

# The Year Of The Harvest And Thanksgiving

Wish everyone a Happy Blessed and fruitful 2019!

I am declaring this year the year of the harvest and Thanksgiving. We have been preparing the ground here over the past 6 months and have been praying for a harvest of souls into the kingdom of God.

We have declared that New Malden be saved, that we are taking this city and believing God to move mightily in this city.

*Guaranteed harvest Gal 6:7-10 (msg) 7-8 Don't be misled: No one makes a fool of God. What a person plants, he will harvest. The person who plants selfishness, ignoring the needs of others—ignoring God!—harvests a crop of weeds. All he'll have to show for his life is weeds! But the one who plants in response to God, letting God's Spirit do the growth work in him, harvests a crop of real life, eternal life.*

*9-10 So let's not allow ourselves to get fatigued doing good. At the right time we will harvest a good crop if we don't give up, or quit. Right now, therefore, every time we get the chance, let us work for the benefit of all, starting with the people closest to us in the community of faith.*

There are two things I would like us to focus on this year.

- The first is on the harvest - on people.
- The second is giving God thanks for everything - having a thankful and grateful heart.

**Focus on People** - When Jesus saw the people he was overwhelmed with compassion for they were like sheep without a shepherd - Matt 9:35-38 tells us that Jesus went about teaching and preaching the gospel and healing every sickness and disease **but** when He saw the multitudes He was moved with compassion for them because they were weary or harassed and scattered like sheep without a shepherd.

Jesus was going about doing what he came to do which was teaching preaching healing BUT something moved Jesus when he saw how the people were. We may be taken up with teaching and preaching and healing and yet if we are not moved by the condition of mankind today we are missing the point. Jesus was moved with compassion when he saw the state of humanity.

I pray that we will be moved and stirred into action when we see humanity and the plight of humanity today.

Many people today are like sheep wandering in the wilderness of life not knowing the way without a future and a hope.

If we are coming to church to satisfy our selves and have a good / blessed time without any consideration for those who are lost around us we have missed the point.

**If** we have no compassion for the people around us or any concern that without Jesus they are going to a lost eternity then our gathering is in vain. Our compassion and concern for people must motivate us to do something about it. It is of no use having compassion without motivation to do something about it. The easiest thing we can do is invite people to come and experience Jesus.

The Kingdom of God is about people not church buildings or religion or living a pious life. It is about going all out for people. It is good to pray for people and it will be even better if we took the trouble to invite people and go the extra mile to physically bring them to church where they can experience Jesus.

This year let's take the focus off of ourselves and give ourselves for the benefit of people encountering Jesus.

**So here are some practical things you can do:**

- If someone isn't in church get their number and call them up. Don't wait for one of us to do it.
- If someone needs a ride to church then go and get them.
- If prayer then pray.
- If financial need then bless with some finances or food or clothes or whatever the need is.
- Encourage one another to attend mid week gatherings to support and pray.
- Challenge one another for sloppy attitudes and vague excuses. Let's be a people who ask tough questions and sharpen each other as iron sharpens iron. Be more outward looking than inward looking.

**2 Do everything with thanksgiving and gratitude** - Let this year be a year where we become mindful of who God is and thank Him daily without complaining.

Let Thanksgiving be a life style in 2019. *Heb 13: 15 (amp) Through Him, therefore, let us constantly and at all times offer up to God a sacrifice of praise, which is the fruit of lips that thankfully acknowledge and confess and glorify His name.*

NB: Sacrifice of praise - The terms "sacrifice" and "praise" might seem to be opposites. We think of sacrifice as offering something at great cost to ourselves. Praise, on the other hand, sounds joyful as it bubbles from a grateful heart. However, in the spiritual realm, sacrifice and praise are joined.

Sometimes praise is not costly, e.g. we praise one for a job well done or praise for some heroism. We often find it easy to praise God when He has blessed us, helped us, and protected us, we feel generous toward Him. We can sing, worship, and talk about how good He is because we can see it. That kind of praise, although worthwhile, does not cost us anything. It is not a sacrifice.

However there are times when God did not show up, when the doctors report was bad or a spouse wants a divorce where God seems far away and praise is the last thing we want to do.

To praise God in those times requires personal sacrifice. It takes an act of the will to lay our all on the altar before a God we don't understand. When we bring a "sacrifice of praise," we choose to believe that, even though life is not going as we think it should, God is still good and can be trusted ( Ps 135:2 Yes, let his people praise him as they stand in his Temple courts; Nahum 1:7 The Lord is good. When trouble comes, he is the place to go! And he knows everyone who trusts in him!)

Let's be determined this year as a people to be thankful and let's challenge one another to do it. If someone complains let's remind them to be thankful.

**Col 3:17** *Don't get weary, don't give up - this is your year of harvest as you continue thanking God daily with gratitude for who He is in you.*