

God,... is **farming** the earth. Unlike crops which **man** grows, however...
(here today, and gone tomorrow)....

God's harvest produces a crop that **sprouts** now.... and lasts for all eternity....

Right now..... (both here in this room)and all across the globe....

God is sowing seeds of faith through the proclamation of His Word... and reaping the **new creations** it creates as the harvest that He gathers into His barn forever....

And He has chosen to involve **us** in that process....

Whereas He **could** do it all by Himself (through speaking) or by sending angels (like He did in the OT).....

Somehow it brings Him more glory to incarnate the gospel..... in human beings.....

To make us His sowers..... as we SPEAK the Word..... and His REAPERS... as we **invite** people to follow Christ....

Farming the gospel... is God's Family Business.... and His laborers are His children.

The passage we are going to study and apply to our lives today..... is one where Jesus (who has been appointed LORD of the Harvest).....commands **us** to **JOIN Him** in this business....

becoming **Co-Laborers with Christ**

Look at how we see this in the rest of the story of the woman at the well:

John 4:27-42

"Just then his disciples came back. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you seek?" or, "**Why** are you talking with her?"

So the woman **left her water jar** and went away into town and said to the people, "**Come, see a man** who told me all that I ever did. Can this be **the Christ?**"

They went out of the town and **were coming** to him.

Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, 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 to them, "**My food** is to **do the will of him who sent me** and to **accomplish his work.**"

Do you not say, "There are yet four months, then comes the harvest"? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that **the fields are white for harvest.** Already the one who reaps is

receiving wages and **gathering fruit for eternal life**, so that sower and reaper may **rejoice together**. For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me all that I ever did.” So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. And **many more believed because of his word**. They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that **this is indeed the Savior of the world.**””

Last week, we heard Jesus reveal to this woman that He is the long awaited Messiah.... and that **all true** worship must pass through a relationship with Him....

Today, we see this woman demonstrate evidence that she has begun to BELIEVE His Word.... the evidence is that she **enters** into the family business of sowing and reaping the gospel...

If you are a FOLLOWER of Jesus Christ (through faith in His gospel)....

Then you have been GRANTED all the benefits of a child of God... a member of His household....

- You are a **co-heir** with Christ of the Kingdom of God....His glory = your glory..
- Your sin nature has been crucified with Jesus on the cross... So that you SHARE in His victory over sin in the resurrection!...
- You are a **co-partaker** of Christ’s JOY in the Holy Spirit...

Right now....God is at WORK.....farming the earth....

By His Spirit.... He is drawing people to Himself..... He is speaking the GOSPEL through His servants to people all over the globe.....and He is HARVESTING their souls **for** Himself...

Today, I want you to hear His call to **JOIN Him** in that labor...

LISTEN as God APPLIES this text to us.... (the first app. point is)

Co-Laborers with Christ

1. Prioritize God’s Agenda

My agenda gets interrupted **a lot**..... does yours?

The **weather** can mess up my plans..... **TRAFFIC** can deter my progress.....

Not having the right tools to fix something at the house can grind my to do list to a halt....

Worst of all....I can get **sinfully impatient** when other people seem to make life **inefficient**.....

In fact, I can be **so** FOCUSED on my agenda..... that apart from the grace of God.... I don't even like **GOD** to interrupt it...

Yet, what God wants to show us today..... is that **HIS** work in the world.... is not only VASTLY more pressing than our agenda.... but He purposely weaves His OPPORTUNITIES for us to join Him..... into **the midst** of our DAILY lives....

So that.... we have to CHOOSE between being obedient to join Him in what He is doing or STUBBORNLY stay the course with our agenda.....

As the **light** of WHO Jesus is.....comes on.....in this Samaritan woman's soul.... ... the Holy Spirit immediately inspires her to want to go back to town to tell everyone about Him:

A couple of weeks ago.... we learned that she was not a popular figure in her village. In fact, it is doubtful that anyone even LIKED her....

It was at midday that she had come to draw water for her household.... so she and the folks in her house were probably all thirsty.....

She was carrying out her daily responsibilities..... (nothing wrong with those)...

But upon **tasting a sip** of the **Living Water** of the gospel... ... look again at what she does:

John 4:28-29

"So, the woman **left** her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?""

The arrival of the disciples back at the well brought the conversation between Jesus and this woman to an abrupt end.... but through her belief in Jesus' words.... the Living water of His Spirit was **bubbling up** within her.... and she knew it needed to overflow into the lives of her fellow townspeople....

So she thought nothing of setting aside the task at hand.... in order to GO and TELL others about her discovery....

The news was simply TOO GOOD.... the water TOO satisfying to keep to herself.

So she LEFT her water pot behind....

If you are familiar with middle eastern culture this was a large clay pot that women carried on their head....

She left it because of the **URGENCY** of this NEWS that was bubbling up within her.... the passion of her new found joy..... could not be slowed down by this weight.

The agenda and goodness of the GOSPEL.... took control and precedence over her previous plans for the day....

- Does that ever happen to you?

It is almost HARD to find someone in NOVA that is **not** BUSY... Many would argue that we are TOO busy.... between work and commute.....

Between extra activities for our children.... to vacations..... to the premium we place on **entertainment**.... we are a BUSY people....

Our calendars are with us at all times with **alarms** going off, telling us the next event is upon us..... and we maintain CONSTANT electronic communication with people whom we are supposed to meet....

None of that is inherently sinful.....

But I want you to consider for a moment that the SAME Jesus who interrupted this woman at the well..... to make her what Origen calls "**the apostle to the Samaritans**"..... is going to prompt you to carry out His business as well..

It starts by you choosing to take time to DRINK from His well.

By communing with Him through His word and in prayer.... so that you fellowship with Christ as you go through the day....

In the car,... during breaks at work..... even (when possible) **as** you are working...

Out of those open lines of communication..... this same BUBBLING over of Spirit empowered **goodness** will be ready to flow into the lives of anyone He brings your way....

- He will nudge you to **speak**..... He will prompt you to have COMPASSION..... He will inspire you to PRAY and intercede.....
- He will make you aware when He wants you to be His hands and His feet in serving others....

Is that Important to you? Do you **BELIEVE** that is THE reason you are here?...

You are not here to merely make yourself HAPPY with the passing pleasures of the world....

But that you have been CREATED **anew** in Christ Jesus for specific **good works**.... which He prepared beforehand.... that you should WALK in them?

That in His goodness..... God WANTS you to participate in the glorious activity of Him farming the earth with the gospel....

This Samaritan woman..... was so filled with INSPIRATION of the truth of Who Jesus is..... that all her fears of what the towns people thought of her were cast aside.....

She WENT and INVITED the people to come with her to SEE Jesus.....

You can do that too..... In fact, it is the main pattern we see in the Bible of “NORMAL” people spreading the gospel.....

We see predictions about this reality scattered throughout the major and minor prophets..and in Revelation.... we see the reality of the One who has HEARD and believed the gospel.... then immediately inviting others to partake of that same living water:

Revelation 22:17

"The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let **the one who hears** (that’s you) **say, “Come.”** And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price."

Through intentional personal interaction with people..... Personal invitation.....WE (the church) say.... COME to Jesus!

“Come and meet the Savior with me..... I have tasted of His Living water and you can too.....

LOOK... we can find Him as He speaks to us here in His Word.....

We can find Him as He meets with His people to worship..... Come and See!

We can find Him as you realize that HE is the one that sent me to care for you in your time of need.....

THIS Saturday..... if you’re interested..... a group of us are planning to do just this....

A church plant in DC has asked us to come and help them distribute invitations to an Introducing God course.....

We are going to be together at the Metro stop..... inviting people to COME and see...

Come and taste the goodness of the Lord through studying the gospel....

The woman here in Jn. 4....invited the people of her town..... “Come and See...Can this man be the CHRIST?”

Because the HS was speaking through her...

John 4:30

"They went out of the town and **were coming** to him."

Jesus interrupted these people's lives.....THROUGH the words of this woman....
He DREW these people to Himself.... through her INVITATION... and (by the grace of God) they obediently CAME.
IRONICALLY..... while this group was on their way to meet their SAVIOR.....

Jesus' disciples still had their mind set on **earthly things**..... they were still FOCUSED intently on their normal AGENDA....

John 4:31-32

"Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." But he said to them, "**I have food to eat that you do not know about.**""

"Look Teacher.... now that this irritating woman has finally left..... EAT UP!.....

*we went all the way to **Pot Belly's** to get you this food....."*

Nothing **WRONG** with eating.....

God **designed us** to NEED **fuel** for our bodies....so that we can continually **ASK** Him to provide for us....

(Give us this day our DAILY bread....)

... and then we give Him glory by **THANKING** Him as He does PROVIDE....

Think about the precision... to which He designed us to need food.... and then how He provides EXACTLY the food we need.... and it even TASTES good!.....

But what is going on **here**..... is something even **BETTER**... more filling..... **more energizing** than enjoying whatever your favorite food or drink is.....

What was taking place is that Jesus, this woman, and now the townspeople....are living life on **ONE plane**.....partaking of the things of God.....

And the disciples are on another wavelength altogether.....

- Get that picture?

Think that could possibly be taking place ... among us..... right now?

That MANY of you are walking in the Spirit.... hearing the Word of God as manna for your soul.... enjoying the comfort and even conviction of His presence....

COMMUNING with God most high as He speaks to you.....

Others, are focused on some EARTHLY need getting met?

Jesus says to His disciples:..... **Listen** I am not hungry anymore..... because my inner being is FILLED with a type of **FUEL**you have not yet experienced.....

“I have food to eat that you do not know about.””

Here is what He meant:

Co-Laborers with Christ

2. Are Energized by God’s Pleasure

Introverts are energized by solitude.... **extroverts** live off of being around people.....

Some of you love what you do so much that you actually look fwd to going to work.... or school.....

It **invigorates** you..... (count that as a blessing from the Lord – give Him glory)

Take note – for the children of God..... there is an even better type of FUEL...

- GOD Himself empowers us to do His will..... by sharing His good pleasure with us as we do it....

When you are **obediently** serving God..... using your gifts..... for the accomplishment of **His agenda**..... (building His church)....

you will experience... in increasing measure.... His good PLEASURE. ...His holy JOY will be imparted to you.... as you obey.... and your joy will be made FULL.

That **JOY** is FUEL for your continued obedience to God.....

GOD Himself energizes you.....Especially when the going gets TOUGH..... and the TRIALS get deep.....

It is a little taste of heaven here on earth....

As Co-laborers with Christ..... we get to SHARE in.... God’s Pleasure.....

It is FOOD that the world, (and those focused on their **OWN** agenda)....

knows nothing of.....

John 4:33-34

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

The word "will" in both the OT and the NT.... conveys the same meaning as pleasure...

In other words, if something is God's will.... it somehow brings Him pleasure.....

JESUS had experienced the goodness of His Father's pleasure from eternity past..... and now (He says) it is His **FOOD**.....

It is His **fuel** source for carrying out the **DIFFICULT** tasks of God's WORK....

Think of the garden of Gethsemene..... "Lord, if it be your willlet this cup (this fiery container full of your **ANGER** against the sin of your enemies.... which you are about to pour out into my bosom on the cross..... please.... if there is any way possible.... let it **PASS** from me.....do it another way".....

NEVERTHELESS..... **NOT** my will.... but **YOURS** be done.....

Hebrews tells us.....that Jesus.... "for the **joy** set before Him... **endured** the cross..."

What joy? The future **JOY** which He knew was **SURE**.... the everlasting **REWARD** of having obeyed His Father..... despite what it cost Him here on earth.....

Do you realize.... child of God.... who labors with your Master here..... that **NO ONE** can take that joy away!?

That even **DEATH** can not kill that eternal happiness which is yours in Christ Jesus?

- Bro. Miles?

What trial are you experiencing right now.... that is **HARD** to endure....

Ask God for grace to **BELIEVE** that His **good pleasure** will sustain you...and **HELP** you endure.....

So that **together**... **WE**... can **ACCOMPLISH** the work He has called us to do....

We can **CROSS** the finish line of this marathon together..... "for the **JOY** set before us..."

If you are not yet **getting that**..... listen in as Jesus tries to teach His disciples about the **WORK** He was doing in the world:

John 4:35

"Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? Look, I tell you, lift

up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest."

In Palestine, as in most places of the world... it takes about 4 months between the time of planting a crop and its harvest.....

During that interval..... farmers mostly had to **WAIT** until the time when the crop was ripe... **then** they would eagerly enter the fields and **WORK** until the crop was brought in...

Jesus says "is this not one of your sayings"....means this proverb was something they applied colloquially as if to say..... "there's no rush..... what's your hurry?...."

THAT is the way God's children often think about the TASK that been given us.....

"Just **relax**..... the issue is not pressing..... God is sovereign after all ...right?"

You have probably heard of what happened when **William Carey** (known as the father of modern missions) first tried to convince a group of particular Baptists that THEY needed to be spreading the gospel to the nations... one of them famously retorted:

"Young man, **sit down**; when God pleases to convert the heathen, he will do it without your aid and mine."

False...

Because... in our text today..... JESUS tells us that God **is** converting heathens..... not only in Samaria... but here in **our** midst.....

In OUR generation..... And He has chosen to involve **us** in this URGENT task....

Co-Laborers with Christ

3. Participate in the Harvest

"Lift up your eyes and see"(Jesus says). the HARVEST is upon us!!"

Interestingly, **no** crops grown in that area were **white** at harvest time.....

But what WAS white (on this day) were the garments that the people from Sychar wore as they rushed out to drink of the gospel WATER which had obviously CHANGED the woman....

As they came over the horizon...Jesus said.... here comes your OPPORTUNITY to **join in** the HARVEST.... Don't miss it!

John 4:36-38

"**Already** the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that

sower and reaper may **rejoice** together. For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.””

Jesus is stressing the **urgency** of the work that is upon them...

His hearers knew well... that a **RIPE** harvest can not stay in the field very long.... it will **SPOIL**... animals will eat it..... the sun will scorch it.... mildew will blight it...

In the same way,..... when God orchestrates the SOWING of the seed of the Word of Christ in someone’s soul.... and then by His Spirit **sprouts** that seed so that it produces FAITH and repentance....

As the stems of these **NEW Creations** of God begin to emerge from the darkness....

God calls LABORERS.... to come alongside Him.. and be the human instruments of **gathering them** into the barn....

People are born into the Kingdom through **evangelism**.... (sowing of the gospel seed)....

But they are HARVESTED as they are **taught** how to live for Christ..... how to OBEY...and **bear fruit** that will remain forever....

Here in this context.....Jesus says....someone has **ALREADY** SOWN good seed in the hearts of these people of Sychar that are approaching.....

He is probably referring to **JTB** ...because (Jn. 3 tells us) he had been prophesying and calling people to repentance....pointing people fwd to the Messiah..... **not far** from that place.....

On top of that.... the woman....had also been sowing gospel seed.....(through her testimony and invitation)

But **NOW**... (Jesus said to them....) it is time for you disciples of mine.... whom I have called for this purpose.... to roll up your sleeves and enter into the work of **HARVESTING**....

So thatThose harvested.... can become **fellow LABORERS** in God’s field themselves.....

And we can REJOICE together in all that God does.

THAT is Kingdom multiplication....

THAT is how God is farming the earth.....

Jesus is giving **the paradigm** here for ALL gospel ministry..... it is never a **one man** show.....

It is never the job of one local church alone..... Some **sow**.... Another REAPS.... but GOD gives the increase.....

GOD Himself is our **missions director**..... we are GLAD participants in His FIELD.....

Check out the HARVEST God brought about on this day:

John 4:39-42

"Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me all that I ever did." So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.""

One woman's testimony....became the VEHICLE of reaping (for all eternity) the souls of almost an entire town...

She ... was a **TRAMP** no more.....

Used to be! **NOW**... she is a Co-Laborer with Jesus Christ!

She has become a WORKER in God's harvest field....

These Samaritans.... were now ready to be DISCIPLED.... so they too could become Co-Laborers with Christ....

So they too... could be agents of spreading the Good news that JESUS is the Savior of the World...

How about us? Think God might be farming people's hearts in your neighborhood..... in your office..... in your school?

He tells us that He is.... and that He needs Laborers to enter into the fields with Him...

Luke 10:2

"And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore **pray** earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

