

Seeing the Harvest

Scripture Reading — John 4:27-38

I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. — John 4:35

I get very excited when the first red tomato, beans, zucchini, or anything ripe for picking appears in my garden. As soon as I see it, I eagerly tell my wife, children, neighbors, and anyone who will listen about the coming harvest.

When Jesus saw a ripening harvest, I'm sure it didn't escape his attention. Fields ripe with grain are among the most beautiful sights on earth. I like to think that his face lit up when he saw such a sight.

However, Jesus also saw much more. He looked beyond ripening grain and saw people in God's kingdom ready for harvest. A Samaritan woman of questionable character had come to know Jesus as her deliverer (John 4:4-26). And she was bringing to Jesus the very people who usually shunned her. This bold move resulted in a wave of humanity flowing out to meet Jesus. This was the greater harvest that satisfied Jesus' deeper hunger.

What surprised the disciples about this encounter? From what we know about the strained relationship between Jews and Samaritans (John 4:9), it's fair to say that the disciples struggled to see the harvest among those whom they saw as enemies. Today Jesus' followers still struggle to see the harvest among people they dislike and tend to avoid. It's important that we hear Jesus telling us to look gently and humbly on everyone we meet.

Prayer

Savior, deal a death blow to my prejudice and pride so that I can see people with your eyes of love and compassion, people that you came to seek and deliver. Amen.

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