

Reflections by the Pond

THE WRITINGS OF DAVID S LAMPEL

A Season of Harvest



Now this I say, he who sows sparingly
will also reap sparingly,
and he who sows with blessing
will also reap with blessing.

2 Corinthians 9:6

WHERE I LIVE THIS IS A TIME OF HARVEST, of crops of field corn and soybeans drying in the fields and being scooped up off the soil by massive machines called, oddly enough, harvesters.

The air is still warm, mostly, yet dry, lacking the sometimes oppressive summer humidity for which the Midwest and South are famous. The leaves are beginning their turn, repenting from standard green to a variety of colors: saffron and daffodil yellows, flashing red, burnt orange, rich burgundy—all to fade inevitably to their native shade of a dull brown. Many of them have already fallen to carpet and nestle into the blades of drying and fading grass.

The small garden plots have already been gleaned; the last of the dinner-table vegetables have now been either consumed or placed into storage in the house, and the few remaining flowers are looking a bit lonely now, pining for their brethren.

To Christians, “harvest” has traditionally been associated with evangelism, to the “reaping” of souls by means of the gospel message. The association is taken from Jesus’ message to His disciples, as recorded by the apostle John.

Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work. Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest. Even now he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for life eternal; so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this case 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 labor.”

John 4:34–38

There is more to this discourse by Jesus than simple evangelism, but that is sufficient for the moment.

In the Midwest, as in other parts of the world, there is a dependable rhythm to these things. Spring is for planting, summer is for growing, autumn is for the harvest, and winter is the time to let the soil rest.

A good farmer worth his salt would no more plant corn in the dead of winter than try to fuel his tractor with Kool-Aid. He needs to plant the seeds at the very beginning of the growing season, once the soil is warm, to allow the young plants time to grow and reach maturity so that they can be harvested before winter sets in. And either in the very late autumn, or very early in the spring, the fields must be cleared in preparation for the new planting of the following year.

The Lord in His discourse is answering those who would say, “It’s not time yet,” with “It is always time to reap.” The planting of God’s truth is never tied to a season.

There is no cycle of seasons when it comes to the cultivation of the gospel. We are never too young or too old to share the good news of Christ. The little girl can take her neighborhood playmate with her to Vacation Bible School; the old man can bring along his checkers buddy to Sunday morning church.

There never is an inappropriate time to stand up for the Lord. Oh, we may not grab them by the ears and beat salvation into their soul. But it’s never wrong to sow the seeds of Christ through the quiet example of a righteous life, the touch of a ministering friend, the respectful silence of a listening ear.

The farmer must wait for spring to plant his seeds, and he must patiently wait for autumn to harvest the crop planted, but for the Christian the fields are *always* ready, for both planting and harvesting. ♦

