

The Fields are Ripe

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[0 : 0 0] Thank you so much. It's wonderful to be here. I've had a great weekend. I brought my friend Kevin with me, and it's just been great being with the church. We have been so encouraged.

The number of people that came out to our evangelism seminar, which is usually, I've done these all over the country, and usually when you mention evangelism, that's a great way to scare people away, to get people to stay home. We've had people leaving the country, faking diseases, those kind of things. What do I have to do to avoid doing any kind of evangelism? But we were so encouraged. Just such a great job to see your eagerness to reach out, to learn, and then to reach out. It was so encouraging to hear some of the testimonies coming back. People went to the campus, to Harvard, to MIT, and hearing some of these great stories of how God met them, and they were able to share the gospel. It's been such a joy as well to be with Sean and Hannah. Sean is doing an amazing job serving in this church, and some of you might not know, but he serves on the Theology Committee in Sovereign Grace, so God is really using him and his gifts to help shape the theology of sovereign grace, which is incredibly important. And God's really gifted him to be able to do this, to think that's what I always love to draw him out here about what he's reading and what he's doing.

He is gifted in that way. So we thank God for you, Sean, and for how God is using you. Now turn with me to John chapter 4, and I want to read this story and pray. I know that it is very easy to feel guilty when it comes to evangelism, but my prayer is that God would inspire us as we look at Christ and see his example. So John chapter 4, this is going to be a longer section, so let's read in verse 1. It says, Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John, although Jesus himself did not baptize but only his disciples, he left Judea and departed again for Galilee, and he had to pass through Samaria. So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour, that's noon.

There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, Give me a drink, for his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria? For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered her, If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, Give me a drink, you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water. The woman said to him, Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?

Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock. Jesus said to her, Everyone who drinks of this water, he's probably pointing down the well at this point, Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water that I will give him will never be thirsty forever. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life. The woman said to him, Sir, give me this water so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water. Jesus said to her, Go call your husband and come here. The woman answered, I have no husband. Jesus said, You are right in saying I have no husband, for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true. The woman said to him, Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship. Jesus said to her, Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know. We worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming is now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.

[4 : 48] God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth. The woman said to him, I know the Messiah is coming. He was called Christ. When he comes, he will tell us all things.

Jesus said to her, I who speak to you am he. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this amazing story. We thank you for the amazing example of Christ.

we thank you for the way you love those who are lost, the way you care, the way you break through barriers, the way you exhaust yourself to reach men and women with the gospel. We praise you for this.

We thank you for what you have done in our lives. Lord, I pray for this congregation. Lord, I pray for those who might feel a sense of guilt or hesitancy when it comes to reaching out. I pray that you would meet with each of us, that you would fill us with your spirit, give us courage, and use us to reach those who don't know you. In Jesus' name, amen. Several years ago, I took a trip to a place called Altoona, Pennsylvania. Isn't that a weird name, Altoona? Does anyone ever hear of Altoona, Pennsylvania? Oh, a couple. Maybe Kevin, have you heard of it? Right, yeah. So a few people. It's weird, strange. It's up in the mountains. And I went there to do a weekend seminar just like this on evangelism.

And we had this great time. I did all these messages. We did outreaches and preached on Sunday. And when we got done, I was exhausted and I was really hungry. So I couldn't wait to eat. And I love eating. Eating is one of my hobbies. I didn't really forget a meal unless I do it on purpose. I think about food all the time. And so we were done. I was like, oh, this is going to be great. And so we stopped at a Chipotle and I thought, okay, this is going to be one of one. As we were going in, I saw this amazing car. It was a 458 Italia, a Ferrari Italia, which is this amazing car. I love Ferraris. I don't know that much about it, but I knew about this car. And so as we were going to eat, I spotted this Ferrari and I immediately forgot about eating, which is very hard for me to do. I forgot about food. I ignored that. And I just went over to this car and, you know, there was another guy was there and we were just drooling on the car and walking around like, this is really amazing. I can't believe this. And so we're talking about this. We're taking pictures of the guy's car. And so then I went in to get in line to eat and everybody else had already gone in. And so then I was in line and then I saw the guy that owned the Ferrari get up and go out and get into the car. And then I got out of line because I wanted to go outside and hear the Ferrari. And so the other guy that had been watching, he got up and went out too, because we were both into this. And I actually asked the guys, excuse me, would you mind revving the engine for me just so that I could hear it? You know that loud whine of a Ferrari sound? You guys all know that. It's really cool.

[8 : 00] So he's like, you know, people that own cars like this love to do things like this. It's short. He drove by, he's like revving the engine. We're like, oh my goodness, this is so awesome. And so finally, after I don't know how long that was, I finally went in to get some lunch. Let me ask you this question. Have you ever been so passionate about something that you forget about eating? Have you ever been so passionate about something that you don't care about eating? In this story, Jesus is so passionate about reaching the lost, he doesn't care about food or eating. He, he forgets about his physical needs because those around him have even greater spiritual needs. Now we can learn many things from, from Jesus in this passage, but I want to point out eight things. What did Jesus do to reach this woman? There are eight, sorry about that, eight things that we're going to look at here first, and I'll try to get through them. Number one, Jesus cares. So what did Jesus do to reach this woman? Number one, Jesus cares. Look again at verse three. It says he left Judea and departed again for Galilee and he had to pass through

Samaria. Now, actually he didn't have to pass through Samaria. Most Jews, when they were in the south in Jerusalem heading north toward Galilee would not pass through Samaria, Samaria was on the way, it was directly north, but a good Jew would actually go out and around Samaria. They would take the long way because they didn't want to be with the Samaritans. They hated the Samaritans.

Samaritans were considered half breeds. They were considered unclean. So they would avoid them and travel around Samaria. But not Jesus. It says he had to pass through Samaria. Why did he have to pass through Samaria? Why was it necessary? Well, it's because Jesus cares about people who are far from God. He cares about people who are hurting. He cares about people who are lost. He cares about people who are broken and empty and hopeless. He cares about people who are going to hell. He cares so much that he was willing to risk his reputation. He was talking to a very immoral woman. He was willing to go tired. He was willing to go hungry and thirsty. He was willing to sacrifice his own comfort and ease in order to rescue her. This woman was being deceived and destroyed by sin. She was in great danger. She had no way of rescuing herself. Jesus had to go through Samaria because he cares about the lost.

Number two, Jesus blows through barriers. Look at verse seven. It says, There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, Give me a drink. For the disciples have gone away to the city to buy food.

The Samaritan woman said to him, How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria? For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

[11 : 44] This is absolutely scandalous. Not only does Jesus decide to go to Samaria, but now he sits down and talks to a Samaritan. Jews are not supposed to talk to Samaritans. And not only see a Samaritan, she's a woman, she's a woman. Jewish men are not supposed to talk to women in public. And not only is she a woman, but she's an immoral adulteress.

Rabbis are not supposed to talk to immoral adulteresses. What Jesus is doing is absolutely unheard of. This is shocking. He's blowing through social barriers.

He's running down. He's plowing through social barriers. He's plowing over racial barriers and moral barriers because he has to reach her with the gospel.

Don't you love this about Jesus? I mean, everyone else is avoiding her and rejecting him and judging this woman.

Her life is so messed up and so steeped in sin. She doesn't even want to be seen. It's like going to the grocery store in the middle of the night so you don't run into someone.

[13 : 04] This woman might be rejected by the whole world, but she is not rejected by Jesus.

His love is unhindered by her sin and her reputation. She's not out of the range of his grace. You know, in hunters, when they, I don't hunt, but I have a whole family on my website where hunters, they, when a shot is out of range, it's too far.

It's out of range. You can't, you can't get it. She's not out of range of the grace of Christ. Don't you love to see how much Jesus loves people and to see how he gives them grace?

He is so passionate about giving people grace and forgiving their sins. He, he, he just, he has to bless through these barriers. If, if he doesn't take a risk here, if Jesus doesn't cross these massive boundaries and offer her living water, who will?

Who, who's going to save this immoral woman from hell? When she's all alone, she came at noon in the hot sun to draw water so that the other women wouldn't see her.

[14 : 23] She's trying to avoid the condemnation and the shame. And that's really what sin does, you know. It, it drives us away from people. Sin isolates us. Imagine what it felt like for this woman.

She's working on her sixth husband. She probably knows this isn't going to work either. She, she probably feels trapped and hopeless and broken. And many people find themselves in the same place.

Sin has isolated them. It's trapped them and they have no hope. Jesus had to talk to this woman because she could never talk to him.

He didn't assume that he should just kind of sit down by the well and wait till some spiritual seeker comes by and ask him a question. No, he didn't do that. He asked her a question.

Jesus is the one that took the initiative. Do you know that most non-Christians will not voluntarily come to us?

[15 : 24] Most of them are not going to take the initiative to have a spiritual conversation with us because they don't know that they need to have a spiritual conversation with us.

Most of them are not going to take the initiative to build friendships with us. We have to go to them. In verse 40, we learn that Jesus stayed with the Samaritans for another two days.

Now, what do you think the disciples thought when Jesus said, oh, hey, guys, we're going to be hanging out with the Samaritans for a couple more days? I'll tell you, they probably thought things that they would later need forgiveness for.

They hated these people. They would have had no desire to reach out to Samaritans. They were unwilling to cross these kinds of boundaries.

And I think that sometimes we're unwilling to cross certain boundaries. It's much easier for us to relate to people who are like us, that aren't as messy and aren't as needy, people that aren't different.

[16 : 39] You know, it's easy to avoid situations that might make us feel awkward or uncomfortable. Jesus smashes through these barriers.

Jesus doesn't care about this. No race barrier, no economic barrier, no moral barrier, no social barrier can stop him.

His heart is so filled with love that nothing is going to keep him away. That's number two. Jesus blows through barriers.

Number three, Jesus shows mercy. He shows mercy. I love this verse. Verse 10, where Jesus said, if you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, give me a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.

None Christians don't know what they're missing. They don't know what they're missing. They don't know the gift of God.

[17 : 52] They don't know about that. They don't know that they can find forgiveness and satisfaction in Christ. A satisfaction that is so superior to what the world offers, it's like the superiority of the Grand Canyon compared to a hole in the ground.

People don't know this gift. They don't know the gift and they don't know where they can get it. They don't know that Jesus is the one that can give them the gift.

So they look everywhere and never find it. Jesus is saying to this woman, if you knew, if you only knew what God could do for you, and if you knew who I was, you would ask me for something.

I'm just asking you for a little drink of water, but I have something to give to you that is far greater than this water. This is amazing.

Despite her filthy, rebellious lifestyle and her blatant rejection and disregard of God, Jesus wants to give her living water. He wants to give it to her.

[19 : 06] He's saying to her, just ask me. Just ask me. I want to give it to you. I want to give you this gift. I want to give you living water. What an amazing picture of the Savior.

This is a perfect man looking at a filthy woman and saying to her, if you only knew what I could give you, you would ask. I want to give it to you. I am so willing.

I am so willing. I'm not rejecting you. I'm inviting you to have, to come get what I have. I want to share it with you. He wants to give this immoral woman eternal life because he is infinitely willing to show mercy to sinners.

J.C. Ryle says, all day long, Christ stretches out his hands to the disobedient and the gainsaying. The gainsaying means those who oppose. He has thoughts of pity and compassion towards the vilest of sinners, even when they have no thoughts of him.

He stands waiting to bestow mercy and grace on the worst and most unworthy if they will only cry to him. And then he says, the lost will discover at the last day that they had not because they asked not.

[20 : 26] They had not because they asked not. Jesus shows mercy. Number four, Jesus connects relationally.

Now, relationships are critical when it comes to reaching out to people. And friendship is actually the most effective way of reaching people with the gospel.

That's what Jesus did everywhere he went. He built friendships with people who were far from God. So think about Zacchaeus or Matthew and his tax collector friends or the woman caught in adultery or Mary Magdalene or blind Bartimaeus.

Jesus was a friend of sinners. That's my favorite title for Jesus. He was a friend of sinners. Aren't you glad that he was a friend of sinners?

We see him here building a friendship with this woman by initiating a conversation. Then he's asking her for help. He offers to help her. He's honest with her about her sins and problems.

[21 : 28] And then he spends two more days with her village. Now, there's a lot we can learn from this. But let me just mention one thing. When Jesus says, give me a drink, this is an act of kindness.

He was reaching out to her as a real person with his own real need. He was showing weakness. Others in the village just avoided her and condemned her.

Jesus believed she was made in the image of God. He valued her, which is why he asked her for a drink. And we should do the same thing. We should value people and we should be willing to let them help us.

It promotes friendship. We shouldn't be like, okay, well, non-Christians need us. We don't need you. We're fine. We don't need anything. Only you need us. No, that doesn't promote friendship. We don't want to communicate that.

And listen, we shouldn't be afraid to be real and vulnerable with non-Christians. We don't have to pretend that we have it all together, that our life is perfect. It should be real.

[22 : 34] We should let them see where we struggle and let them help us where they can. This is one of the ways we connect relationally. Number five, Jesus says some uncomfortable things.

He says some uncomfortable things. Look at verse 16. Jesus said, go, call your husband and come here. The woman answered, I have no husband. Jesus said to her, you are right in saying I have no husband, for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband.

What you have said is true. Can you say uncomfortable? Like, hello? Hello? Can you imagine this? Can you imagine talking with a stranger, and all of a sudden, they bring out, like, your deepest, darkest secrets?

I mean, doesn't this kind of cut across the idea of building relationships? Didn't we just talk about how important it is to build relationships? Isn't that like on the top of the list of building relationships?

Hey, don't bring out deepest, darkest secrets and kind of throw it in their face. Right? Well, why is Jesus doing this? He's not trying to needlessly offend her.

[23 : 42] He's trying to help her. He wants to give her living water. And the only way that can happen is if she sees her sin.

She's an immoral woman who's lived for pleasure apart from God. So Jesus says, go call your husband. By saying this, he is putting his finger on the problem of her immorality.

Her main problem is not a replication. Her main problem is not that she has to come and draw water in the middle of the day. Her main problem is her sin. And Jesus just goes right after her.

You've had five husbands, and you're sleeping with number six. J.C. Ryle says, till men and women are brought to feel their sinfulness and need, no real good is ever done for their soul.

That's not. Unless someone sees their sin, unless they see their need, you can't do any good for their soul. So Jesus was willing to confront her sin to do good for her soul.

[24 : 54] He has a lot of courage. Now, I want to confess, I don't have a lot of courage. When I was in Altoona, when we were doing that outreach, I made the mistake of confessing a fear, kind of an irrational fear I have of librarians.

And so I just, I apologize to any librarians who are here with us. I have an irrational fear of librarians, okay? I had never shared a gospel with a librarian.

I'm just afraid of them. And again, please forgive me. I've done this message before. I've had librarians come up to you. If you're a librarian, please come up to me after the service. I will confess to you as well. But I'm just scared.

I feel like they have that glasses deal with the little rope thing, and their hair is really tight. And that if I were to ever share the gospel with them, it would go really bad. That they would take me in the back, put me in stops, and throw rotten tomatoes at me.

I just, I don't know. It's just an irrational fear. And so we were there in Altoona doing this evangelism seminar. And one of the young guys, who was like 14 years old, said to his dad, dad, can I take Mr. Donahue to the library so we can try to share with the librarian?

[25 : 55] And I'm like, I seriously was scared. And so he came up to me. I was like, yeah. I'm like, yeah, sure. I'm going to be the library. And so we were walking to the library. And I'm not joking. So the Altoona library was like this.

It was a poor concrete, just square-hued buck. It looked like a fortress. I am not joking. It looked like a bunker that it could survive a nuclear holocaust.

And so we're going in. And I love this kid that I was with. I'm trying to teach the evangelism seminar. It's like, yeah, you know, it's not really that big of a deal. I'll just kind of go up and talk to people. And if they want to talk to them, I was like, yeah, OK, thank you.

I'm like, I try to get the faith from him along to me. And so we go into this library. And so I'm there. And I see a librarian. He was kind of a younger guy. And I go, OK, maybe I could talk to him.

And there was another guy that was talking to the librarian that seemed very talkative. So I go, well, maybe I'll talk to him first. And so that guy kind of went over to another area. So I went over and I began to talk to him. Well, the guy, I am not kidding.

[26 : 51] He was crazy. He had lost his mind. And he was talking 100 miles an hour. He said, you're not going to believe this, but the Russian mafia is really strong. And I do know they're tracking me right now. And he just starts going on these conspiracy theories.

And I'm like, oh, my goodness. So I tried to, like, extricate myself from this, you know, situation. I kept 10 minutes. I kind of get away from him. And there's the librarian. OK. Now I'm going to chance.

My heart is beating. I'm sweating a little bit. I'm like, I can do this. And so I go up to the library. And I just started this conversation. And I asked him a couple questions. And we went to this, oh, how good are you going to? And it was going, actually, really well.

And I thought, this is great. I was about halfway through. I'm like, I'm sharing the gospel with the library. I'm overcoming my fears. This is great. And about halfway through, the crazy guy comes back up.

Excuse me. I forgot to say something about the Russian mafia. They don't like send money back to Rome because they get the money from the church. And they want to keep the money from the family. And he just, I'm like, get behind Satan.

[27 : 46] I'm trying to retell this library. So we finally, the library knew the guy, kind of, you know, got him away. And I was able to finish the conversation with the library. And so afterwards, I was like, oh, this is so great.

And the other guys were with me. It's like, nah, that doesn't count. Pass me the old woman with the glasses. And she went back and tried again. So it was terrible. But it's just being realized, I'm afraid. Like, why?

I'm afraid. Whenever I was sharing yesterday, whenever I go to share the gospel, I'm fearful. Even just inviting someone up, there's fear. There's a hesitation that I have.

Jesus was full of courage. He loved people enough to risk what they thought of. Might be too worried about what somebody's going to think about. Jesus didn't care about that.

He was willing to say things that might be uncomfortable. And God can give us courage to love people in the same way. Number six, Jesus gets to the gospel.

[28 : 44] He gets to the gospel. Did you notice how Jesus progressed in his conversation with the woman? So he moved from the natural to the spiritual and then to the gospel. And that's a good model for us when we're engaging folks.

Jesus started this conversation out by talking about water and asking her for a drink. So it was just a very natural thing to do. And that's something that we can do.

Just talk to people about natural things or about normal things. For some, it can be hard to initiate conversations, especially with a stranger. But people are usually happy to reciprocate friendliness.

We just need to take the first step, open our mouths, and say something natural and talk to people. Talk to people shows that we care for them. It shows that we're interested in them.

And one of the best ways to do this is just to ask people questions and then listen to them. Last night when we were out at a restaurant, we just were talking to our waitress.

[29 : 45] We just got talking to her about different things. And I noticed a tattoo on her arm. I was trying to read it. It was kind of on the outside of her arm. I said, oh, what's that tattoo? People usually like to talk about their tattoos.

That's why they're getting something publicly printed on their body. And so you can ask somebody about that. And so this was a song when her daughter was born. And so she just talked to us about that, how her daughter's initial.

And it just became a way to get into a conversation, to take interest in what was happening in her life. So that was just a natural conversation.

But that's what Jesus did with this woman. He just talked about water. And then he noticed how he switched to spiritual. He didn't go right to the gospel. He went to more of a spiritual. He talked about living water. This idea, I don't know, it's kind of a weird concept, like spiritual living water that he talked about.

Okay? So he made that jump with the woman. And last night, we were able to do that with this waitress. And I just said to her, hey, is there anything, we were just going to pray for our food.

[30 : 47] Is there anything we can pray for you? Okay, prayer. Prayer is spiritual. It's not the gospel. It's spiritual. So we just introduced this idea of prayer. And she said, oh, yeah, I'm pregnant. And we said, oh, great.

We would love to be able to pray. And it just enabled us to talk. And that led to a conversation about church. And, again, another spiritual idea. What was her background? Did she go to church at all?

Did she grow up in a church? She was Catholic, but she doesn't go. But she's really interested in these things. And it just led to a spiritual conversation. So there's ways to do that. My favorite way to jump into the spiritual was just to ask somebody, hey, did you grow up with any spiritual beliefs?

We did that yesterday when we were on campuses in the mall. We were just asking, hey, do you have a spiritual background? Do you ever go to church? That just takes the conversation from something that's natural into something that's more spiritual.

And then I don't know if you noticed how Jesus went from the spiritual to the gospel. He told the woman that he could give her eternal life. And he jumped to the gospel. Now, we didn't get to share the gospel last night, but we got to talk about spiritual things and even invite this woman to the church.

[31 : 54] I know that it can be scary and that it's a lot easier to keep things to ourselves. But God can help each of us to take even to small steps of boldness by opening our mouths and telling people about Christ.

Number seven, Jesus exhausts himself to reach this woman. He exhausts himself to reach this woman. So let's look at verse 31.

So his disciples went into town. They were getting food. And then verse 31, it says, meanwhile, the disciples came back. Verse 31, meanwhile, the disciples were urging Jesus, saying, Rabbi, eat. But he said to them, I have food to eat that you do not know about.

So the disciples said to one another, has anyone brought him something to eat? Jesus said, my food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.

Jesus was tired. All right. When he gets to this well, he is tired. He was constantly ministering to people and caring for people.

[33 : 03] He was constantly preaching the gospel and healing the sick and delivering people from demons. He was constantly instructing his disciples and debating the Pharisees. He had just finished a late night with Nicodemus the night before.

He probably rose early to commune with God and walked over 20 miles to get here. Verse 6 says, he was weary from the journey. He crashed down with his back to the well while the disciples went into town to find food.

I just imagine him sitting in the dust, leaning up against that well. Maybe his head is back against the well in the hot sun, his feet aching when this woman approaches.

You know, Hebrews 4 says that Jesus was tempted in every way just as we are. I'll tell you how I would have been tempted in this situation. I would not be thinking, how can I have a natural conversation and then transition over to the spiritual and then try to get to the gospel.

No, I would be thinking about me. How can I get water, food, and rest immediately? Thank God Jesus doesn't give in to those temptations. What love the Savior has for the lost.

[34 : 11] What incredible compassion and care. He's so filled with love as he lays there with his head against the well, aching and tired, that he has to say something.

He has to talk to this woman. So he asks for a drink. And he gets it all started. When Jesus confronts her sin, she backpedals. She offers excuses.

Then he reveals that he is the Christ. She goes into town and tells everyone. Jesus is dog tired.

His disciples come back. They're urging him to eat. They're probably afraid he's going to be passed out. And then this woman brings the whole village. Which means he is going to be up late, caring for and praying for as many as he can.

But listen, he doesn't care about eating. Because he says to his disciples, I have food that you don't know about. And he's not talking about physical food.

[35 : 13] He's saying there's something else that sustains me. Something else that gives me energy. There's something more important than food and drink and rest. It is reaching lost men and women with the gospel.

His food is the mission. He says to do the will of the one who sent him. Now in the book of John, John often refers to Jesus or Jesus refers to himself as the sent one.

As the one who is sent by God. We see that here in verse 34. Jesus is the sent one. He was sent to this broken, fallen world with a mission. He was sent to die.

Now in this story, Jesus was thirsty. And there's only one other time in the Bible when Jesus is thirsty. Do you remember this? It's in John 19 when Jesus is hanging on the cross.

And he says, I thirst. Jesus was willing to go thirsty so that others could drink living water.

[36 : 20] Jesus was willing to exhaust his life to save men and women from death. He gave everything that he had to rescue us. And now he is sending us.

Did you know that Jesus isn't the only sent one? We have been sent as well. In John chapter 20 verse 21, Jesus says, as the father has sent me, so I am sending you.

When we become followers of Christ, we're called to certain things like fellowship and prayer. Listening to the preaching of God's word. Giving, reading God's word. These are wonderful things.

But there's more. We are also sent out into a world that desperately needs the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We're sent to help others become followers of Christ. Did you know that? And when we reach out to people, there is a spiritual nourishment that we receive.

[37 : 25] Do you feel spiritually weak? Do you feel spiritually sluggish? Do you feel spiritually undernourished?

Try reaching out. Try befriending someone who doesn't know the Lord. Try sharing the gospel with someone who needs to be forgiven.

And you will find spiritual food that you knew nothing about. I love this picture of Jesus leaning against the well, talking to this sinful Samaritan woman.

And then struggling to his feet as the entire village surrounds him. I love how he overcame his weariness and tired himself out to reach the lost.

God wants us to tire ourselves out to reach the lost. Number eight, last one. Jesus urgently reached out.

[38 : 29] He urgently reached out. Look at verse 35. It says, Do you not say there yet four months? Then comes the harvest. Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes and see that the fields are white for harvest.

My mother-in-law grew up on a small farm in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. You never hear of Lancaster. It's where the Amish live. And so a real small farm in a town called Five Pointville.

A very tiny little town. And she grew up on a small farm. And in Lancaster, a lot of the farmers didn't have all their own equipment and combines. So when it came time for harvest, the harvesters would come.

Men would come. And my mother-in-law remembers when she was a little girl and the harvesters would come. And it would be such an anticipation because she said her mom would cook a big breakfast, a special breakfast.

And all these strange men would be eating breakfast at their table, the harvesters. And they would harvest. It was such hard work. They had to really hustle and get this done. She remembers her mom making lemonade, which was a real treat.

[39 : 35] And her running across the stubby field to the men, to the harvesters, and giving them this lemonade. And they were covered with all that, whatever, the hay and the sweat and the dirt. They were covered.

And they worked so hard. They would work until late at night because it was not an option for them to not get the job done. When there is a harvest, when the harvest is ready, there is a small window to harvest where that crop will be ruined.

A harvest can't wait. You can't hang back. When the field is ripe, you have to hustle. And Jesus is saying, the harvest is ripe. The harvest is ready right now.

The time to harvest is now. And Jesus challenges his disciples. He says, don't you save four months and then the harvest. That was a saying that just meant don't rush. We can wait. We got time when you've sown, when you've planted something.

And you have to sit around and wait for months. No. Jesus is saying, we don't have to wait. It's time to reap. He's exhorting his disciples. He's basically saying, don't say you can do this later.

[40 : 43] Don't say we'll get to this in a couple months. Don't say I don't have time or I don't have the gifting or someone else will do this or I just have to get this one area of my life straightened out or I'm too much of a hypocrite or I don't know what to say or I'm too scared or I'll just wait until they come to me.

No. We don't have to wait. The harvest is ready. Lift up your eyes and see the fields are white for harvest.

This white harvest was probably the Samaritans coming toward Jesus in their white robes as the town comes to him. He's saying to themselves, lift up your eyes.

The harvest is white. Here they come. Here they come. Do you see the harvest that is all around you?

Do you see it? Do you see that your neighbors, your classmates, coworkers, family members, waitresses, people at the gym, people at the grocery store, people at the bank, at the Starbucks, your mechanic, your hairdresser, your mailman.

[41 : 59] They need Jesus. They need Jesus and they need you to reach out to them. Lift up your eyes and see the harvest.

There's an urgency that we should feel when it comes to reaching out to the walls. Close with verse 36. Jesus said, already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life so that the sower and reaper may rejoice together.

What's he saying? He's saying, guys, we're already reaping. I just sowed by reaching out to this woman and I'm already reaping and collecting those wages.

The fruit is coming in right now. We don't have to wait. We can actually sow and reap at the same time. Imagine doing that like planting a tomato seed in the morning and in the afternoon you're reaping the tomato seed.

That's what he's saying. Usually when you sow, you have to wait a long time for the plant to grow. But not here. He's saying this. You can sow and reap in the same day. The sower and reaper are rejoicing together.

[43 : 11] Jesus found great joy in the middle of that harvest field. Sweaty, dirty, and tired. And we can find joy as we join God in his glorious plan to save the lost.

There is nothing in this world, I promise you, there is nothing in this world that will bring you more joy than seeing a lost man or woman come to know the forgiveness of their sins through Jesus Christ.

Yes, it can be hard work. Harvesting can be hard work. Yes, it can be long hours and discouragements and rejections and setbacks. But there is a joy that comes.

And Jesus is sending us into the harvest field for our joy. Charles Spurgeon said, If you are eager for real joy, such as you may think over and sleep upon, I am persuaded that no joy of growing wealthy, no joy of increasing knowledge, no joy of influence over your fellow creatures, no joy of any other sort, can ever be compared with the rapture of saving a soul from death and helping to restore our lost brethren to our great father's house.

Let's pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.