

PURPOSES OF GOD

John 4:27-42



SYNOPSIS

In the continuation of Jesus's encounter with the Samaritan woman, she became the first missionary of the gospel of Jesus Christ because of the way Jesus satisfied her spiritual thirst. Jesus's awareness of his Father's purposes caused him to reap a harvest in an unlikely context. He invites us to share in his joy as we partner with the sowing/reaping work that he reveals to those with eyes to see spiritual realities.



OUTLINE

1

PURPOSES OF GOD INTRODUCED

Jesus often used physical metaphors to explain spiritual realities to draw in the sincere listener. As an extension and full representative of his Father, Jesus Son of God came to complete his Father's purposes. He reveals the truth that a basic need of humans is to have meaning/purpose. Specifically, we were designed to be nourished not just by food but by fulfilling the purposes of God. (Deut 8:3)

2

PURPOSES OF GOD REVEALED

When Jesus said the fields were ripe for harvest, the disciples couldn't see the spiritual reality of spiritually hungry Samaritans. Jesus's interaction with the presumed hostile Samaritans led them to invite him to stay for 2 days. Jesus must have communicated God's heart for them and taught/ministered in a way that satisfied their spiritual search. The purposes of God were revealed to Jesus, but the disciples didn't have the eyes to see spiritually ripe fields until after they received the Great Commission. (Acts 8:9-17)

3

PURPOSES OF GOD EXPLAINED

Jesus introduces the concept of Kingdom teamwork to the disciples by discussing sowers and reapers. Ancient Israelite writings sowed into the Samaritans. John the Baptist likely baptized near Sychar. The Samaritan field was ripe for harvest through no effort from the disciples, yet Jesus invited them to share in the sowers' joy by participating as reapers of the spiritual harvest. Sometimes we might only sow (e.g. tithing); other times we might only reap (e.g. STM conversions), but the joy of fulfilling God's purposes can be shared in eternity by all participants.

As Jesus is a full representation of God, we are his ambassadors to fulfill God's purposes on earth. (John 17:18; 2 Cor 5:20) Like Jesus, we are sent people. May we be nourished by fulfilling God's purposes. May we be obedient and faithful as he opens our eyes to see spiritual realities, especially as we engage in local and global mission opportunities and as we grow our engagement with "unlikely" contexts and people.



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

Where do you get your sense of meaning/purpose? Do you agree that meaning/purpose nourishes?

2

How would you rate the visual acuity of your spiritual eyes? What could you do to improve your "eyesight"?

3

Jesus wanted the Samaritans to see God's heart for them. What is God's heart for the (unlikely) people in the spaces you occupy?

4

What have you reaped that you did not sow? Where might God be inviting you to sow the beginnings of a spiritual harvest?

5

Regarding sowing and reaping: Do you tithe? Will you go on a short-term mission this year? Why/why not?



BIG IDEA

We are ambassadors of Christ, sent into the world to fulfill God's purposes, if we have the eyes to see him inviting us into our Father's business.

In the economy of God, nothing is wasted. Sow generously. Maybe the fields aren't ripe because you need to sow. Maybe you need to take God's purposes more seriously. Ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to spiritual realities.

