

## “Lord of the Harvest!”

### I. Announce:

- A. Neck update: Protrusion in C-6/C-5 disk. [No surgery now, wait it out] I ask 2 things:
  1. Please don't hug me - Please don't recommend your \_\_\_\_\_. (I like & trust my surgeon)
- B. Go to [Familiesthatsoar.org](http://Familiesthatsoar.org) to sign up for this Sunday Nights Family Conf.
- C. Mens Breakfast Sat morn 7:30-9am. [Want to help 5:30am or 6am, call Greg Fischer]
- D. Prayer: Lord, pry open sins claws & help us to soar free.

### II. Intro:

- A. Slide #1 Title: *The Lord of the Harvest*. Salvation & the Christian life is about HIM!
- B. Slide #2 Outline (word pictures): Harvesting; Building; Indwelling; & Glorifying.
  1. Metaphors/images are used to express deep & difficult truths.
  2. Examples: He's a **Vine** that nourishes its branches; a **Shepherd** who lays down His life for his sheep; the **One True Light** for a dark world; the **Bread** of life.

### III. Slide #3 **HARVESTING!** [Agricultural Metaphor] (5-9)

- A. This has to do with understanding we are *servants* & God alone is **Lord!**
- B. New Flash: We are just ministers - servants - slaves!
- C. God's servants are **many**, but God **alone** is Lord.
  1. The roles of the two must never be confused.
    - a) We have an **important** but *subordinate* role in the work of the gospel.
- D. Examples:
  1. Paul had *planted* the church in Corinth; while **Apollos**, who came later, *watered* it.
  2. Bob Chappell *planted* CM; while I took over 5 years later, *watering* it.
  3. Steve Struikmans *planted* RCC in Tem; while **Scott Treadway** now is *watering* it.
  4. Pastor Marty *planted* Lambs Fellowship in Murr; while **John** now is *watering* it.
    - a) And in every one of these churches...**GOD** has given the increase!  
To which, *Apollos, Brian, Scott & John* would all say...AMEN!
- E. Another Example:
  1. I have a **Staghorn Fern** as you walk up to my front door, hanging on the wall.
  2. Who gets the glory for its beauty? It was originally *planted* by Pasquale Tripepi (Masked Marvel) & given to me as a gift. Mical when she waters it (very rare but I think it

happened once for my analogy!) Kelly when she waters it. Me when I water, fertilize, & provide the *real labor* on it. Or, God who brought forth the original fern?

a) Are we really going to argue, “*my thumbs greener than your thumb?*”

F. Here’s what we find then corporately for churches, but also individually for all believers, “**Hard work is available to all; large Harvests are not!**” (that’s a God thing)

1. Only God has the power to cause **the seed of the gospel message to grow**.
2. (7) So **planters & waters** are nothing...w/o Him.
3. **Slide #4,5auto** (if you don’t have sunlight or air, you don’t have a plant)
  - a) **The problem?** Sometimes we splash some water on someone, and BAAM the seed sprouts. **We think Wow! It was the words I spoke that saved them! Slide #6 blank**
  - b) I’ve had “*net jumpers*” before. **Whats a net jumper?** Where I barely say anything & they want to get saved. I know it wasn’t my few moments with the person, **but** probably a history of others investing in their life...**but** ultimately God’s grace to be credited.
  - c) It’s God...**Only God! Only He can change a heart! Only He can change a life!**

G. The agricultural lesson:

1. The church is the **field**(9).
2. Believers get the opportunity to *spread seeds of the gospel*, i.e. **plant**.
3. We also have the opportunity to **water** the implanted seeds. (nurture, cultivate)
4. **Growth/increase** only comes from God. **He germinates the seed. He helps it to sprout. He ultimately helps it to bring forth fruit.**
  - a) Jill Briscoe said, “I love what Corrie ten Boom once taught me”. She said, "Jill, people thank me so much, and it used to worry me because I didn't want to get a big head. **So I began to collect those compliments like flowers. 'Thank you,' I'd say. 'Thank you, thank you, thank you.'** Then at the end of the day I'd kneel down and I'd say, 'Here You are Jesus, they're all Yours.'"
  - b) If we have an **ability**, it is **Christ’s ability** - to be laid at His feet.
  - c) If we have **money** it is to be **Christ’s money**, **Christ’s building**, **Christ’s lambs**, **Christ’s mission**, **Christ’s gospel**, everything is Christ’s!

H. We also recognize...**Everyone** has a place in God’s harvest. **Slide #7**

1. Jn.4:35-38 **Do you not say, ‘There are still 4 months and then comes the harvest?’ Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this the saying is true: ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors.**

2. There should not be **competing** or **comparing**.

#### IV. Slide #8 **BUILDING!** [Architectural Metaphor] (10-15)

- A. This has to do with the believers **works**.
- B. **Key:** Importance of the **genuineness** of one's building materials for the work of the kingdom.
1. **Adequacy** or **integrity** of any building material depends upon **the test** it will have to meet.
    - a) That test for the Christians building is **fire** on the day of judgment. Showing it for what it is.
- C. **No other foundation** - no other redemption; no other salvation; no other Savior; no other Christ.
- D. Slide #9 Cement = water, cement, aggregate.
1. The Romans had figured it out & we're still using it for our foundations today!
  2. Slide #10 **Hadrian's Pantheon** in Rome is made of concrete, still stands.
  3. Slide #11 **No other foundation!** - Spurgeon said, "None but Jesus, the divine savior, could sustain the weight of a single soul w/all its sins, much less of all the souls which are built up into the Temple of God."
- E. Slide #12 Some building materials are **combustible** (wood, hay, straw) & they will be burned up *completely*.
- F. Others will use **noncombustible** materials such as **gold**, **silver**, or **costly stones** (granite, marble) & they will find their labor will stand the test. And they will receive a reward.
1. Those who build poorly will suffer loss, **but** they themselves will be saved as a person who is rescued from a fire.
  2. Picture a man escaping a burning building, he has his **life...but no possessions**.
    - a) There is a **legend** of a wealthy woman who, when she reached heaven, was shown a very *plain* mansion. She objected. "Well," she was told, "that is the house prepared for you." "Whose is that fine mansion across the way?" she asked. "It belongs to your gardener." "How is it that he has one so much better than mine?" The houses here are prepared from the materials that are sent up. We do not choose them, you do that by your earthly faithfulness.
    - b) This may be a *legend*, but it bears a profound truth!
- G. Examples of wood, hay, & straw works??? Slide #12b,c,d AFTER Poof! (3 x's)
1. **Wood:** When I became a sound man as a new believer *to be seen by others...POOF!*
  2. **Hay:** Sharing the gospel w/a friend w/me, being more interested in showing off my *apologetic prowess than* caring for the soul of the individual I was talking to...**POOF!**

3. **Straw**: Any time I have *served the Lord* with a wrong heart...**POOF!**

H. **Slide #13** Take heed how you build! - Wasn't that the story of the 3 little pigs?

1. That which was made of **shoddy building materials** (straw & wood) blew down, **but** that which was **of sturdy material** (brick) withstood the fierce winds.
  - a) Instead of blowing, Jesus will simply look at it with **"His eyes like a flame of fire"** at the judgment seat of Christ. **"Take heed how you build!"**

I. **What helped Kelly & I more than anything in our 1st building blocks?**

1. Friends plugged us in right away.
2. We never forsook the gathering together of the brethren (when they met, we were there)
3. We got involved in home studies, in servicing, in fellowship (Christian friendships).
  - a) **And been doing it ever since, for 31 years.**

V. **Slide #14 INDWELLING; TEMPLE! [Another Architectural Metaphor] (16,17)**

A. This has to do with **all** believers, **anytime & anywhere**.

B. **Key**: Importance, **the temple** does not refer to the structure in which believers **meet** to worship. **Rather**, Christians themselves **are** the temple.

1. **We are God's temple why?** - Because the Spirit of God dwells in us! (1 Cor.6:19)
2. **Slide #15** know there are 2 words in Greek for Temple: (**naos & hieron**)
  - a) One means the Temple building itself. *hieron*
  - b) *Naos* means the Sanctuary, the Holy of Holies, where the glory of God dwells (that is the word used here).
    - (1) **We are God's sanctuary, the place of His holy awesome presence!**
    - (2) You are not simply **the structure** in which He lives. **You are the dwelling place of the Shekinah glory of God! :)**

C. **Note**: **The Spirit of God dwells in you** - not an **influence** of the Spirit; **but the 3rd person of the Trinity Himself!**

1. Christian, no matter how **weak, feeble, poor, helpless, or frustrated** you feel; **or** how **inadequate, incapable, incompetent, or ineffective** you feel,...**The Spirit of God dwells in you!**
2. **Why does He dwell in us?** That we might develop **character**, the **fruit** of the Spirit, **good works**, & the **reproduction** of the character of Jesus Christ.
  - a) Which begs the question, **"Why is it that so little of His life is produced in us & so much of ourselves still remains?"** (Alan Redpath)
3. **The O.T. tabernacle had an outer court** (where the public walked), **the inner court** (which was the place of service), **& the Holy of Holies** (the sanctuary of the presence of God).

- a) We are not to live in the **outer court** (the world); we are not to live “*only*” in the **inner court** (of the busy rush of Christian service); **but in the Holiest of all** (walking as holy men & women w/dignity, reverence, & worship!)

D. Paul gives a **strong warning here**, that He will destroy those who destroy His Temple.

## VI. Slide #16 **GLORIFYING! (18-23)**

- A. **Key:** Importance, **Avoid** self-deception. **Avoid** the worlds wisdom. **Avoid** boasting in men.
- B. (18-20) **Avoid** self-deception. Note the difference between *worldly wisdom* & **God’s wisdom**.
- C. (21-23) He wraps up with challenging the Corinthian believers to reverse their partisan cries.
1. Stop boasting of your loyalties to your favorite leaders (Paul, Apollos, Cephas).
  2. These loyalties divide the church into rival factions.
  3. Paul’s reminder...*they ALL belong to Christ*...not to them.
  4. Slide #17 blank
- D. All is yours - you are Christ’s - Christ is Gods.
1. If **all things are yours**, what are you **fighting** for, **or bragging** about, **or competing** for, **or comparing** yourself against? **All things are yours!**