

## Friend Day 1

### Lesson 1

#### *Lift Up Your Eyes on the Fields*

**I. Review: Where to Look or Where to Focus in 2024 (and for the rest of your life). Focus is defined as:**

- A. The center of interest or activity.
- B. The state or quality of having or producing clear visual definition.
- C. Your eyes adapting to the prevailing level of light.
- D. To pay particular attention to.

**II. Review: Four things to focus on in 2024**

#### **A.1. Look to Jesus**

1. *(Heb. 12:1, 2 NKJV) Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

#### **B.2. Look up!**

1. *(Luke 21:28 NKJV) <sup>28</sup> Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near." <sup>29</sup> Then He spoke to them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. <sup>30</sup> When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near. <sup>31</sup> So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. <sup>32</sup> Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place.*

#### **C3. Look to yourselves.**

1. *(2 John 1:8 NKJV) <sup>8</sup> Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but that we may receive a full reward for, but that you may [persevere until you] win and receive back a perfect reward [in full].*

#### **D4. Look upon the harvest.**

1. *(John 4:35, 36 NKJV) <sup>35</sup> Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! <sup>36</sup> And he who reaps receives*

*wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.*

III. Our primary focus for 2024 is the harvest. We are to place our focus on Soul Winning and Church Growth this year. So as I begin to introduce this vision to you, let's look at Four Irrefutable Facts about the Harvest that Jesus gave us.

A. Fact 1: The harvest is now.

1. (John 4:35 NKJV) <sup>35</sup>*"Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!"*

2. The harvest is now. We should not put it off until the future.

3. We should not say, "the harvest is coming in four months" or "the end time harvest is coming" or there is going to be a great harvest someday."

4. This kind of thinking runs contrary to Jesus' intent here.

5. In this passage He is trying to focus the disciples' minds on the fact that the harvest is now.

6. Putting the harvest off until sometime in the future causes people to delay action, postpone responsibilities, and miss the plan of God for their lives.

B. Fact 2: The harvest is ripe.

1. (John 4:35b NKJV) *Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!*

2. The harvest is ripe.

3. That means that right now in Amarillo, Texas there are souls that are ripe for harvesting.

4. Right now there are people in this city that are ready to be saved and come to this church.

5. There are people that are so ready that it can be compared to picking ripe fruit off a tree. It just falls into your hand with minimal effort.

6. There are people that are so ready that a little effort and exertion will have a very satisfying result.

C. Fact 3: The harvest is plentiful.

1. (Matt. 9:37 NKJV) <sup>37</sup>*Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few."*

2. The harvest is plentiful. The harvest is not scarce.

3. Churches don't have to fight over people or be upset if more people go to another church.

4. That means that you can fill this place up and still have people left over. It's not a pie, it's a river. We need to banish a scarcity mentality.

5. That means that every church in town can fill up and there would still be more churches needed to take care of the harvest.

**D. Fact 4: The harvest is weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.**

1. (Matt. 9:35-38 NKJV) *<sup>35</sup> Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. <sup>36</sup> But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. <sup>37</sup> Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. <sup>38</sup> Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."*

2. Do you see that Jesus referred to the multitudes who were weary and scattered like sheep having no shepherd as the harvest?

3. The harvest is weary and scattered like sheep having no shepherd. They have no one to care for them.

4. They need someone to care for them.

5. A little effort showing care and concern for people will yield remarkable results.

IV. The Lord has put on my heart as pastor to lead the church in several soul winning strategies this year. These strategies are team efforts. Today I am going to introduce you to our first 2 strategies for the year.

**A. Friend Day Campaign 1/7-3/24 (11 Weeks)** There is a harvest waiting for this church among your friends, relatives, associates, and neighbors.

1. Prepare the church and equip the members for **Stairstep Evangelism**. You are not going to try to lead them to a decision to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior. Rather, you are going to prepare them to be your guest on Friendship Sunday by doing taking certain steps that will cause them to trust you and want to be your guest on that day. I am going to show you how to increase your influence in their lives. We are going to show them love and hospitality and I will present the plan of salvation to them in my sermon. Many of them will get saved because you have stair stepped them to Jesus.

2. **Friend Day Follow Up and Baptisms** 4 weeks following. (3/24-4/21) All of

us will be involved in that.

3. We are going to restructure the Sunday School hour to accommodate discipling these new believers.

**B. Resurrection Sunday San Jacinto Outreach**

1. Give free hams to the first 100 guests that come.

C. Two big attendance Sunday's back-to-back targeting 2 different groups of people.

D. The San Jacinto converts will flow into the Friend Day Follow Up Plan.

E. We should have 100 plus in attendance on both Sundays.

F. We could see 50 or more salvations.

**V. Today I am going to give you the first step.**

A. I am asking each of you to go to the Lord in prayer and ask him, "Who are the friends that you want me to minister to?" and I want you to write down 5 names and begin to pray for them. Write those 5 names down and bring the list to church next week. Make two copies. One for yourself to keep and one for the Pastor's Prayer Circle to begin to pray for.

B. Focus on your unsaved friends and relatives or some believer who is out of fellowship and needs to be restored. Let's not try to get other people to leave their churches and come over here.