

FIVE PRINCIPLES OF THE HARVEST

John 4:27-42

(John 4:27-42), “And upon this came his disciples, and marveled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her? {28} The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, {29} Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? {30} Then they went out of the city, and came unto him. {31} In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. {32} But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. {33} Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat? {34} Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. {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. {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. {37} And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. {38} I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labors. {39} And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did. {40} So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days. {41} And many more believed because of his own word; {42} And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.”



S **SOMETHING WONDERFULLY REFRESHING** takes place when a person gives their life to the Lord. One of our **FAITH TEAMS** had the joy of seeing a person come to the Lord this past week. **ROB SITSLER** wrote the following paragraph describing their visit.

“On our Monday night FAITH opinion polls we had what I think was **A DIVINE APPOINTMENT**. We had been walking down our chosen street and had walked about four blocks with hardly a light on. When we did find a light on, we were typically dismissed with an "I'm not interested". Finally, we found two more houses with the lights on and decided we'll try these two houses and then head back. When we got to the first house, a woman answered. She answered the questions and then listened attentively as we presented the Gospel to her. When we asked her if she would like to accept Christ as her

savior she started crying and said, “Yes.” She prayed to receive Christ and then told us that we had come on just the right night. I could not wipe the smile off of my face and words cannot describe the joy I felt in my heart at being used by God to introduce this woman to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This is my fourth FAITH semester and this was the first time I had been on a visit in which someone was saved. Monday night I learned that if we continue to be obedient to His command to share the good news, it's not a matter of *if* he will use us, but *when*.”

S ROB DESCRIBED THAT VISIT AS “**A DIVINE APPOINTMENT.**” THE DEFINITION of that term was presented in an earlier message from John, chapter 4.

- **A DIVINE APPOINTMENT IS** a term used to describe the experience of God bringing a **person** to the ***right place*** at the ***right time*** under the ***right circumstances*** so that they have A LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE WITH GOD. It is **A GOD-ARRANGED ENCOUNTER.**
- **THE WOMAN AT THE WELL IN JOHN 4 IS AN EXAMPLE OF A DIVINE APPOINTMENT.** In a brief moment of time HER LIFE WAS **CHANGED FOREVER.**
- PERHAPS TODAY will serve as a **DIVINE APPOINTMENT** in the life of some listener. This could well be the very **SPECIAL HOUR OF DECISION** for someone today.

S **JESUS' EXPERIENCE** with the woman at the well was not only a *divine appointment*, BUT IT WAS ALSO AN EXAMPLE OF **A DIVINE TEACHING POINT.** Jesus not only had a word for the woman at the well who needed salvation, He also had a word for His disciples who **NEEDED SPIRITUAL GROWTH.** As always, Jesus took every opportunity to teach His disciples HIS WORD OF **TRUTH.**

S **THE SUBJECT** Jesus taught the disciples that day was on the subject of “**THE HARVEST.**” Jesus used the word “harvest” **two times** in verse 35:

(V. 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."

ANY FARMER can tell you THE BIGGEST EVENT OF THE YEAR down on the farm **IS THE HARVEST**. Everything that farmer does the other eleven months of the year is designed to make the harvest a success. **THE HARVEST IS** that experience of cutting the grain and gathering it into the granary.

S Jesus used a **PHYSICAL HARVEST** to illustrate the **SPIRITUAL HARVEST** in which He wants all His children to participate. With the *spiritual* harvest in mind, CONSIDER **FIVE PRINCIPLES OF THE HARVEST**.

- I. THE PRINCIPLE OF **"RISK"**
- II. THE PRINCIPLE OF **"PRIORITY"**
- III. THE PRINCIPLE OF **"URGENCY"**
- IV. THE PRINCIPLE OF **"REWARD"**
- V. THE PRINCIPLE OF **"INTERDEPENDENCE"**

I. THE PRINCIPLE OF "RISK"

(V. 27), "And upon this came his disciples, and **MARVELED** that he talked with the woman: . . . "

S **IT APPEARS** that the disciples had **GONE INTO TOWN TO BUY SOME GROCERIES** while Jesus stayed behind at Jacob's well. Because they had gone into town, they **MISSED THE DISCUSSION** Jesus had with the woman at the well. When they returned, all they knew was what their eyes told them — **JESUS WAS TALKING WITH A WOMAN**.

S **BY TALKING TO THAT WOMAN, JESUS WAS BEING "POLITICALLY INCORRECT."** He was **TAKING A "RISK"** that could have adversely affected His ministry. In fact, **JESUS TOOK THREE "RISKS"** THAT DAY:

- 1) **GOING TO SAMARIA WAS A RISK**. Samaritans and Jews were at odds with one another.
- 2) **TALKING TO A WOMAN WAS A RISK**. It is not a **BIG DEAL** in our day and time, but it was a **VERY BIG DEAL** in Jesus' day.
- 3) **IT WAS A RISK TO TALK TO THE KIND OF WOMAN SHE WAS**. That woman had lived with five husbands, and the man she was living with at that time was not her husband

(v. 18).

S THE DISCIPLES WERE SO **SHOCKED** with what they saw that our text words it this way:

(V. 27), “And upon this came his disciples, and **MARVELED** that he talked with the woman: . . . ”

- **THE GREEK WORD FOR “MARVELED”** is the same word Jesus used with Nicodemus in John 3:7 when Jesus said to Nicodemus:
(John 3:7), “**MARVEL** not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”
NICODEMUS COULDN’T BELIEVE HIS EARS when Jesus told him he had to be born again. He was dumbfounded. He asked Jesus:
(John 3:4), “. . . How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?”
- **IN THAT SAME MANNER AS NICODEMUS, THE DISCIPLES** were **SHOCKED** that Jesus was talking to a woman. Their **BODY LANGUAGE** must have been screaming, “**JESUS, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?**”

JESUS SPOKE TO THAT WOMAN FOR AT LEAST TWO REASONS.

- (1) HE WAS **DEMONSTRATING** what it meant to take a “**RISK**” so that others might find **ETERNAL LIFE**. The gospel will go unshared if we are unwilling to “risk” for the Kingdom’s sake.
- (2) HE WAS **TEACHING HIS DISCIPLES HOW TO BREAK DOWN ANY BARRIERS** erected by **sin** and **Satan** so the Gospel might be shared. **IF WE** are going share the Gospel, we must be **WILLING TO TAKE SOME RISKS**. If we are going to participate in God’s spiritual harvest, we must be willing to **STEP OUTSIDE OUR “COMFORT ZONES.”**

FARMERS ILLUSTRATE THE NECESSITY of “RISK-TAKING.”

Every time they plant a crop, they take a risk.

IMAGINE THE “RISK” INVOLVED FOR **THE ETHIOPIAN FARMERS** in years past when **FAMINE WAS SO SEVERE** in their land. It was common that seeds planted in the ground never germinated

at all because it was so dry. Those seeds that did sprout often dried up because it stopped raining later in the season.

JUST SUPPOSE you were a farmer living under those conditions. What would you do with the little grain you had left when it came time for the next planting season? Would you hold on to the grain so that you and your family would be guaranteed something to eat? Or would you plant that seed in the ground hoping it would rain and produce a bountiful crop? It would take **GREAT FAITH** and **GREAT "RISK"** to plant that seed in the ground.

ONE LESSON Jesus taught the disciples that day was **"THE HARVEST REQUIRES RISK."** **IN MANY INSTANCES** the Gospel will go unshared unless we are willing to step out of our **comfort zones** and take a **"risk."** If we are afraid of the "dangers" and "hazards" involved, we can live a lifetime and never share Jesus with another person.

WHAT **"RISKS"** HAVE YOU TAKEN? WHAT **"SACRIFICES"** HAVE YOU MADE TO SHARE THE GOSPEL? Have you ever caused anyone to **"MARVEL"** as Jesus had done with His disciples BECAUSE OF YOUR BOLDNESS IN SHARING THE GOSPEL? God encourages **BOLD SHARING** of the Gospel.

- **(Mat 22:9)**, "Go ye therefore into the **HIGHWAYS**, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage."
- **(Rom 12:1)**, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies **A LIVING SACRIFICE**, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."
- **(Mat 16:25)**, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."
- **THANK GOD** for the **"RISK TAKERS"** in the **"HARVEST."**

I. THE PRINCIPLE OF **"RISK"**

II. THE PRINCIPLE OF "PRIORITY"

EVENTUALLY **THE DISCIPLES** RETURNED from town with the **FOOD**. ONCE **THE WOMAN** left Jesus, **THEY BEGAN TO PRESS JESUS** with what they considered **THE MOST IMPORTANT MATTER FOR THE MOMENT — FOOD!**

(V. 31), “In the mean while his disciples PRAYED [urged] HIM, SAYING, ‘MASTER, EAT.’”

- S THE VERB “PRAYED” [urged] is in the **IMPERFECT TENSE** and **ACTIVE VOICE**. It can be understood as a **continuous action**. The idea is they “**kept urging Him.**”
- S THE VERB “EAT” is in the **IMPERATIVE MOOD**. Imperative simply means it was **A COMMAND**. They were telling Jesus with **SOME DEGREE OF INSISTENCE** that He needed to eat right then and there. They knew how long Jesus had gone without food and they just knew He needed to eat. They were quite **confident** that nothing was more pressing at that moment than for Jesus to eat.
- S **JESUS’ RESPONSE MUST HAVE SET THEM BACK A BIT**. The impression is THE DISCIPLES **WERE SHOCKED** to discover that Jesus did not desire food at that time.

THE DISCUSSION between Jesus and His disciples REGARDING the matter of “FOOD” IS VERY REVEALING.

- THE DISCIPLES SAID
(V. 31), “. . . ‘MASTER, EAT.’”
- JESUS SAID
(V. 32), “. . . ‘I have meat [food] to eat that ye know not of.’”
- THE DISCIPLES SAID
(V. 33), “. . . ‘Hath any man brought him anything to eat?’”
- JESUS SAID
(V. 33), “. . . ‘MY MEAT [FOOD] is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.’”

TWO DIFFERENT KINDS OF FOOD WERE BEING DISCUSSED THAT DAY:

- (1) **PHYSICAL FOOD** — bread, fish, olives, figs, pomegranates, dates, etc.
- (2) **SPIRITUAL FOOD** — God’s **will** and **work**.

THE REASON the disciples had a difficult time understanding what Jesus meant was they were thinking *physical food* and Jesus was talking *spiritual food*.

EVERY SUNDAY MORNING about 11:30 it is common to find the

“THE BATTLE OF THE TWO FOODS” taking place in churches across America.

- (1) ON THE ONE HAND IS THE BATTLE FOR **“SPIRITUAL FOOD.”** It is on our mind because **the preacher**, or **Sunday school teacher**, shares God’s Word with us. God’s Word is spiritual food!
- (2) ON THE OTHER HAND IS THE BATTLE FOR **“PHYSICAL FOOD.”** It is on our mind because lunchtime is near. Our stomachs start growling about 11:30 a.m. because it is almost time to eat. We begin to think about the roast, gravy, potatoes and carrots waiting for us at home. The **nonverbal** communication sometimes says to the preacher, “O.K. Preacher, it is time to stop sharing *spiritual food* because it is time for us to go eat *physical food*.”

OUR PASSAGE IS A DEMONSTRATION OF BOTH HUNGERS:

- (1) ***THE DISCIPLES*** DEMONSTRATED **PHYSICAL HUNGER**. The disciples had made a journey to purchase food. Once they returned, they brought the food to Jesus and expected Him to eat it. They couldn’t understand why Jesus didn’t stop everything He was doing and just sit down and eat.
- (2) ***JESUS*** DEMONSTRATED **SPIRITUAL HUNGER**. Jesus had something on His mind that He considered to be of greater importance than *physical food*, and it was *spiritual food*. **JESUS DEFINED** spiritual food using **TWO WORDS**, both of which begin with the letter **“W.”**
 - **(V. 32)**, “. . . ‘MY MEAT [food] is to do the **WILL** of him that sent me, and to finish his **WORK**.’”
 - **SPIRITUAL FOOD IS THE “WILL” and “WORK” OF THE FATHER.**
 - **(John 6:38)**, “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own WILL, but the **WILL** of him that sent me.”
 - **JESUS HAD GREATER HUNGER FOR *GOD’S WILL* than He had for *physical food*.**

- When Jesus had fasted for forty days and nights in the **WILDERNESS** without food, Satan came and tempted Him. Satan told Jesus to turn **STONES INTO BREAD** so that He might have something to eat. Jesus answered Satan: **(Mat 4:4)**, “. . . It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.’”

THE SPECIFIC “SPIRITUAL FOOD” Jesus counted to be of greater importance than eating *physical food* was **PARTICIPATION IN THE SPIRITUAL HARVEST**. Jesus’ hunger to lead someone to salvation was of greater influence than His hunger for fish and bread.

(Luke 19:10), “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

S **DOING GOD’S “WILL” AND “WORK” WAS NOT A BURDEN TO JESUS**. It was just the opposite! IT WAS **“SPIRITUAL FOOD”** that brought Him nourishment.

QUESTION — IS DOING GOD’S “WILL,” AS IT RELATES TO THE “HARVEST,” THE GREATEST PRIORITY OF OUR LIVES?

WOULD WE SAY WITH **JESUS**:

(V. 32), “. . . ‘MY FOOD is to do the **WILL** of him that sent me, and to finish his **WORK**.’”?

WOULD WE SAY WITH THE **PSALMIST**:

(Psa 40:8), “I delight to do **THY WILL**, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.”?

IS **“THE HARVEST” OF GREATER PRIORITY TO US THAN:**

- . . . A **BIG MAC** from McDonalds?
- . . . A **ROAST BEEF** dinner?
- . . . A **MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL GAME?**
- . . . An **EXTRA DOLLAR** in the bank?
- . . . A **relaxing moment with the NEWSPAPER?**
- . . . **FISHING?**
- . . . **GOLF?**
- . . . **SHOPPING?**
- . . . **VACATION?**
- . . . **SLEEPING?**

- . . . etc.?

(Psa 40:8), "I delight to do **THY WILL**, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart."?

- S **DR. JAMES BOICE** writes of **A LITTLE GIRL** who wrote to her grandmother to say "**thank you**" for a Christmas present. She wrote,

"Dear Grandma, thank you for the pincushion. I have always wanted a pincushion, but not very much."

DR. BOICE CONCLUDES:

"We are like that. We say, "Thank you, Lord, for having a will for my life. I have always wanted your will for my life." Yet if we are honest, we are forced to admit, ". . . But not very much." (James Boice, John, Vol. 1, pg. 397)

- S **GOD'S WILL FOR EACH OF US IS** that we BE **ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS IN THE HARVEST.**

(Luke 19:10), "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

(John 20:21), ". . . As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you."

- I. THE PRINCIPLE OF "**RISK**"
- II. THE PRINCIPLE OF "**PRIORITY**"

III. THE PRINCIPLE OF "URGENCY"

(V. 35), "SAY NOT YE, . . . "

- S THE WORDS, "**SAY NOT YE,**" can be understood to mean, "**DO YOU NOT SAY?**" Jesus was simply restating A FAMILIAR **AGRARIAN PROVERB** that addressed the laws of nature.

THE LAW STATES:

(V. 35), "Do you not say, 'THERE ARE YET FOUR MONTHS, AND THEN COMETH HARVEST . . . "?

- S Plants grow according to a predictable timetable. For example, one garden package of corn read that such corn would mature sixty-seven days after planting. Corn operates according to a predictable timetable. Now, different plants take different lengths of time to mature. Apparently there were crops in Jesus' day that took four

months to mature.

- S Jesus was not really teaching His disciples how to be farmers. Jesus was teaching **TRUTHS ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL HARVEST**. It appears that one truth Jesus was trying to teach His disciples was **AS IN THE PHYSICAL HARVEST there must be a PHYSICAL PLANTING**, so in the **SPIRITUAL HARVEST THERE MUST BE A SPIRITUAL PLANTING, TOO**. If there is **NO PLANTING**, there will be **NO REAPING**. **ONLY AFTER SOWING CAN THERE BE REAPING**.
- S **WITH REGARD TO THE SPIRITUAL HARVEST, THERE IS ONE MAJOR DIFFERENCE**. In the physical realm, a particular crop is sown and harvested at approximately the same time each year. In the spiritual realm, spiritual seeds can be sown and harvested every day of the year. **EVERY DAY** is a potential day for spiritual *sowing* and *reaping*. We don't have to wait until **July** for someone to come to Christ and experience salvation.

JESUS GOES ON

(V. 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.**'"

- S **THE PRINCIPLE IS "GET THE FRUIT OUT OF THE FIELD WHILE IT RIPE."** That principle is true in **the physical realm**. **ANY FARMER** can tell **HOW IMPORTANT IT IS** to get the crop out of the field once it is ripe. One of the crops my dad raised over the years was **WINTER WHEAT**. If enough moisture was available, he usually planted it in late **AUGUST**. Sometimes the wheat was ready to harvest in **THE MONTH OF JUNE**. I remember as a little boy going with my dad to the wheat fields to watch the combines harvest the wheat. Sometimes those combines would cut late into the night hours. **THE REASON** they worked so late into the night was the wheat had to be harvested once it was ready. On more than one occasion, the harvest would begin and before the grain could be taken out of the field, it was mowed down by a hailstorm or high wind. On one occasion gentle rain started falling that lasted for days and the grain actually began to sprout while it was still in the head.
- S **THE PRINCIPLE IS "GET THE FRUIT OUT OF THE FIELD WHILE IT RIPE."** That principle is not only true in the physical realm, **IT IS ALSO TRUE IN THE SPIRITUAL REALM**.

JESUS' WORDS WERE **A MILD REBUKE** for THE LACK OF **"URGENCY"** ON THE PART OF **HIS DISCIPLES** FOR NOT IMMEDIATELY PARTICIPATING IN THE SPIRITUAL HARVEST.

(V. 35), ". . . **I SAY UNTO YOU**, 'Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.'"

S **APPARENTLY THE DISCIPLES** had gone into town to buy bread, but had not shared the gospel along the way. Perhaps they crossed paths with the very woman Jesus would talk to at Jacob's well and yet they never talked to her about eternity. In town they talked to many people, but they didn't point anyone toward eternal life. They exchanged their niceties with the butcher and baker, but they never told anyone about Jesus. They did not talk to a single person about the **BREAD OF LIFE**. They were urgent about *physical bread*, but there was no urgency about *spiritual bread*. When Jesus told the disciples to "*lift up your eyes and look on the fields*," He was pressing the issue of perpetual participation in the harvest.

S TO US THIS MEANS WE MUST REMAIN **PERPETUAL PARTICIPATES** IN GOD'S SPIRITUAL HARVEST. We are always to live in the reality that someone might accept Jesus today. People can be saved just as well in January as they can in July. People can be saved just as well at a well, or grocery store, as they can in church. We are always to live with the reality that someone might be ready to come to Jesus today.

S PERHAPS THE MISSING INGREDIENT THAT BOTHERED JESUS MOST ABOUT THE DISCIPLES WAS **THEIR LACK OF URGENCY IN THE SPIRITUAL HARVEST**. They could make a trip into town to buy bread, but they did not make a trip into town to tell a lost person about eternal life.

S HOW ABOUT US? **IF WE HAD SOME INSTRUMENT THAT MEASURED OUR "URGENCY LEVEL"** IN GOD'S SPIRITUAL HARVEST, HOW WOULD IT REGISTER? Would it indicate we are more motivated to share the Gospel with the world than we are to eat a good meal?

In early February of this year our national news services reported that **LITTLE 7-YEAR-OLD DANIELLE VAN DAM** had disappeared from her home in the Sabre Springs section of **SAN DIEGO**,

CALIFORNIA. FOR TWENTY DAYS a massive search was undertaken to find the missing child. Friends, family and law officers joined together in an effort to find the little girl. Special media coverage was afforded the desperate mother. To the horror of all involved, the little girl was found dead in the **DESERT** outside of San Diego on **FEBRUARY 27.**

- S **WE ALL UNDERSTAND THE EFFORT & URGENCY EXPENDED** in the search for lost children. Our hearts go out to any parent who experiences such a loss. Nothing touches our heart as quick as a child that suffers.

- S **WHAT I DON'T UNDERSTAND IS WHY OUR HEARTS** have a lesser sense of urgency when it comes to the search for spiritually lost souls. Why are we so much like the disciples and so little like Jesus when it comes to sharing Jesus with others? **THE PROBLEM TODAY** is we believe the spiritual harvest is important, but we don't believe it with **THE KIND OF URGENCY** that Jesus did.

- S **PERHAPS ONE REASON** the harvest is not as urgent to us as it was to Jesus is, we are **CONSUMED** and **OCCUPIED WITH LESSER THINGS.** Watching our favorite **T.V. PROGRAM** is more urgent than sharing Jesus. **READING THE NEWSPAPER** is of higher priority than helping someone find salvation.

- S The truth is we **WILL NEVER BECOME REGULAR PARTICIPATES** IN GOD'S SPIRITUAL HARVEST until we become burdened with the plight of lost souls.

- I. THE PRINCIPLE OF **"RISK"**
- II. THE PRINCIPLE OF **"PRIORITY"**
- III. THE PRINCIPLE OF **"URGENCY"**

IV. THE PRINCIPLE OF "REWARD"

(V. 36), "And he that reapeth receiveth **WAGES**, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: . . ."

- S THE GREEK WORD for "WAGES" is most often translated as **"REWARD"** (mis-thos') in other verses in the Bible. **CONSIDER TWO EXAMPLES:**
 - **(Rev 22:12),** "And, behold, I come quickly; and my **REWARD** (mis-thos') is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

- **(Luke 6:23)**, “Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your **REWARD** (mis-thos') is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.”

S Jesus was talking about **THE REWARDS** of a soul-winner. JESUS USED **TWO WORDS** TO DESCRIBE THE REWARDS OF A SOUL-WINNER:

#1. THE REWARD OF “FRUIT”

(V. 36), “And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth **FRUIT** unto life eternal: . . . ”

S **THE FARMER** PLANTS HIS CROP BECAUSE HE BELIEVES HE WILL RECEIVE A REWARD OF **“FRUIT.”** Take **CORN** as an example. One seed can easily produce from four to five hundred seeds on one ear. The farmer plants many seeds expecting to receive a great reward for his labor.

S THE REWARD OF “FRUIT” ALSO APPLIES IN **THE SPIRITUAL REALM**. AFTER RESPONDING TO JESUS, **THE WOMAN AT THE WELL** went to town and told the people about Jesus. The word **“MANY”** is used two times in our text to describe the result of her witness for Jesus:

- **(V. 39)**, “And **MANY** of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, . . . ”
- **(John 4:41)**, “And **MANY** more believed because of his own word;”

“ONE” BECAME **“MANY”** because a woman dared to participate in God’s spiritual harvest.

S **ROB SITSLER** WROTE:

“. . . I learned that if we continue to be obedient to His command to share the good news, **IT'S NOT A MATTER OF IF HE WILL USE US, BUT WHEN.**”

S **WHAT IF** Jesus had not won that woman? **WHAT IF** Jesus had been too busy? What if the woman had not told? What if she had been too shy? What if **ROB** had not gone? What if **YOU** and I don’t tell? One simple witness can result in **A MULTITUDE OF FRUIT** IF WE WILL ONLY TELL!

#1. THE REWARD OF “FRUIT”

#2. THE REWARD OF JOY

(V. 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.”

S **THE FARMER KNOWS THE JOY OF HARVEST**. When a farmer puts in multiplied hours so that he might have a bountiful harvest, **it is inevitable** that he experiences great joy when the crop comes in.

(Psa 126:5-6), “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. {6} He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, **SHALL DOUBTLESS COME AGAIN WITH REJOICING**, bringing his sheaves with him.”

S What is true in the **PHYSICAL REALM** is also true in the **SPIRITUAL REALM**. **IT JUST MAKE SENSE** if the salvation of a lost person causes heaven to rejoice, then the Holy Spirit in us is going to produce joy in us when a person is saved.

(1) **THE WOMAN AT THE WELL LEFT HER WATER POT** and went back into town because she was so excited about what had happened in her life (V. 28) that she had to share it with someone. She said to them:

(V. 28-29), “**COME, SEE** a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? {30} Then **THEY WENT** out of the city, and came unto him.

(2) **ROB SITSLER WROTE ABOUT JOY:**

“I could not wipe the smile off of my face and words can not describe the **joy** I felt in my heart at being used by God to introduce this woman to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

- I. THE PRINCIPLE OF “**RISK**”
- II. THE PRINCIPLE OF “**PRIORITY**”
- III. THE PRINCIPLE OF “**URGENCY**”
- IV. THE PRINCIPLE OF “**REWARD**”

V. THE PRINCIPLE OF “INTERDEPENDENCE”

(V. 36-38), “And he that **REAPETH** receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that **SOWETH** and he that **REAPETH** may rejoice together. {37} And herein is that saying true,

One **SOWETH**, and another **REAPETH**. {38} I sent you to **REAP** that whereon ye bestowed no labor: other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors."

S I remember as a young boy the **LONG CARAVANS** of harvesters passing through our town during the time of wheat harvest. They would start in the south and travel north as they followed the harvest. When it came time to cut our wheat, my dad would hire one of the traveling caravans to cut our fields. They would pull into our fields and in short fashion, barring any problems, they would cut our wheat.

S THAT WHOLE PROCESS IS AN EXAMPLE OF **WHAT JESUS WAS TEACHING:**

- "ONE **SOWETH**, and ANOTHER **REAPETH**" (v. 37).
- "I sent you to **REAP** that whereon ye bestowed no labor: other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors" (v. 38).

WHAT WOULD YOU THINK OF THE MEN who harvested my dad's crop if they took all the credit for my dad's crop? Can you imagine them bragging when all they had done was pull into the fields and cut the wheat? **THAT WOULD BE LIKE A PREACHER** bragging because someone responded at the invitation after one of his sermons.

S **WHEN A YOUNG CHILD** comes forward to received Christ, someone might exclaim the pastor's message was what led that young person to Jesus. What is often left unseen is that mother and father who faithfully taught their child the Word of God in years past. What is not seen is that faithful Sunday school teacher who proclaimed God's Word to that child for years. God used many faithful servants to complete His harvest. It was a team effort from beginning to end.

S **THE SPIRITUAL HARVEST IS A SHARED MINISTRY.** It is not a *Lone Ranger* operation. It is an example of the *Principle of INTERDEPENDENCE*.

(John 4:34), "Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the **WILL** of him that sent me, and to finish his **WORK**."

S **HARD WORK** is required element to be a participant in the harvest. The Greek word for "**LABOR**" in v. 38 is translated "**WEARIED**"

in John 4:6. Are we willing to go to work so that others might hear about Jesus?

- S **THE PROBLEM TODAY** is we believe the spiritual harvest is important, but we don't believe it with **THE KIND OF URGENCY** that Jesus had. We are more like the disciples who went to town to buy food and in the process failed to plant spiritual seeds and reap a spiritual harvest.

- S **ONE REASON THE SPIRITUAL HARVEST** is not as urgent to us as God would have it be, is we are **CONSUMED** and **OCCUPIED BY LESS IMPORTANT THINGS**. Watching our favorite **T.V. PROGRAM** is more urgent to us than sharing Jesus. We spend more time **READING THE NEWSPAPER** than telling people where salvation can be found. We say we delight to do God's will, but do we really?

- S We are more like **THAT LITTLE GIRL** that Dr. Boice wrote about than we would like to admit.
"Dear Grandma, thank you for the pincushion. I have always wanted a pincushion, but not very much."

- S **WE WILL NEVER BECOME REGULAR PARTICIPANTS IN THE HARVEST UNTIL** we are burdened with the plight of lost souls. **OUR PRAYER OUGHT TO BE, GOD HELP US TO BE BURDENED OVER THE THINGS THAT BURDEN YOU.**

- S **GOD'S "WILL" AND "WORK" MUST BE PLACED ABOVE OUR WILL.**
 - I. THE PRINCIPLE OF **"RISK"**
 - II. THE PRINCIPLE OF **"PRIORITY"**
 - III. THE PRINCIPLE OF **"URGENCY"**
 - IV. THE PRINCIPLE OF **"REWARD"**
 - V. THE PRINCIPLE OF **"INTERDEPENDENCE"**