

# Whitened Harvest Fields

by Samuel Logan Brengle

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer, faith, and service in reaping the harvest of souls and bringing people to Christ.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 9:37

**Topics:** "Harvest", "Mission", "Prayer"

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## Description

Samuel Logan Brengle emphasizes the necessity of preparation in the spiritual harvest, illustrating how the fields of the world have been plowed and sown through the sacrifices and prayers of faithful servants. He recounts the story of Adoniram Judson, who, despite years of toil without visible results, ultimately reaped a bountiful harvest of souls. Brengle calls upon the church to recognize the urgency of the harvest, urging believers to commit themselves to prayer, support missionaries, and actively participate in gathering the lost. He highlights the importance of testimonies, songs, and literature in preparing hearts for the Gospel. The message concludes with a call to action, encouraging all to pray for laborers and to engage in the mission of reaching the unsaved.

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## Transcript

Before fields are ready to harvest, they must be plowed and sowed and tilled.

When Jesus said to His disciples, 'Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest, He looked upon a land plowed by God's faithful judgments and sowed deep with the toils and sacrifices of prophets and teachers from Moses to John the Baptist, and watered with the tears and blood of those who had sealed their testimony with their lives.

When young Adoniram Judson went, as the first American missionary, to Burmah, he found a land covered with age-long growths of superstition and ignorance. For years he plowed and sowed in hope. He struggled with difficulties of language and spiritual darkness.

After seven years, with as yet no converts, a friend wrote and asked him what the prospects were. He replied, 'The prospects are as bright as the promises of God.' Already the fields had whitened unto harvest, and shortly after he had written to his friend he was reaping what he had sown -- thirty thousand souls were won to Jesus and organized for service.

It is not often that a man sows in tears and reaps in joy as Judson did. The plowers and sowers often toil in hope, and yet must wait for the reapers, who enter the fields and gather in the harvests upon which they themselves have bestowed no labor.

At the present time the world seems to be one vast ripened or ripening harvest field, waiting for earnest and skilled reapers. For many centuries it has been plowed and harrowed by wars and commotions, by famine and pestilence, by storm and earthquake, and where the plowshare has not reached, the spade of disappointment and sorrow, of bereavement and death, has left no sod unturned. Everywhere the soil has been and is being prepared.

For many years The Army has been in the fields sowing and reaping. Let us look back to the sowing of The Army.

Think of the tears shed for a lost world! Oh, the eyes of Officers and Soldiers of The Army that have wept fountains of tears as they have looked at men and women rejecting Jesus! These tears have fallen like rain. They are a part of the sowing. God remembers them all, He treasures them 'in His bottle.' (Psalm lvi. 8.) Has He not said, 'They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him'? (Psalm cxxvi.5, 6.) These tears of faithful Army workers will not be forgotten of God, and we must not forget them, but reckon with them, for they enter into the preparation of the harvest fields of the world.

Think of the prayers of The Army! Prayers for the Salvation of the world; prayers for loved ones, for the children, the heathen, the drunkard and publican, the harlot and the gambler. Think of the prayers for enemies, prayers for the friends of God and all workers of righteousness; prayers in the secret closet, at the family altar, in the public hall, on the street, in the saloon, the kraal, the bungalow, the city, the desert, the wilderness, the jungle, on shipboard and trains, from lonely little quarters and from dying beds! These prayers ascend to God as incense, and they shall surely return in blessing. He does not forget them, and we must not. They have their part in the preparation of the harvest fields.

Think of the testimonies of The Army! Testimonies to the enslaving power of sin and the heartache and dissatisfaction surely following its wildest pleasures; testimonies to the arresting, quickening, convicting power of the Holy Spirit, and to the absolute certainty He produces of a life beyond the grave and of judgment to come.

Remember all the testimonies to forgiveness of sins, to the witness of the Spirit, and the comfort of the Holy Ghost; testimonies to the subtle, lurking, hateful presence and power of inbred sin, and of deliverance and cleansing from all its defilement; testimonies to the incoming of the Holy Spirit and to love made perfect.

Recall the continual witness to answered prayers, to Divine guidance in times of perplexity; to healing in sickness; to deliverance from temptation, to revelations in times of darkness and loneliness; to fresh infusions of strength and hope in seasons of weakness and distress, to secret girdings for the long march and fierce conflicts of life; to renewals of patience and faith in the midst of backslidings and desolations; to meat and drink that the world knows not of.

Do not let us forget the great host who have ever proclaimed the spiritual realities of a Blessed Presence going before as a pillar of cloud and fire to the end of the way; of bending skies; of opening heavens; of songs and shoutings; of harps and palms and the rush of angel-wings.

And last of all, testimonies in the Valley to Jesus, the Good Shepherd, folding His dear one in the eternal embrace of His infinite love, and to triumph for ever over death and Hell. Oh, the power of Army testimonies! They have their part in the preparation of the harvest fields.

Think of the songs of The Army! How they have captured and held the attention of the world! The careless sinner and the ripened saint alike are arrested by them. How they soften the heart, recall memories of innocent childhood and of mother's prayers! How they make one see the Infant Jesus in the manger, the wrestling Saviour in the Garden, the dying Son of God on the cross, the bursting tomb, and the Great White Throne! They interest, alarm, convict, convert, assure, comfort, correct, inspire, guide, instruct, illumine. They present the law in its most solemn and searching aspects; they declare the judgments of God; they proclaim the Gospel in its tenderest and fullest invitations, and embrace all the vital Bible truths. And think how they are sung from the cradle to the grave! Everywhere they are heard and known, and their sound has gone forth to the ends of the earth. They have reached the hearts of men. We must not forget the songs of The Army; they have their part -- an immense part -- in the preparation of the harvest fields.

But when we consider the seed-sowing of The Army in the fields of the world, we must add to its tears and prayers and testimonies and songs, its literature filled with burning messages of love, yearning appeals, faithful warnings, thrilling experiences, and patient instructions, sown broadcast over the nations.

And to all this must be added the immeasurable influence of saintly lives in shops and mills, and offices and stores, in mines and kitchens, on battlefields and shipboard; the sacrifices, devotion, faithful, patient service, and loving ministries which are unheralded among men, and yet which silently hasten the ripening of the harvest.

Truly, with such seed-sowing the harvest must be great, and already it is whitened and waiting for the reapers. Oh, that the Lord of the harvest may send forth reapers into the whitened fields!

When the harvest is ripe, it must be gathered in haste, or it will be lost for ever.

Our harvest is at hand. The children are waiting for us to gather them into the Saviour's fold. The great crowds of the unsaved in the homelands and the vast pagan and heathen populations of foreign countries need our faithful ministry speedily. How shall we reach them? Where shall we begin? What shall we do?

1. We must determine to reach them. There must be mighty ingatherings of the people. To this end there must be mighty outpourings of the Spirit, and for this we must give ourselves fully to God. 'He that reapeth receiveth wages,' said Jesus. Would you like God for your Paymaster?

2. Then we should give ourselves to Him and do His work. If we do this, and wait in faith upon Him, we shall see such Pentecosts and revivals as shall pale all those that have gone before.

3. If we cannot go ourselves, we may send generous help, that others may be sent.

Some time ago I met a plain, humble little woman at one of our Camp Meetings, who supported a missionary in a foreign field, was educating his boy, and at the same time was supporting a poor, friendless old man in her home city. She did it by baking and by selling her pies and cake and bread, and by putting the proceeds into God's work. God will surely see that she receives wages.

A comparatively poor man in California, of whom a friend of mine wrote, supports eight foreign missionaries. When asked how he did it, he replied that he lived largely on oatmeal, wore celluloid collars, and managed all his affairs on economical lines. In other words, he denied himself to help to save the world for whom Jesus died. God will see that he receives wages.

4. Then we can send books and letters out into the fields to reap for us.

A gentleman of whom I heard smoked four cigars a day. He learned that for the price of a cigar he could buy a New Testament, and then and there he resolved to quit smoking and with the money saved to buy and scatter Testaments, which he has since done at the rate of more than one thousand per year. Some time ago a gentleman living hundreds of miles away was passing through this man's native city; he got off the train and spent the day hunting him up to thank him for the Salvation he had received through the gift of one of those Testaments. He, too, shall surely receive wages.

A letter of cheer and sympathy sent to a distant, lonely reaper in some far-away field will often hearten the worker and hasten the ingathering of the harvest.

5. Finally, we can all aid in the reaping of the harvest by watchful diligence and expectant faith in prayer.

Did not Jesus command us to pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers? And shall we not fulfill so simple and yet so urgent a command?

Multitudes cannot go to fields of active service; many have but little, if any, money to send; but all can pray and plead His promises till He rain righteousness upon the earth.

I know a man intimately who offered himself for foreign service, but was rejected; then he sought and obtained the fullness of the Spirit, and gave himself to prayer and such service as he could offer at home. God heard and answered his prayers and blessed his labors, and today he hears from the four corners of the earth of those who have been saved and sanctified and blessed through things he has said and done.

God will be well pleased with those who pray, and will bless them, and will visit with grace the ends of the earth in answer to their petitions, and they shall surely receive wages.

O Lord, pour out the spirit of prayer upon Thy people, and help us to win the world to Thee!

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