

“HARVEST WISDOM”

Mark 4:26-29

Things you thought everyone knew: One of our churches that does 1 major outreach a year/couple times a year pass out flyers before revival. Church hasn't grown in many years! Missing the obvious connection of harvest: It comes from seed sown.

I. HARVEST UNDERSTANDING

- A. Some men seem to miss the point about how a church grows – what causes people to come to church
1. **The presence mentality:** I am here – so people should come...I am sacrificing/heroic to be here!
 2. **The heritage mentality:** *I was disciplined by Pastor Greg/Mitchell – I'm from Prescott...Sinners don't care!*
 3. **The building mentality:** *I have a building – they should come; I need a better/nicer/bigger building*
a. Any building you have will not be impressive b. Sinners don't care!
 4. **The program mentality:** I will offer something so people will be drawn
a. Kids/food/entertainment b. Actually most of what you do will be totally unimpressive
- B. Harvest comes from seed sown **Mark 4:26** *And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;*
1. Seed in the house does no good – it must come into contact with soil! **Human hearts**
a. My raised-bed garden: Wood/soil/fertilizer. I was away when I was supposed to plant – it grew nothing!
 2. Our job is to get the seed outside the 4 walls of the church
a. Personal witnessing/street preaching/jobs/markets/beaches/parks/apartments/shopping areas
 3. When we sow seed – God can go to work: God primarily blesses seed sown – not just paper passed out
a. Isaiah 55:11 so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.
- C. Flat spots in the harvest can often be traced back to lack of sowing
1. It is a mistake to be event-oriented: 4-8 weeks buildup – 1 night doesn't work; 4-8 weeks of lost time
a. Years can pass in a blur -4-8 weeks at a time!
 2. Practical wisdom: **Sow as much seed as possible**
a. We don't know which people are bad soil: Hard/shallow/choked
b. We don't know which people are good soil: Fruitful! Productive – win others
 3. So give yourself the best chance: Sow as much seed as possible!
a. Eccl 11:1-2 Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days. 2 Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.
b. Eccl 11:6 Sow your seed in the morning, and at evening let not your hands be idle, for you do not know which will succeed, whether this or that, or whether both will do equally well.

II. HARVEST VISION

- A. Harvest requires vision: **John 4:35** *lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are white unto harvest*
1. **Vision as to who we can sow seed into**
a. Disciples looking for lunch – Jesus saw a woman he could speak to
 2. **Vision as to where we can sow seed**
a. Places where people gather always b. Places where people will be gathered for an existing event
c. Places where people could gather if you made some noise
- B. Ask God to give you this vision/this sensitivity: **James 1:5** *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask God*
1. Let me see people like you see them:
 2. Let me see opportunities
 3. Let me have spiritual sensitivity to recognize what you are wanting to do
a. Acts 8:29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.

III. HARVEST MIRACLES

- A. We can't lose sight of the miracle dimension of harvest
1. Labor/sowing seed will never be enough
a. Wrong to approach it as building up a debt – so God owes you
 2. **Mark 4:27-28** *And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knows not how. 28 For the earth brings forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.*
a. Believe God to bless our labors b. Believe God when nothing seems to be happening!
1. Work like it's all up to you – pray/believe like it's all up to God!
- B. We must have faith that God will help us in the harvest
1. Ruth is faithful to glean/labor – and she is led to exactly the right place/person of blessing
a. Ruth 2:16 Also let grain from the bundles fall purposely for her; leave it that she may glean, and do not rebuke her."