

**Steps of a Disciple, part 13**  
**New Horizons—Fields Ready For Harvest**  
*John 4:31-38; Luke 10:1-2*

**#1 - The Condition Of The Fields, John 4:31-38**

*The emphasis here is about the timing of reaping the harvest.*

Remember, Jesus's disciples had just brought Him some food to eat, but instead of taking the time to eat the physical food, He said the spiritual harvest was more pressing. Of greater importance. There's an immediacy of gathering the spiritual harvest that supersedes the physical need. **FIELDS READY FOR HARVEST.**

Now, before we leave this text for the teaching from Luke chapter 10, let's conclude the narrative because there is one more important message Jesus wants to teach His disciples about the harvest.

Jesus goes on from verse 36 to verse 38 and says this: some sow the seed and some gather the harvest. Each of them shares in the reward of the gathered fruit. It doesn't matter to God if you are the one who plants the gospel seed into someone's heart; if you're the one who waters that planted seed; or, if you're the one who brings that spiritual work to completion. Clearly, there is a team effort recognized by Jesus in the gathering of spiritual fruit. Look again at verse 38:

“I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored and you have entered into their labor.”

Jesus is teaching His disciples that there are **NEW HORIZONS** where the spiritual fruits are harvested in new places, places the harvester had not been before. Oh yes, the seed planter had been there; the one who watered the planted seed had been there; but for the harvester—this is a new place, a **NEW HORIZON** where spiritual harvesting can be done.

We will find, in **NEW HORIZONS**, **FIELDS READY FOR HARVEST.**

**#2 - The Condition Of The Harvesters. Luke 10:1-2**

In John's narrative, the emphasis was on The Condition Of The Fields. In Luke's narrative, the emphasis is on The Condition Of The Harvesters.

Jesus is sending out teams of His disciples out to do ministry. There's lots of harvesting to be done, Jesus says, but the condition of those to do the harvesting work is at issue. Specifically, there's more work than we have workers. The condition of the harvesters is that there are too few harvesters to get the job done. There's a numerical problem!

Here is Jesus' solution: Pray to God for more laborers who will go out into those fields which are ready for harvest.

Today, we have seen from these two different settings, that Jesus has things to say about The Condition Of The Fields and The Condition Of The Harvesters. Last Sunday's message was about Personal Evangelism and I told you that today, it would be about Corporate Evangelism. So, let me unveil our NEW HORIZONS - FIELDS READY FOR HARVEST for this fall.

### **Opportunity #1 - Saturate Tampa Bay**

There is a nationwide campaign designed to bring a gospel witness to every home in the United States—to reach 60 million households with the gospel of Jesus Christ. This fall, this campaign is coming to Tampa Bay and Richland Baptist Church has become the Anchor Church for Zephyrhills.

How exciting to be part of such a movement in bringing the gospel message to our community! Now, the task in Zephyrhills is God-sized. And I have already begun reaching out to other evangelical churches to be a Partnering Church and help us reach the 30,000 homes around us.

To accomplish this task will take an army at each church. People can get involved in one or both battalions:

1. Packing Battalion—we need many volunteers who will come and assemble these packets. A finished packet will consist of a DVD, a gospel tract and some Richland Baptist Church literature placed inside a plastic door-knob bag.
2. Distribution Battalion—we need many volunteers who will go out and hand these packets on the front door of people's homes. This will consist of both “runners” and “drivers.”

### **Opportunity #2 - Public School Initiative (PSI)**

Listen carefully to this opportunity, it's incredible!

A month and a half ago, Dr. Henry Lyons, Chancellor of Public Schools for the Florida Department of Education came to Dr. Tommy Green, the head of the Florida Baptist Convention and asked for help from Florida Baptists in the state's public schools!! After years of denied access or marginalized opportunities, the head of our state's public schools not only realizes they need our help, but are asking for our help.

We are calling this our PSI Ministry (Public School Initiative).

Shortly, I will be reaching out to one of the closest public school's to begin developing a relationship and defining what areas of ministry we can have among their teachers and students.

- • It may involve one-on-one mentoring/tutoring with a student one hour each week.
- • It may involve a small team from Richland Baptist Church adopting a school's home room

and interacting with those pupils once each month throughout the school year.

There will be a regional day of training that we will be part of in Tampa on Thursday, August 9th, from 9:00 - 4:00 at Idlewild Baptist Church. Dr. Tommy Green and Pastor Jeffery Singletary with the Florida Baptist Convention will be there, along with host pastor Ken Whitten. Kurt Browning, the Pasco County School Superintendent will be there to share opportunities to serve in our community schools. And the keynote speaker for the day will be Dr. Tony Evans from Dallas, Texas.

### **Opportunity #3 - Bless Every Home**

Some of you have already become a Bless Every Home partner and I want to thank you for your prayer ministry to see your neighbors get saved. If you haven't become a Bless Every Home partner, let me encourage you to consider joining us to pray, by name for your neighbors' salvation and then to connect with them to eventually share your faith.

### **Opportunity #4 - Walk Through Bethlehem**

For most, Walk Through Bethlehem needs no introduction. However, there are several here who are new this year at Richland. Each Christmas season, Richland does Walk Through Bethlehem, a guided tour of the city and people of the ancient city of Bethlehem and invite the public who comes to experience what it might have been like to be in Bethlehem the night Jesus was born. There are countless opportunities for you to be involved in this outreach event.