

Arranging: Joy

Sowing Seeds, Growing Gardens—part 6

October 15, 2017

DAY 1: Lessons on people coming to faith

1. This is our last week in looking at how to get started in sharing your faith, sowing seeds into people's lives that may someday bear fruit of Christ-likeness. From seeds to gardens!
2. You may remember the episode of Jesus sharing truth with the woman at the well in John 4. At the end of their conversation she "got it," she understood that Jesus was the Messiah and that her sins could be forgiven.
3. She left her water jar at the well, and ran back into town to tell the townspeople that the Messiah was at the well. She became one of the first evangelists!
4. While she was running into town, the disciples were coming out of town, having gone there to bring back lunch. When they offer Jesus some food, he declines. We pick up the story there.
John 4:34 "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work."
5. What message do you think Jesus is giving to His disciples?

John 4:35 "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."

6. When a follower of Christ looks at a lost person it's usually difficult to imagine that the person is even remotely interested in the gospel. That's how it often *seems*.
7. What message is Jesus giving the disciples in v. 35?

John 4:36 "Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together."

8. Jesus continues to teach the disciples principles of how lost people can come to faith. What do you think He is teaching the disciples in v. 36?

John 4:37 "Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true.

John 4:38 I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor."

9. What is the lesson of these last two verses?

DAY 2: the harvest of the Samaritan townspeople of Sychar:

1. We continue yesterday's story from John 4.

John 4:39 Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did."

2. How effective was her witness to the townspeople?

3. The townspeople were so intrigued and excited that they walked out of town and into the countryside to where Jesus was sitting at the well.

John 4:40 So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days.

4. The disciples would have been dumb-founded if someone had told them that these Samaritans would have anything to do with the God of the bible. And look! They are flocking to Jesus! What things do you sense in them in verse. 40?

John 4:41 And because of his words many more became believers.

5. The harvest of people continued!

John 4:42 They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."

6. What things do you think persuaded them to turn to Jesus as their Savior?

DAY 3:

1. Paul tells the Corinthian believers the same message that Jesus gave His disciples about the principles of a lost person getting saved.

1 Corinthians 3:6 I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow.

⁷ So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.

⁸ The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor.

⁹ For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

2. Apollos was a leader in the young Christian movement. Who are the “players” on the stage of seeing lost people come to faith? (v. 6)

3. When a lost person comes to Christ, who ultimately “made it happen?” (v. 7)

4. There is a tendency in Christian circles to glorify the “harvester,” the Christian who led the lost person to Christ. In contrast to that, how should we look at this process? (v. 8)

5. What does God promise to all who engage in the sowing or planting or watering, etc.? (v. 8)

6. What strikes you about the truths in v. 9?

7. What strikes you about this passage in Corinthians?

DAY 4: Verses on the harvest

1. The following verses relate to sowing and harvesting. Jot down what strikes you about each verse:

Matthew 13:8 Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop--a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.

Proverbs 11:30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise.

Romans 1:13 I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I planned many times to come to you (but have been prevented from doing so until now) in order that I might have a harvest among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles.

Daniel 12:3 (RSV) And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.

3 John 1:3-4 (RSV) For I greatly rejoiced when some of the brethren arrived and testified to the truth of your life, as indeed you do follow the truth.

⁴No greater joy can I have than this, to hear that my children follow the truth.

DAY 5: Verses on the coming reward for sowing

1. The following verses all relate to the promises regarding the sowing of seeds. Jot down what strikes you about each verse:

Matthew 10:42 And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."

Matthew 25:23 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.'

1 Corinthians 15:58 (RSV) Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

Psalms 126:6 He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him.

Matthew 19:29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.