

Sermon Notes and Discussion Questions: Revision - The Effective Harvester - John 4

INTRODUCTION

Do you find it easy or difficult to tell people about Jesus? Why?

What strategy do you use to tell people about Jesus?

Who is the last person (or group of people) you told about what Jesus has done in your life? How did that go?

UNDERSTANDING

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 4:7-26.

1. The Effective Harvester Knows Living Water: Because God has shown you grace and mercy, in the same manner we need to show it to others.

How did Jesus balance non-judgmental compassion with uncompromised truth in His relationship with the woman? How can we do the same in our relationships with others?

What desires or longings do we often look to the world to satisfy today, when the ultimate fulfillment will only be found in Jesus?

Once the Samaritan woman realized that Jesus was no ordinary man, the conversation changed as He told her about all she had done. She knew He was the Messiah—the true source of redemption.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 4:27-30.

2. The Effective Harvester is Excited about New Life.

How did the living water she found spur her to tell others about Jesus out of joy and compassion, rather than obligation? What can we learn about her urgency, given that she left her jar?

How would you describe the disciples' attitude toward Jesus when they came back to Him? Why do you think they responded in that way?

The disciples seemed confused about Jesus' purpose. They were speechless as to what Jesus was doing in speaking to a Samaritan woman. The woman responded to Jesus by going and telling everyone. The disciples did nothing.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 4:31-34.

3. The Effective Harvester has a Harvest Mindset.

Why did the disciples urge Jesus to eat? What does Jesus' statement about food in verses 32 and 34 reveal about what truly satisfies, particularly in light of the previous discussion on living water?

What were the disciples focused on in this passage? How might their focus have been different if their dependency on and gratitude for Jesus had been more like the Samaritan woman's?

Because Jesus' disciples were focused exclusively on the earthly task of satisfying their hunger and thirst, they were oblivious to the spiritual realities taking place around them in the lives of the Samaritans. Ultimately, even more than food and water, the people needed Jesus—as do we. Because of that, all believers are equipped to share with others the way to meet their needs through Christ by telling of His grace, love, and salvation. Jesus taught them to prioritize God's mission of expanding the kingdom above all earthly purposes.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 4:35-42.

4. The Effective Harvester Know the Laws of the Harvest.

- There must be urgency
- Some Sow
- Some Reap
- All Rejoice

What hesitation might the woman at the well have had when she went back into town? How do you think she overcame it?

Why did the Samaritans come to faith? How might God have used the example of the woman—the repentance, freedom, and redemption she had found—to draw them to Himself?

Ultimately the Samaritans came to faith not by any human effort, but by the grace of God as He called them into relationship with Himself. But in His good purposes, God worked through the woman's bold witness to do so. The Samaritans grew closer in relationship to Jesus by becoming closer in relationship to the woman, as she showed them firsthand how good Jesus' grace really is—just as we can do in our relationships.

APPLICATION

5. The Effective Harvester Knows the Lord of the Harvest.

What excuses do you typically make when confronted with the opportunity to guide someone to discover life in Jesus? How does Jesus' teaching in this passage speak to those excuses?

What specific opportunities do we have before us as a group to “reap the harvest” in our church right now?

In general, how does the woman at the well teach and challenge us about the gospel message? What hang-ups do we need to hand over to Jesus in order to be faithful witnesses?