

So. May Aug. - 17, 1953 -

THE HARVEST IS GREAT - John 4:35

Introduction

This text is the basic scripture for the W.M.S. program for this month. It takes into consideration the American Indians and the Jesus Way. This is also a text that we are interested in in connection with our revival.

I. A glance at the American Indian. We are told that there are 400,000 Indians in America, 65% live within Southern Baptist territory. We have 102 full time missionaries and 22 part time workers. There are about 350 different tribes of Indians, each one has a different language.

In Florida there are a large number of Seminoles. A story is related by Mrs. Crenshaw of a 29-year-old Indian man who was converted and offered a sincere prayer "Thank you, Lord, for saving my soul."

In New Mexico, x and Arizona there are 65,000 Navajo Indians. 85% of these people cannot read or write.

In North Carolina there are 3,700 Cherokees. About half of these are members of the seventeen Indian Baptist churches.

In Oklahoma, 28% of the entire Indian population of the United States lives. There are about 150 Indian Baptist churches in Oklahoma.

There are 5,000 Indians in Oregon, 24,000 in California, 15,000 in Washington without any Southern Baptist missionary.

It has been said that 100,000 American Indians have never heard the story of Jesus.

Helen Toledo was a orphan converted to Christ. She made a statement like this. "I feel that the Christian life is not for me unless one is making an effort to win the lost to Christ." Now surely this would lead us to our situation tonight on the brink of this revival.

II. The Saviour's statement. You will recall the incident by Jacob's well and how the woman went away and ~~came~~ came back bringing a crowd with her. The people were coming toward Jesus and he turned and said to his friends, "The harvest is ready. Now is the time to reap." That speaks to us today. There are a great number of unattached church members who are worth little to the churches. Those who have grown careless and who have forsaken the church and they do not seem to believe the Saviour's statement.

The harvest is now ready and He would cause us to see the situation.

III. A Serious Situation. What is it? The harvest will not wait. Harvest time is crisis time. The crisis must be vigorously and promptly met. Grain once ripe must be gathered in at once or it will fall to the ground and be lost. He had in mind the farm with the yellow golden brown wheat waving in the breeze and the farmer says "I believe it is ready. We will go into the fields and harvest the crop."

This is what Jesus had in mind. He was thinking about the world. Doors once open but unentered may never open again. Minds and hearts ~~that are ready~~ that are ready and are not won to Christ may turn and be hardened. Truth resisted is easier to resist the next time. It is now or never as the harvest is ready.

IV. The Garners are Ready. We could say without hesitation "The Garners are ready." The farmer sweeps out the old wheat bins. He is getting ready for the new grain. It is dusty work. What about a place for the children of men when they shall have been harvested. Let us clean out the bins and get ready for this great, great harvest.

V. Laborers. Jesus was calling for laborers to go out into this field. A great many Christians have never understood that they must submit to the Lordship of Christ. "Why call ye me Lord and do not the things I say?"

Jesus is saying to us "Go out into the streets of this city and show concern for these people."

Proverbs 10:5. "He that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame." To sleep in harvest time is to sleep in a time of supreme need. This is what the disciples did that awful night when Jesus was praying in Gethsemane. The program is so great and so tremendous that it should enlist every heart and every hand of every one of us. It will be to our lasting shame if we sleep.

The message of the gospel will bring down the grain. It is the divine sickle for reaping the spiritual harvest.

There must be a personal plea. Deacons and members, choir members - all alike, will have to make this personal plea.

There is prayer. We must give ourselves continuously to prayer. We must pray that the Lord will send forth harvesters, laborers.

little girl challenged in Hindustan to give a
sack to the poor at Xmas - kind up - But
me - to bed - I'm having a hard time
giving up my best doll, father, you don't
have to give your best -
But dad I would not want
to give a sorry doll -
she won the victory & Xmas
gives you her a beautiful doll -
"I'll guess when you give your best, the
best will come back to you"