

Harvest Time



Theme: Jesus calls us to bring in the harvest. Proper 9 (14) Yr. C

Object: A basket of fruit or vegetables.

Scripture: He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Luke 10:2 (NIV)

An old farmer sat on the steps of his small shack chewing on a piece of straw. He was approached by a passing stranger who was looking for a cool drink of water. Wishing to start a conversation with the farmer, the stranger asked, "How is your cotton crop coming this year?"

"I ain't got none", replied the farmer.

"Didn't you plant any?" asked the stranger.

"Nope," said the farmer, "I was afraid the boll weevils would get it."

"Well," asked the stranger, "how is your corn?"

"Didn't plant any corn either," replied the man, "I was afraid there wasn't going to be any rain."

"If you didn't plant any cotton or corn, what did you plant?" asked the man.

"Nothing," said the farmer. "I just played it safe!"

Well, I guess if you don't plant anything, it makes the harvest a lot easier, doesn't it?

In our Bible reading today, Jesus sent out people to bring in the harvest. The harvest Jesus was talking about was not cotton, fruit or vegetables. He was sending out workers to bring people into the kingdom of God. He said that there were many souls who were ready to be harvested, but there were not enough workers. One reason it was hard to find workers was that it was very difficult work. Jesus warned that the workers in his kingdom would often be treated very unkindly.

Jesus is still looking for people who will work for him and bring people into his kingdom. That is what the church is supposed to do. It won't always be easy. In fact, it will be hard. Many people in the church are like the farmer in our story -- they are "just playing it safe." I have heard that eight out of ten church members have never invited anyone to church and that nine out of ten church members have never won anyone to Christ.

How about you? Are you willing to work for Jesus and invite people to come to church? Will you go and tell people about Jesus' love and that he died on the cross so that they

could have everlasting life? There are many souls who are need to be brought into God's kingdom, but there just aren't enough workers.

Father, we want to be faithful workers telling others about Jesus and his love. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

It All Depends On Jesus



Theme:	Jesus sends workers to bring in the harvest. Proper 9 (14) Yr. C
Object:	A suitcase and a list of all the things you must pack when taking a vacation.
Scripture:	After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road. Luke 10:1-4 (NIV)

I am getting ready to go on vacation. I have my bags all packed and ready to go. I am really looking forward to this chance to "get away from it all" so I can relax. I have a list of all the things I need to take with me on vacation.

- Clothes - enough for two weeks
- Hair dryer - in case they don't have one at the hotel
- Shaving kit (or cosmetic case) - to stay looking my best
- Some comfortable shoes - for when I have to walk
- Sandals - in case I go to the beach
- Swim suit - for the beach or the hotel swimming pool
- Camera - for sightseeing trips
- Laptop computer -so I can chek my email and surf the web
- A book - in case I get bored
- Traveler's checks, plenty of cash, and credit cards

Can you think of any other things I may have forgotten? I want to make sure that I have everything I might need on the trip. Sometimes I think that when I go on vacation, I am not really "getting away from it all" -- I am taking it all with me!

The Bible tells us that Jesus appointed seventy-two of his followers and sent them out, two-by-two, to go into every town and place where he was about to go. Do you know what Jesus told them to take with them? Nothing!

Jesus said to them, "Go!" Then he went on to say, "Do not even take a purse, or a bag, or a pair of sandals."

Now, why did Jesus say that? I think it is because when Jesus sends someone on a mission, their success or failure does not depend upon what they bring with them -- it depends on him! One reason I can be pretty certain of that is because of something else Jesus told the people when he sent them out. He said, "He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me."

Just as Jesus sent out the seventy-two people, he wants you and me to go to people today and share the good news that the kingdom of God is near. The results do not depend upon us. We should not become puffed up when people receive the message and we should not be discouraged when they reject the message. We should just go and tell as if everything depends on Jesus -- because it does!

Dear Jesus, may we be ready and willing to go when you say, "Go!" and leave the results up to you. Amen.

Interactive Group Activities

by Carol Williams & Charles Kirkpatrick

Sermon Title: "It All Depends on Jesus"

Scripture Reading: Luke 10:1-11

SUITCASE RELAY: Run a quick relay with each team running to the line to grab suitcase and run it back to next team player, who will run the suitcase back to the starting line and leave the suitcase there.... running back to next team player who will run to the line and get the suitcase and run it back to next team player, etc, until all the players have run and all the players are setting down in their line with the suitcase in the front of their line up.

QUICK CHANGE RACE: Place like items in 2 suitcases (one suitcase for each team). Children can run to suitcase and open it up, put everything on that is in the suitcase, take it off quickly and run back to their team for the next player to put everything on and take it off. Continue until everyone has put on all the suitcase items and are sitting down with the suitcase at the front of their line. (Items for suitcase can be shoes, shirt, hat, watch, gloves, etc).

2 X 2 WALKING: Divide class into 2's and call out places for the teams of 2's to WALK TO, such as to the board, the drinking fountain, a certain picture, to a wall that is designated, etc. Groups of 2's must continue to hold hands or hands on shoulders, etc but cannot disconnect.

72 FINGER PRINTED INK-MEN: Provide children with ink pads to place their fingers in the ink and press onto a long table length piece of narrow paper. Each finger printed ink "man" will count as one of the 72 followers of Jesus in our story. Let children add little arms and legs to the finger prints. Make a long title over the 72 followers that will say in bright letters - GO AND SHARE THE GOOD NEWS TO EVERYONE! The teacher can divide the finger prints between the number of students so everyone has a chance to add "prints". If only a few children are in the class, then all five or ten fingers of each child can be used, but if there are many children in the class - then children can just use a couple of fingers.

SUITCASE ENVELOPE: Give each child a paper plate to color. Then fold the plate in half and tape or staple the edges but not the top of the plate. Add a small handle and form a suitcase. Children can place paper strips inside the "plate suitcase" that will have today's Bible verse written on them, as well as other words from today's lesson, such as IT ALL DEPENDS ON JESUS, and/or TAKE NOTHING WITH YOU, etc.

"GO! BE WILLING" CHEER: Let children form motions for a lesson cheer, to say together, GO, BE WILLING, GO! GO! BE WILLING! GO, BE WILLING! GO! GO! BE WILLING!!! Form two teams and have one team say it to the other team and back and forth - to see which team can be the loudest and most WILLING :-)

"DEPEND ON JESUS ONLY" PAINTING: Each child can be given a large piece of paper. Write DEPEND ON JESUS ONLY on the paper and children can begin to trace the letters with one paint or bright colored marker. Then trace with another paint or colored marker and continue with a different color for each time around the letters! Place thin layer of glue rubbed on by fingers, and then lightly sprinkle glitter on the words. Hang by a ribbon for all to see!!

BEAD STRINGS: Children can be given lettered beads and a thin plastic "string" to string the beads for the words -- DEPEND ON JESUS! Hang around their neck for a necklace!

PUFFED UP BALLOON BOPPING: Give children a balloon to blow up and tie -- bop the balloons back and forth to each other for time designated. Sit in a circle while holding balloons and talk about our lesson and not being PUFFED UP if people receive our message and not being discouraged when they reject the message..... after the "circle talk" - have all children POP their balloons at the same time outside, if possible! Encourage children to pick up all the pieces of the balloons and see if they can find "72" pieces of balloons to represent the 72 followers of Jesus in our lesson today! (throw the pieces of balloons away in the trash!).

GO AND TELL: As children get ready to leave class today, let them draw out a piece of paper out of a box that will have something to TELL others about JESUS written on it. Encourage children to GO AND TELL what is on their piece of paper to someone else after Sunday School or class time.