

Ripe for Harvest Part 5

Partnering with the Lord in His Harvest Fields

Thesis: Our Triune God-- God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit-- is at work all around us. The fields are ripe for harvest (John 4:34-38). We are called to partner with the Lord in his harvest fields (Matthew 9:35-38). May we see what God sees, feel what the Lord feels, pray what the Lord leads us to pray, and go as he sends us in his anointing, empowering, and grace.

Text: John 4:34-38; Matthew 9:35-38

Let's review the messages that we have covered in the first four parts of our series, *Ripe for Harvest*. I believe the Lord is speaking to us about this season of harvest, and it was confirmed by Doug Stringer, Gloria Madugba, and other significant voices with whom we have relationship.

1. **Part 1: Catching a vision of the harvest fields around us.**
 - a. **Jesus wants us to wake up and get in on what God is doing today.** *Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest (John 4:35).*
 - b. Every farmer knows that you sow first; then, in due time, like in four months, the crop becomes ripe and needs to be harvested.
 - c. But, hear the word of the Lord to us today: **Open your eyes and look at the fields. The fields are ripe for harvest... today!**
 - d. We heard from **Amy Smithwick** as she shared her story of working in the harvest fields with *Youth with a Mission* for six months based out of Amsterdam.
2. **Part 2: We have story to tell and a message to demonstrate to those around us.**
 - a. **We have a message to share and it is good news of the gospel of the kingdom of God** (Mark 1:14-15).
 - i. *After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 15 "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!" (Mark 1:14-15).*
 - ii. The kingdom of God has come near to us in the Lord Jesus Christ. That is good news.
 - b. **We have a message to demonstrate** (Luke 4:18-19, 9:1-2, 10:1-2; Acts 1:8). We demonstrate what it is like when God rules and reigns.
 - c. **We proclaim and demonstrate the whole gospel:** serving the poor, the marginalized, and those in need (Matthew 25:31ff); working for the

common good (Acts 10:38); restoring individuals, social systems, communities, and nations to God's design (Acts 3:17-21; Colossians 1:20).

- d. We heard from **John and Beverly Atkins** as they respond to the Lord leading them into their second career as missionaries to Honduras.
3. **Part 3: We are invited to see what the Lord sees, feel what the Lord feels, pray what the Lord leads us to pray, and go as the Lord sends us in his anointing, empowering, and grace** (Matthew 9:36-38).
 - a. *Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 37 Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. 38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field" (Matthew 9:35-38).*
 - b. We heard from **Kathy Vosburg Miller** as she shared about Crosswalk Center: responding to the Lord's desire to bring wholeness and workability to a social system, like helping returning citizens.
4. **Part 4: We get to partner with the Lord in our spheres of influence.**
 - a. **We heard two stories to help stir us with possibilities for the harvest fields of our neighborhoods:**
 - i. **Tammi Van Drunen**, Greeley, Colorado: practicing mission as a stay-at-home mom
 - ii. **Carol Monahan**: touching her neighbors with the love of Jesus
 - b. **The Lord is calling his people of different ages into various harvest fields right now.**
 - i. Neighborhoods
 - ii. Schools
 - iii. Workplaces
 - iv. Sectors of society
 - v. Social systems: breaking the power of injustices
 - vi. Third places
 - vii. Or, to serve with or **to partner with existing groups** like mentoring in schools, serving in prisons, caring for the hurting, etc.
 - viii. Or, **to start new enterprises** like CrossWalk Center, which we heard about recently
 - ix. Or, to serve here at Calvary in reaching and discipling the harvest which the Lord have given to us. (I will talk more about the need for laborers here at Calvary next week.)
 - c. Then, we considered the question: **What is the Lord saying to you?**

Today, we want to talk about **ministry opportunities** which the Lord has given to us at Calvary.

Jesus was sent by the Father. The Son, in turn, sends you and me into his Father's harvest fields. *"As the Father has sent me, I am sending you," (John 20:21).*

What is the Lord stirring in you? Where are you joining the Lord on his mission in your spheres of influence? To whom in your spheres of influence is the Lord sending you?

Testimony: I want you to hear from Daniel and Marlene DeJesus. These friends inspire us with how they listen to the Lord and obey his promptings. Daniel has been involved in prison ministry and after care ministry for a long time. Daniel and others from Calvary and beyond have formed teams to go in and to minister to people inside the prison walls and outside those walls. I have asked Daniel to share about loving the offender and ex-offender and about his upcoming mission trip to the Philippines. I want you to hear how God is changing lives inside and outside of prison, bringing people together to serve in prisons, and calling Daniel and Marlene to step up in new ways.

[Have Daniel and Marlene share.]

Through the years, we have had different ministry opportunities besides the **Prison Ministry**, like our **Hospital Ministry** and **Healing Touches**, just to name a couple. Currently, **Sharon Williams** is listening to the Lord and starting a **Grief Share Ministry** at Calvary.

I believe that there are other ministry opportunities here that the Lord wants to launch to touch the harvest fields around us. Let me mention one such opportunity: **Alpha**. [Alpha](#) is primarily designed as an evangelistic outreach tool. People can come and explore in a safe atmosphere what following Jesus is about. It is also a powerful discipleship tool to help people grow in their faith.

[Play a video clip from Alpha.]

Right now, Steve and Debi Buckles are facilitating **Alpha** on Sunday mornings. We want to expand **Alpha** to other nights or venues, especially Wednesday evenings. We have a lot of parents who drop off their children at our Wednesday night activities. They are looking for a place to plug in that is non-threatening. And, Alpha is a great place for us to bring our friends and family members who are exploring spiritual matters in general and Christianity in particular. Alpha will help them in their spiritual journey.

Here at Calvary, we believe in the principle of leadership. So, we won't start something unless there is the leadership for it. I am asking the Lord to raise up someone to

facilitate Alpha on Wednesday evenings. If you are interested, please contact [Margaret Petry](#) or [me](#).

Reflection

1. What got stirred up in you as you listened to today?
2. What did you learn?
3. Where did you experience resistance?
4. What is the Lord saying to you?

Ministry Time