the ground. Because we can only see the surface of the soil.

We now must purpose to reap the harvest. Look at what else Jesus said in John 4:

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Joh 4:38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

Now Jesus is not saying that one only sows and one only reaps. Jesus reminded the disciples I sent you to reap where you bestowed no labor. Church we may be early in our sowing and we may wonder how can I reap from this sowing I did?

Jesus is telling us that you will reap from the harvest field a crop that you did not labor in producing. You did not plant, nor did you water the crop but you will glean a harvest.

Others have already planted the seed, others have done watering, but you will still get a harvest. That is why our eyes must be lifted up and being observant of folks we are passing by.

We have to purpose of a church to go into the harvest field. If we do not go into the field then we cannot gather nothing to the harvest. We can sit back and talk about the harvest and how great it looks, but if we are willing to put our hand to the plow. If we are not willing to get up and move for God then that beautiful field will turn to despair.

Gathering the harvest means you have a way to process the harvest. We have to have a way to nurture the harvest. The crop that comes in is new and is tender and needs special attention.

Every visitor we have come through the doors of our church represent 100% of our growth potential. We need to make sure we are connecting and reaching out to our visitors on a consistent basis. We also need to be reaching into our community on a regular basis.

All we have to do is work purposely for the kingdom and let God give the increase.

We must be:

- **Servant Minded:** Jesus, in John 13, shows him laying down his position and demonstrating his philosophy by washing the feet of the disciples. We must be committed to the Team, to our Church, and to God. We humbly take up his yoke and show love and respect toward each other.
- **Committed:** Our commitment must be anchored in faith that we are doing God's will by reaching out to the lost members of our community. The faith described in Mark 2 where four people committed to bring the sick of the palsy before Jesus. Our commitment must be resolved to overcome any hurdles and obstacles that may be laid

before us. The four people bearing the burden of the sick man overcame the crowded house, the height of the building, the thickness of the roof, and the dead weight of the man. They were committed by faith to bring him before the Lord. Their commitment paid off with a wonderful healing of the man.

- **Love Motivated:** The love for the lost must be catalyst that keeps our hearts burning for just one more soul to be saved. Imagine the screams from all the lost souls that will echo as a thunderous roar from the depths of hell. Knowing that many these souls may have been saved if only the saints were motivated with the agape love of Christ. Every person we touch is one more chance for God to work in their life.

Remember everything that we do as a church must have a purpose of reaching the harvest. Church if we don't prepare and go about God's work with purpose then we will not realize the harvest and blessing God wants to give.

Every person we reach is allowing God to work one more time in their lives. It may be the 1st or the 20th time that we watered or planted a seed but the point is we are in the harvest!!!

Continue to Prepare Your Ground, Planting Good Seed, and Working to Reap the Harvest! That is our commission Church!!!