

One sows another reaps

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 26 May 1985

Preacher: Alex J MacDonald

[0 : 00] Now let's turn to John chapter 4, and especially some words in verse 37. John 4, 37, thus the saying, one sows and another reaps, is true.

One sows, another reaps. One of the main themes of this whole chapter is what we today call evangelism.

That is, simply making known Jesus to other people. Now it was, in a sense, slightly different, as, of course, it was initially the Lord Jesus himself, who was making himself known.

But nonetheless, he laid down for us in this chapter great guidelines about the whole question of evangelism or communicating the gospel. And you know, we've looked on another occasion at how he dealt so skillfully and so lovingly, so personally, with that woman of Samaria, who had come to the well just to draw water when he was there.

But I'd like to look with you at the second part of his contact here with the Samaritans. Because, in a sense, his personal contact with that woman was only the beginning of a story that was ongoing.

[1 : 38] And perhaps we could look with the prophet at other parts of this story at another time. For instance, in the book of Acts, it tells us about the great impact of the post-Pentecostal preaching of the gospel in Samaria.

But I'd like to look with you tonight at what followed on from this woman's meeting with Jesus. And we see this, really, in two parts.

First of all, we see something of evangelism in practice. The actual communication of the good news actually being done by people. And then we have Jesus teaching concerning this whole question.

And this question of sowing and reaping comes into it all. First of all, then, I'd like to look with you at the woman and the other Samaritans, the people in our hometown.

Because that's the next stage in this process that began when that woman met Jesus. And Jesus talked to her and revealed himself to her.

[2 : 44] Well, we see, first of all, that she left her water jar and ran back to the town. Now, we may wonder why she left the water jar.

And I suppose there's many guesses that are made about this. The two most sensible are that she was so excited by what had taken place that simply she forgot the water jar. But there is another guess that perhaps is nearer to the truth.

Remember, at the beginning, Jesus had asked her for a drink. And as far as we know, so far, he hadn't got the drink because she was so busy in arguing and discussing with him. And so now she left the water jar for him.

But at any rate, this woman was going back to her town with a mission. She was going back for a particular purpose. She was going back to tell the people there about this amazing, this unique man that she had met there by the well.

She went back to tell them about him. But really, to do more than that, she went also to invite them to consider this man for themselves.

[3 : 51] We're told that she went back and said, come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ? Now, there's a tremendous amount in that.

She told them about her meeting with this man. He told her everything that I ever did. Now, we can allow, obviously, here for a degree of ordinary, honest exaggeration.

In other words, the woman wasn't really saying that Jesus had told her about every single little trivial detail in her life. But what he had told her was that he revealed what kind of person she was and what our deepest needs were.

We know, as we looked at this before, how skillfully the Lord Jesus did this in arousing, first of all, just how ordinary compassion for another human being who was thirsty.

Then arousing her curiosity by strange kind of veiled sayings. And then, also, he aroused something of conscience in her as he touched upon an area in her life that really was very needy.

[5 : 09] That whole area of her marriage and the breakdown of marriages and so on. He also, of course, before that, had aroused her longing for satisfaction in life as he talked in that kind of veiled way, in figurative language, of a deep and full satisfaction being provided by living water that would give eternal life.

And then, finally, he went on to talk, of course, in answer to her serious questions concerning religious truth and concerning how to worship God.

Finally, revealing himself to her as the Messiah. Now, all of this is, of course, in this woman's mind.

As she tells the people there, Come see a man who told me everything that I ever did.

Here was someone who really understood me, who exposed my innermost thoughts. He knew things about me that no one else could.

Now, of course, still today, that is still the testimony of the Christian. We are speaking about someone who truly understands us.

[6 : 22] Someone that we don't need to pretend with. Someone, indeed, that we cannot pretend with because he knows us as we really are. He knows our innermost thoughts.

And along with that, he knows our innermost needs. You see, no doubt this woman had all kinds of different relationships with people, but no doubt amongst them were the kind of relationships where people didn't think very much of her because of the kind of life she led.

But here was a man who wasn't prejudiced against her because of these things. He accepted her as she was. He exposed what was wrong in her.

He didn't try to pretend that he didn't know what kind of woman she was. Yet he cared for her and wanted the very best for her. And that's still the testimony of the Christian today.

When we are talking to other people about Jesus, we are telling them about someone who understands us, who knows our real needs, who knows the kind of person we really are.

[7 : 29] People who have really sinned against God and against other people. And he doesn't pretend that we're any different from what we are. But yet he accepts us as we are.

And in his hands, we may become different people. This is the one of whom we still speak today when we're asked to bear witness to Jesus to other people.

We're speaking of this man who told me everything I ever did. But more than that, this woman was inviting them to consider who this man was.

In other words, she says to them, Could this be the Christ? She wasn't just coming home to the town to talk in terms of just meeting an interesting stranger at the well.

And wasn't it interesting? And he was a strange kind of character and so on. It wasn't that kind of thing at all. She was wanting them to consider a very specific question about this man.

[8 : 39] Because I believe she herself had already come to the conclusion who this man was. Because Jesus had clearly revealed himself to her as the Christ.

I who speak to you am he. And she had already good evidence for believing that he was no ordinary man. Although she had already called him a prophet. It would seem that that description was really insufficient to describe what kind of man she met there at the well.

But the question she wanted to urge upon her fellow town folk was, Could this be the Christ? Now here, of course, we have a whole range of biblical truth that we would really need to take into account if we had really time this evening.

Because what really was she meaning when she said to them, Could this be the Christ? What did she, what did the other people understand by this word Christ? Of course, to us today, the word Christ has become almost a kind of surname for the Lord Jesus.

But of course, we know that the word Christ is the anointed one. The Messiah. And this is the very one that not only the Jews, but also the Samaritans were expecting.

[9 : 51] Looking forward on the basis of scripture, on the basis of God's promises. Looking forward to this one who was going to be the seed of the woman who would destroy Satan and his kingdom.

The one promised to Abraham. The one through whom, the seed of Abraham through whom all nations on earth would be blessed. The one promised through David. The one promised through David through whom all nations would be blessed.

The one promised through David whose kingdom would be established forever and would never end. This one promise down through the different stages of revelation in the Old Testament. The Messiah, the anointed king. The one promised to be blessed. She was asking them to consider this very particular question. Is this the man that God has promised that he would send into the world to destroy the kingdom of darkness and to establish the kingdom of God throughout this world?

And that still is a question that we have to ask people to consider today. What we have to ask people to consider today is wider than just asking them to believe in Jesus as their own personal savior.

[11 : 10] That is part and partial of it. But it is more than that. If he is the king of kings.

He is the king of the kingdom of God established in this world. And the kingdom that will ultimately be fulfilled at his return. He is the prince of glory.

He is the great lion of the tribe of Judah. And all these other marvelous expressions that the scriptures use concerning him. What she was asking them to consider here is a great pattern for each of ourselves as we think concerning how we are to tell others concerning Jesus.

Yes, there is to be the personal element as we have seen as we looked at the woman and as we have seen in some of the other elements here. But there also has to be the element that this is not just something individual.

Not just something personal. Not especially it is not something subjective. It is just for you and in this particular experience. But it is something true for all men and for all time.

[12 : 24] He is the Christ. That is what we are asking people to consider. He is the Christ. Whether we respond to him or not. He is the king of glory. Whether we recognize it or not.

This is the question that we have to ask people to consider today and to present to people. Notice also too that the methodology of this woman. She wouldn't have used that word no doubt.

And many others just as effective as her wouldn't have used it. But look how winning it was. She didn't come trying to impress by some great authority of her own upon people what they should do. But in a very ordinary way as someone who had just so newly come to discover this great discovery for herself. She was just asking them. Could this be Christ?

So often a question. A question that is open. Can have far greater effect than some kind of great dogmatic statement. But of course the final thing that she did was to invite them.

[13 : 28] Not only to consider a question. But to invite them to a person. She said come. See a man who told me everything I ever did.

Come and see him. Come and see him for yourselves. This supremely is what we are asked to do in evangelism. What every Christian is asked to do.

And what the whole church of Christ is asked to do. What every preacher of the gospel is asked to do. It's not enough to testify concerning to what we know of Jesus for ourselves and in our own experience.

It's not enough to testify concerning the doctrines of God's word. Concerning our need. It's not enough to testify concerning the person of Christ.

Who he is and what he has done. For there to be effective evangelism. For there to be biblical New Testament evangelism. We have to do the same as this woman. And we have to say come see.

[14 : 28] We have to invite people to the Lord Jesus Christ. For themselves. And no sermon can really be a gospel or evangelistic sermon.

Unless the preacher is asking people to come to Jesus. To come and to see him. And to believe in him. And to trust him for themselves.

And our evangelism. Our witnessing to others. Cannot really be true New Testament witnessing. Unless we come to that stage. To ask people. To consider Jesus.

And to come to him. For themselves. I wonder. Am I speaking to anyone here tonight? To whom these words. Have great meaning.

Not in the context in which we've been thinking. About being helpful advice for evangelism. But because you know. That you have never.

[15 : 27] Come. And seen for yourself. You have heard it all. You've heard it all from others. You've heard it all from preachers maybe. But you've never come. And seen for yourself.

You've heard someone like this woman. Testify. But you've never actually got out of your town. And gone across the fields. As these people did. To see Jesus. And without that step.

Without coming. To Jesus. And seeing him for yourself. Then. All the preaching. And all the witnessing to you. Has been useless and in vain.

All your attendance at church. Has been vain. And all. Perhaps. Your pretense. At interest in Christian things. Is in vain.

Unless. You come. And see. Jesus. For yourself. Now notice also.

[16:26] That we see here. In this. Process. That's going on. Because it is a process. And we can't really simplify it. We see also another stage. And that is.

When those people. Responded to this. Witness. Of. The woman. They then.

Those who were interested. At any rate. They then. As we know. Went over the fields. From the town. Down to the well. Where Jesus had met the woman.

And there. There took place. Or there. And over the next two days. There took place. A development. In. Their attitude.

To Jesus Christ. We see here. What we may call. Two stages. In people's.

[17:22] Faith. Or. We might even call it. Two kinds. Of faith. And this is. Our attention is drawn to this. From verse 39 onwards. Many of the Samaritans.

From that town. Believed in him. Because of the woman's testimony. He told me. Everything. I ever did. And then. In verse 42. They said to the woman. We no longer believe.

Just because of what you said. Now. We have heard for ourselves. And we know. That this man. Really is. The savior. Of the world. Now. No doubt.

There's a lot going on here. And it's complicated. Because there are different people involved. And different people. Come to faith. In different ways. And by different stages. But we can see here.

That there is. Some distinction. There were those. Who said. That they believed in him. Because of the woman's testimony. Now.

[18:15] No doubt. Among some of them. There were those. Who. We might say. Had true faith. Who really believed. That this man. Was the Messiah. Right away.

And you might wonder. Why on earth. Would that have been. Well I think. It's quite straightforward. There was such. A dramatic change. In that woman. That that was sufficient evidence.

For them. For themselves. Whatever man it was. That this woman met. Had effected. Such a change in her. One who before.

Was living a life. That could only be characterized. By Jesus. As having had five husbands. And now living with another man. This woman. Now. Is concerned.

To witness to them. Concerning. The one who has revealed. Her sinful past. The one. Whom she is suggesting. To them. Is the Christ. And they say.

[19:13] It's said here. That many believed in him. Because. Of the woman's testimony. That was sufficient. For some of them. For others. It may have been just a stage.

In their interest. And here we see. The second part of this. Where they say. We no longer believe. Just because of what you said. Now we have heard. For ourselves. And we know.

That this man. Really is. The savior of the world. Now this is instructive. For us as well. Because you see. It draws our attention. To the fact. That there may very well. Be stages.

In coming to faith. Stages in which. We call conversion. Not always. Is it as simple. And as dramatic. As sometimes. We make out. Here perhaps.

Was someone. Whose definite interest. Was aroused. By this woman. Who believed. Something. Tremendous had happened. Something strange. Something. Out of the ordinary. But it was only really.

[20:09] When they came. To see Jesus. For themselves. To hear him talk. And to consider. What he was saying. That they really came. To affirm.

And a profound faith. In him. As the savior. Of the world. Now. In those two. Stages. Or call it what you will. We see something.

Helpful for us. Because you see. You may be in the position. Where you have heard. Testimony. To the Lord Jesus. And you may be in no way.

Antagonistic. To that testimony. Indeed. When. You hear the gospel. Being preached. You may warm. Towards it. You may feel. Something very attractive.

About it. Just as those people. When they saw the change. In this woman. And when they heard.

The kind of thing. She was saying. They were. They were very interested. And they were in no way.

[21 : 04] Antagonistic. Towards her. But yet. You have not really come. To any kind of. Definite stage. Of first hand. Experience.

Of this for yourself. And this is what these people. Came to. We have heard. For ourselves. And we know. That this man. Really is.

The savior of the world. Now what's required here. Is that we go a stage further. Than just. An interest. In religious things.

Just an interest. In hearing the gospel. Being preached. What's required. Is that. We really. Come to grips. With what Jesus. Himself. Is saying.

Now putting it that way. It makes it so similar. To what was happening here. We think today. You know. We're so far removed. From those days. And. It seems to be a bit more. Unreal now.

[21 : 59] How can we really. Get to know Jesus. As these people got to know. Well. Jesus. Still speaks to us. He speaks to us. In his word. And it requires.

Effort. On our part. Just as it required effort. On the part of those people. They had to get out of their town. And they had to walk across those fields. In the heat of the day.

To come to see Jesus. And we have got to work. If we're in earnest. About coming to know Jesus Christ. We have to work. At understanding. These scriptures.

We have to study them. We have to read them. For ourselves. We have to ask Jesus. To enlighten our eyes. And as we read. These scriptures. Playing. For God's help.

That he will convert us. That he will change us. That he will renew us. Then. We come to the same conviction. As this. As these people came to.

[22 : 57] Now we have heard for ourselves. And we know. That this man. Really is. The savior. Of the world. Just like. Those Jews. Of Berea.

Who were more noble. Than the Jews. Of Thessalonica. When they heard Paul. They went away. And searched. The scriptures. To see. If those things were so.

Now what we ought to do. When we hear the gospel. Being preached. When we hear the invitation. Of God's word. And we have questions. About it. Or we're not quite sure. What's involved. Then if we're in earnest.

About it. Let us go away. And search the scriptures. And read them. And let us. Question friends. Christian friends. Let us speak to our minister. Or elder. Or anyone we think.

Will be able to help us. But especially. Let us study God's word. And ask him. To reveal himself. To us. And no one. Has ever prayed. That kind of prayer.

[23 : 55] In earnest. And prayed it in vain. Notice then. In this. First stage. Of what we're looking at here. This evening. The progression.

In what we may call. The Samaritan view. Of Jesus. It started. Merely with the woman's view. Of Jesus. Because she was. If you like. The kind of representative.

Samaritan. Remember the Samaritan. Where the. The. The nation. That was. North of the main body. Of. Of Judea. Around Jerusalem.

And they were the people. Really. That the Jews. Had rejected. Because they. Believed that. They didn't really have. And with some justification. That they didn't really have.

The practices. Of. The Old Testament. Scriptures. As they ought to have done. And at some stage. Or other. They had. They'd been. Married. With other nations.

[24 : 52] And they had. Adopted some of their practices. And so on. There's some degree. Of. Difference of opinion. About. Actually. The history. Of these Samaritans. But at any rate.

By this stage. The Jews. Had no dealings. With these. Samaritans. Although. These Samaritans. Certainly held. To the five books. Of Moses. And they still.

To this day. Because there's a small group. Of Samaritans. Still worshipping. To this day. In the land of Israel. They. Held something. Of.

The word of God. And they were looking. For. Some of its fulfillment. And so we come here. To the Samaritans. Coming in contact. With Christ. First of all. Through the woman. And her first opinion. Of him was. He was a Jew. And a Jewish man. That was all. Her opinion. He. She said. Why are you. A Jewish man.

[25 : 44] Asking a drink of water. From me. I'm a Samaritan. Because. Jews and Samaritans. The Jews wouldn't even use. The same cups. As Samaritans. Because they viewed them. As defiled. And they would become defiled.

If they drank. From the same cup. That was. Why she asked the question. That was all. The view. That she had of him. That kind of prejudice. And division. And barrier. That so often exists. In the world. That was there. Right at the beginning. That was how things stood. When Jesus. Spoke to her. And remember. Jesus was taking the initiative. Then. She moved on a stage. She came to see him. As a prophet. When. She discovered. That he was. Able to know her thoughts. And to reveal. Some of her personal history. She viewed him. As someone. Who had supernatural knowledge. A prophet of God. She was prepared. To accept that. On her own personal experience. And then. She moves the stage further. [26 : 40] She comes to see him. As the Messiah. When. She talks. In these terms. I know that Messiah. Is coming. When he comes. He will explain everything. To us.

Why is she saying this? She's saying this. Partly. Because. She knows. That that is the answer. To these religious problems. They've been talking about. But the thought.

Is already beginning. To form in our mind. Perhaps. This one. Who's before me. This strange. Man. So different. From any I've ever met. Perhaps.

He is this very one. And Jesus declares it. I who speak to you. Am he. So. The Samaritan view. Of Jesus. Has progressed. To that point. Where she goes back. And says to the people.

Could this be the Christ? And then finally. The Samaritan view. Of Jesus. Comes to this point. Where at the end. Of verse 42. They say.

[27 : 33] We know. That this man. Really is. The savior. Of the world. What a tremendous expression. From people. So young in the faith. To understand.

The full implications. Of what the Messiah. Really is. In the person. Of Jesus Christ. The savior. Of the world. The God appointed man.

To be the savior. The deliverer. From sin. And evil. And death. Not just. For the Samaritans. Not just. For the Jews. But. For the whole world. For all.

Who would believe in him. So then. That tremendous progression. In faith. And the knowledge. Of Jesus Christ. That began. When Jesus spoke. To that woman.

At the well. Now that. Above all. Should be. An encouragement. To every one of us. Involved. In evangelism. Personal evangelism. Or any other kind. Of evangelism.

[28 : 28] We might think. Just an everyday. Conversation. With someone. Just as Jesus. Conversation. With this woman. Began. We might think. It wasn't all that important. But look at the tremendous.

Consequences. That flowed. From that conversation. The Samaritans. A whole village. A whole town of them. Came. To believe in Jesus.

As the savior of the world. So then. We pass on. To look. At the. Second whole area. Here. In this passage. Now that concerns.

More particularly. Jesus. And the disciples. Our verse. That we've selected. As the theme of this. Is one sows. Another reeks. Now we've been looking.

At something. Of the sowing. That was going on. Jesus. Obviously here. Is taking. The picture. From nature. As he so often does. Of. A man.

[29 : 25] Sowing seed. A farmer. Sowing the seed. In the ground. Then waiting. Several months. Until the harvest comes. Sowing. And reaping.

And he's using this picture. This natural picture. This agricultural picture. Of. Spiritual reality. Of sowing. Of sowing. The truth of God.

Sowing. The gospel. If you like. And that a time comes. Where that comes to fruition. It comes to a time of harvest. Now he already.

In his conversation. With the woman. He was sowing. He was sowing. The seed. Of the word of God. Of a testimony to himself. In that woman's heart. Now.

That took some time. Throughout. Their conversation. And beyond it. To come to fruition. In that woman's life. It didn't all happen. Instantaneously. When she met Jesus. And then.

[30 : 22] There is the woman herself. You see. She. At some point. In her experience. Becomes a sower too. Because she goes home. To her own people.

And she starts sowing. She starts. Inviting people. To consider Jesus. Just as we've been. Considering this evening. So. She in turn.

Someone. In whom. The seed. Of the word of God. Was sown. The time. When she comes. To ripeness. If you like. She becomes one. Who then goes on.

And sows that word. For others. And she. Invites other people. To come to Jesus. And then. And this. I think. Is where the whole. Point of this is.

These people. Are coming across. The fields. To Jesus. And when Jesus. Says these words. It would seem. That. What he is talking about.

[31 : 19] Is these people. Coming towards him. He says. Open your eyes. And look at the fields. They are ripe. For harvest. They are already.

Ripe for harvest. Now he. Obviously. He was talking at a time. When it was four months. Away from the harvest. In other words. Probably about the time. When the seed. Was actually sown. And they were wondering.

What on earth. He was talking about. When he was talking about. About harvest. But of course. He was talking about. A spiritual harvest. He was asking them. To look up. And to see.

The people. Who at this very stage. Were coming across. The fields. And perhaps. He was saying. White under harvest. Simply because. Of the usual. Whiteness. White appearance.

Of the dress. Of people. In those days. The fields. Are already. White to harvest. He says.

Someone has already. Gone and done. Hard work. Someone's already. Gone and sown. The word of God.

[32 : 13] Over there. In that village. In that town. And now. There's a great harvest. To be reaped. And we're going to be. Involved. In that harvest. And also.

As is quite often. With our Lord Jesus. There's a play. On another idea. Here. Because as we know. How this whole conversation. Began. Was because. Of bread.

Because of food. The disciples. Were genuinely. Sincerely concerned. For the physical. Well-being of Jesus. He was tired. He was thirsty. He was hungry. And.

They were. Wondering. How could he keep going. Without food. They wanted him to eat something. And Jesus said. I have food to eat. That you know nothing about. They were wondering. What on earth.

Is he talking about. Could someone have given him food. But Jesus. Is concerned. About spiritual realities. He says. My food. Is to do the will. Of him. Who sent me. And to finish.

[33 : 07] His work. In other words. To Jesus. His meat and drink. His satisfaction. In life. Was to please God. And that surely.

Is. One of the crucial elements. In this whole question. Of evangelism. Of evangelism. Missionary work. Speaking a word. For Jesus.

To our neighbor. Friend. It is. That we should put. Pleasing God. First. In our lives. That that should be.

The most satisfying thing. To us. Over and above. Everything else. And so it was. From that point. That this whole conversation. Developed. He was trying to draw.

Their minds away. From just physical things. To think. About the spiritual realities. And at the end of it. He ties it all up. When he says. I sent you to reap. What you have not worked for.

[34 : 03] Others have done the hard work. And you have reaped. The benefits of their labor. In other words. They had gone. To get food. They hadn't grown it. They hadn't done all the hard work.

To get this food. They had only collected it. They had reaped it. As it were. And he's saying. Well that's a picture. Of what we are now. Going to be engaged in here. Because that woman.

Has gone away. And done a lot of the hard work. In getting these people. To come. And now. We're going to reap. This harvest. Of people. Who are right. To believe.

In the kingdom of God. And to believe. In me as savior. So then. If we can just finish off. By thinking. About. Those two stages.

In the work. Of evangelism. Of evangelism. Sowing. And reaping. Sowing. Always. Comes first. And reaping. Comes finally.

[34 : 59] Now very often. In our. Christian. Terminology. And in our. Attitudes. To evangelism. And missionary work. We've got it all. Muddled up. We don't really learn.

The lessons. Of nature. That Jesus. Wants us to learn. So often. In terms of evangelism. Missionary work. We're talking.

In terms of harvesting. Without anybody. Ever. Having done the sowing. Now I believe. That what needs. To be done today.

Above everything else. Is not harvesting. But sowing. And that involves. A great deal. Of hard work. And hard work.

That will not. Immediately. Be productive. Farmer goes out. He sows his seed. Whether he does it. By hand. Like my father. Used to do. Or whether he does it.

[35 : 53] With a modern machine. That he just sits on. He goes out. And he sows that seed. And it seems. To be all pointless. Because nothing. Actually happens.

Right there and then. There is then. A time of waiting. But that work. Of sowing. Is necessary. It has to be done. Without that sowing. There never will be a harvest.

Now today. We in our thinking. And attitude. So often. We're wanting the harvest. Right now. Immediately. And yet. Nobody's ever bothered. To go out.

And to actually. Sow the seed. What we need to do. Today. In terms of evangelism. In this country. As well as. In other places. In the world. Is to actually.

Start sowing. To actually. Start doing. What Jesus did. At that well. To start speaking. To that woman. In ordinary. Everyday terms. Arousing her interest.

[36 : 49] Her curiosity. Her longing. For satisfaction. Drawing her. To that point. Where indeed. She will be ripe. She will be ripe.

For harvest. To believe. In Jesus Christ. Just as that woman. Did. Going back. To the town. She didn't immediately. Accomplish. The conversion. Of all those people.

Herself. She sowed the seed. She provided. Something. That raised questions. In their mind. That raised longings. In their mind. And they wanted. To come.

And to see Jesus. Now. We need to view. Our contact. With people. Our involvement. In this world. Along. These lines. Of being those.

Who are sowing. The seed. Of the word of God. We. As individual Christians. Have got the contact. With people.

[37 : 44] That. The preachers. Of the gospel. Very often. Do not have. And we. As individual Christians. Need to be using. Those opportunities. And those contacts.

To be sowing. The seed. Of the word of God. And to be creating. Interest. So that they will come. To that point. Where indeed. There will be.

A harvest. In the grace of God. But you know. It's also true. That every Christian. And every preacher. Of the gospel. Has to.

Be doing. Both activities. Both sowing. And harvesting. Because you see. There is not. Just one. Sowing. And one.

Harvest. In the whole. History of the world. There is an ongoing. Process. Of sowing. And harvesting. Sowing. And harvesting. And at some point. In your experience.

[38 : 40] As a Christian. You'll be sowing. You'll not be seeing. Perhaps. Any results. With a particular. Friendship. With someone. Encouraging them. To think about. Christian things.

Encouraging them. To consider the Bible. For themselves. Consider the. Claims of Christ. The fact that he died. And rose again. And they may not seem. All that interested. They may not really. Seem to progress. All that far. But you're sowing. Someone else. Somewhere else. Maybe the reaper. And may come. At that point. Where that person.

Really becomes. Interested. Perhaps. Because of something. In their own lives. Perhaps. Because of some. Word of God. Brought home to them. From who knows where. But then.

Someone else. May be. The harvester. You. Also. May be the harvester. In somebody else's life. Bringing somebody else.

[39 : 36] To that point. Of commitment. To Jesus Christ. Preachers may. In the same way. Be preaching. The word of God. Sometimes sowing. The seed.

In people's hearts. Sometimes not seeing. Very much result. Maybe for many years. And with some people. He may see the harvest. Of things that have been sown. Not by himself.

But by many other people. Many other preachers. Many other Christians. At different times. But now brought to fruition. Maybe. By. A simple. Statement.

Concerning Jesus Christ. Maybe by a simple invitation. For people to come to him. But in the grace of God. That is used. In that great harvest. Of people coming.

To know Jesus. To know Jesus. I want to finish. Just on this. Key thought. Of this passage. One sows. And another reaps.

[40 : 30] But without the sowing. There is. No reaping. Let us pray. Gracious Lord.

We bless you. And thank you. For. The good news. Of Jesus Christ. Made known to us. Made known to us. In. Very homely. Terms.

As our Lord. Jesus Christ. Himself. Revealed himself. Showing things. From nature. Showing things. About himself. Showing things.
From your word. Help us Lord. As. Christian men and women. And boys and girls. To draw. Upon that. Example of our Lord Jesus.
As we seek. To win other people. To Jesus. Gracious God. Give us patience. As we sow. The word. Give us patience.
[41 : 27] As we. In our contacts. With others. Seek to draw them. To you. And may often. Be discouraged. By their. Apathy. By their.
Trivializing. Of. Everything. That we say. Gracious Lord. We pray. That you would give us. The. Vision. To see.
That. In your time. You use. Every word. Of yours. That your word. Does not return. To you. You. Vine. Give us.
Also. The zeal. To persist. And to go on. Give us that. Stamina. In the Christian life. To continue. Working for you.
no matter what the difficulties. We pray for those, Lord, here tonight who may be challenged by the word of the gospel, who may be drawn to the Lord Jesus Christ.
[42 : 23] O Lord, teach them to see how trivial everything else is by comparison to knowing Jesus. Consider them, enable them to consider how little time is and how great is eternity.
We thank you for the gift of life offered to all and sundry. And we pray that those invited this evening would indeed come and believe in Jesus Christ for their own salvation and the glory of our God.
We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.