

# ***I SENT YOU TO REAP WHAT YOU DID NOT SOW***



Think about churches. Why are they here? How did they get here? What is their purpose?

One could say a church is to be an oasis in a spiritual desert, where people come and get refreshed.

One could say a church is a temple built of living stone. And that Jesus is the cornerstone filled with the Spirit, a habitation of God, who is spirit.

All this is true, but our churches have a purpose beyond what goes on inside their walls. In fact, the proof that what goes on inside their walls is really of God, is what we do when we leave them, when we go out there.

***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."***

*John 4:35-38*

Jesus didn't call these men to discipleship just for their own edification. And he didn't call us to discipleship for our own edification.

He called us to put us to work. You're a disciple now go and make disciples.

***You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit*** *John 15:16 a*

***As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.*** *John 20:21*

***"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..."*** *Matthew 28:18b, 19a*

***But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*** *Acts 1:8*

Now this is the part that scares us. Most of us don't picture ourselves going out there and actually making disciples.

*"I don't know how. I'm shy. That's not my gift". "I'll come to church. And I'll pray. And I'll serve God in other ways. I don't need to go out there and be some kind of evangelist".*

But that's exactly what Jesus is calling every one of us to do.

***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.***

When Jesus said that there was a crowd of people coming down the road from the village of Sychar.

***I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor.  
Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."***

Jesus had already made this happen by talking to the woman at the well. He did the work, then she did the work, and all these people came. Now we get to work. And we know that harvest is out there.

**It's coming toward us. All we have to do is go out there and reap.**



So what does that mean? How do you reap?

Jesus never tells us to do something without first pioneering the way.

Jesus is sitting by the well all by himself. Along comes this woman, she's got a water jar on her shoulder. What does she have to do with the harvest? She's a woman. He's a man. In that culture a man doesn't talk to a woman in public. She is a Samaritan. He's a Jew. In that culture a Jew doesn't talk to a Samaritan. She's minding her own business. Why doesn't he mind his business?

**He sees her as someone sent to him by the Father.**

Does he ask her if she's saved?

Does he give her the four spiritual laws?

No! He just says "give me a drink".

He is her guest. This is her well. He sees her not as another bloody Samaritan. But as someone special. And he deals with her person to person.

Suppose this week you're at a bus stop, the airport, in the waiting room at a doctor's office, or at the supermarket checkout. Somebody wants to come and talk. Or maybe someone comes and wants to borrow something, one of your neighbors. How do you see this person? As an intrusion? Or do you see this man or woman as someone who maybe God sent to you?

***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 will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. 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."***

*John 4:9-15*

And you say "that's all right for him. He knew how to talk to her. He knew he had living water. And he knew he was going to be able to show her that God really cares for her.

**But what do I have to offer"?  
You have more to offer than you want to admit to yourself.**

Do you know why we get so stagnant and half-baked when it comes to our faith?

**It's because we're not giving what God has already put into us.**

What happens to a pond when it has water running in and nothing running out? After a while it gets a scum on top. That's what happens inside us, the grace of God comes in and it stays there, gets blocked up, it's not going out so it begins to scum up.

What do you think happens when we take communion? "*This is my body given for you. This is the blood of the New Covenant shed for your sins*". You're joining yourself to Jesus' death. Paul says that every time we eat this bread and drink of this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

So what happens to that proclamation when we go out the door? If you believe that the Spirit of God comes upon us as we worship and gives us life. What happens to that life when we go out the door?

The truth is that you too have something to give to that person that God sends you. You're going to answer to God for what you do with it.

***Christ in you the hope of glory.***

"I live in you" says Jesus. "I am your light. I'm your health. I'm your wisdom. I'm your peace".

**Christ in you. He's the Living Bread. He's the light of the world.**

You have the light of the world inside you.



So, get the bushel off. It's within your power to give light, grace, hope, healing to the lives you touch without any fancy religious talk. You're going to give people a taste of God's goodness. You're going to touch their broken hearts with healing. You're going to do that.

***Jesus said to the woman "everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give, will never thirst one again. It will become a spring inside welling up to eternal life".***

So, what is this living water?

**It's the Spirit of God, in us.**

Now this woman didn't understand all this. But she understood enough to know that Jesus was giving her hope. And she reached out to grab it. Give me this water. If you believe that certain people are really sent to you by God, if you understand the Spirit of God is in you, then you have to know that the same God who did all that, will open a way for you to speak to this person. It may not all happen in one afternoon as it did for Jesus. You may have to drink coffee, listen, be a friend, for a long time. But as you do this, you know in your heart that you are giving them something wonderful.

You may not say it to them, but you're thinking, "I'm giving you something wonderful".

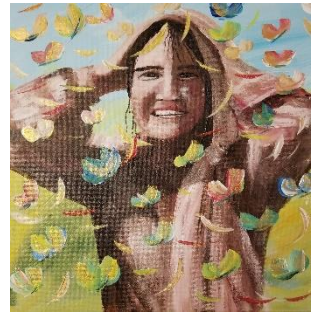
**Something that will prove to this person that God is really there, he loves you.**

***Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered him, "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." The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped 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, and 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. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."***

*John 4:16-24*

Now notice that all they were doing was talking.

But while they're talking, living water is flowing from Jesus into this woman. He's not doing anything fancy. He didn't ask her to get down and pray the sinner's prayer. He didn't lay his hands on her head. But when he's through talking, her heart has come to truth. She leaves her water jar there by the well and runs back to town. She says "come see a man who told me all I ever did. Is not this the Messiah"?



Now this is what each of us is being called to do. It's not complicated.

The Spirit of God does all the work. All we have to do is reap by believing four things.

**First, believe that you have been sent.**

You're not a volunteer. A Volunteer can quit anytime he wants to. But one who is called.

**You were called. The same one who called you, sent you.**

**Secondly, believe that there are specific people who are being sent to you.**

A few years after Jean and I went back to Nova Scotia, at the end of a service at the church where I was serving, when everything was over and people were all gone. We're closing up the door, and in comes this man. He says "*What time is mass? Whatever you like, mass or whatever*". I said "*mass is over. Come back next Sunday at 10:30*". I said "*I'll come and visit you this week*". He said "*I work*". "*I'll come on Saturday*" I said. "*Where do you live?*" "*55 Pleasant Street. My name is Alan Parker*" he answered. So Saturday afternoon I went to see Alan Parker. He says, "*let's go for coffee*". So, we go to Tim Horton's. Alan knew half the people coming into Tim Horton's. Pretty soon we have about four men sitting around this table. And we're talking about God. I'd say that at least a dozen people came into that flock through Alan Parker. He was sent to us.

A couple of years ago, Jean and I were having a vacation in Florida, one of the benefits of old age. We're walking along the beach and decided we'd walked far enough. As soon as we turned around, this man said "*are you guys quitting already?*" So he tells us his life story. He has five children, and one of the five is a daughter who's an alcoholic. Guess where he's from? The Detroit area. So, we've been friends ever since. Pastor Bob has been to visit his daughter. He was sent to us.

This happens in every single one of our lives. May God give us eyes to recognize it when it happens.

**Thirdly, believe that you have the living water in you.**

It's not you. It's the Spirit of God. Listen to what they have to say.

And let God give you something to say in return. If you don't know what to say, do like most preachers do, keep talking until you do have something to say.

**Lastly, believe that you will not come up empty. You will see results.**

Well, as it so often happens when God blesses a church at first, we just thrill, and rejoice, and give thanks to God. Then the Spirit says *“You received, now give. You're in the Kingdom. Now go and get somebody else and bring them in”*. Now comes the critical time. Because we've come to know each other, we feel comfortable together. We're a family. Do we really want to bring strangers into our family? It's so much easier to praise God when we're with family. That's when we're in danger of becoming a spiritual club, with the unspoken rule, members only.

**When we do that, we stagnate. We're a pond with the scum on top.**

If this is the Kingdom of God, we're an open family, we have a lot of empty chairs at our table. And there are specific people who belong in those chairs. The whole purpose of our family is to bring others in. When we think that way, to bring others in, then we stay fresh. And we don't stagnate.

***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”....***

***“ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor.***

***Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”***

This is a word from God to us. I brought you into my Kingdom. I'm sending you out to bring others in.

**Believe that you have been set.**

**Believe that specific people are being sent to you.**

**Believe that you have living water to offer them.**

**Believe that you will not come up empty.**

And God will confirm your faith with signs following.

**And the stagnant pond will become a river of living water.**



Message and prayer above: Richard E. Bieber 2000 (Harvest Dinner 2000...service/audio was bilingual)

Featured Artist: Grace, kindness, and courtesy of Jennifer Allio at [jennyallio.com](http://jennyallio.com)

*Prayer- Wonderful Lord, all-knowing Sower, help us to lift up our eyes and see the work you have done. Help us to see the fields you have prepared. Help us to truly see those you are sending to us. Help us to know you have called us and given us what we need, You in us. Help us to sense that we are filled with the light of life, we are wells of living water and if we would just let it flow... that power can be unleashed into the lives of those you send to us. And yes, help us to truly know that we do have something wonderful to give them and to not be satisfied until they know you are real and that you do love them. And help us to know that there will be results, that people will come to you, open their hearts to you because this is your work, you called us, and have promised that we will be streams of living water. Amen.*

*Maranatha Mirror*



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WHO WAS SLAIN  
HAS BEGUN HIS REIGN

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