

The Earth Is Ripe

by Steve Mays

The sermon emphasizes the importance of being a light in the world and reaching out to a dying world with the love of God.

Duration: 25:58

Scripture: John 4:35

Topics: "Evangelism", "Discipleship"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of reaching out to a dying world, highlighting the urgency of the time to reap the harvest and the need for laborers in God's work. It calls for a focus on loving the Lord, imitating Christ's example, and glorifying God in all aspects of life to be a shining light in the world.

Transcript

Well, great to have you and great to be here. Let's open our Bibles and let's take a look at Revelation chapter 14 tonight we're going to pick up and take the whole chapter and so we're going to be taking a look at Armageddon and We're going to be taking a look at six six six and some of the other things we're going to be looking at tonight But this morning want to draw your attention to Revelation Chapter 14 and we like to take a look at verse 14 and 15 and Really the importance of reaching out to a dying world It says in Revelation chapter 14 Verse 14 and I looked and behold a white cloud and upon the cloud one that set like the Son of Man having on his head a golden crown and in his hand a sharp sickle and Another angel came out of the temple crying with a loud voice to him that said on the cloud Thrust in the sickle and reap for the time has come Underline that the time has come For thee to reap for the harvest of the earth is ripe and underline the harvest of the earth is ripe Jesus went on to say in John 4 35 Say not ye There are four months then cometh the harvest behold, I say unto you lift up your eyes and look on the fields and They are white ready to harvest so Christ is saying don't look down the road Right now is where God wants you to look and one last verse in Matthew chapter 9 Verse 37 then saith he unto the disciples the harvest truly is plenteous or Abundant, but the laborers are few Pray ye therefore the Lord of harvest that he will send forth laborers and to his harvest father We pray that God that you would do that right now that you would give us a great Understanding that father only you can put within the heart of your people a desire to do your work And so we thank you that God the time is short and that God as we look around the world No doubt you're coming quickly. So give us the passion and the heart to see your heart in Jesus name Amen, when you look around the world in which you live today You look at things Absolutely fallen apart and you can look just within the church leadership within the church families It's an amazing thing that one out of

two Christians are being divorced and why because once again not looking to the Lord not taking God's counsel Not willing to understand the commitment that really is involved We find our kids being taken away by so many things and Oftentimes because we are so busy trying to make a living or make an impact in the world in which we live We missed the kids in the heart of what they're going through and then it comes to leadership and oftentimes We get involved in God begins to use us and we forget the most important thing Humility and we begin to go after fame and because of these things we find that so many people are just perishing and the heart oftentimes is just to make it through a day and Jesus was trying to tell his disciples.

Listen, don't look four months down the road Learn to look every day as an opportunity in your life Start looking right now at your marriage or at your business or at your own personal life and Ask God to do a work in your heart and then the passage in Revelation is a great passage Because the time was now going to come He is now going to bring judgment upon the world and Jew tells us that he said he comes with 10,000 of his saints to execute judgment upon the ungodly and so there's a moment that Christ has reached out a time of grace and a time of love But there also comes a time that God is going to deal with this wicked world And so in my heart I believe that God's called you and I to make a stand to begin to shine and to really have great victory in and through our lives in a very powerful way and I believe that we are to shine and we are to be the light and We are to be the salt and we should be able to have such a conviction that we can pick people by our very Lifestyle not by being weird or anything else but people would know that they could come to us or people could look at us and Understand this is what real Christianity really is and it's not happening very often And that's exactly what God wants you to know the importance of being a great great great light And there are times that we need to warn I think of a mother Warning her kids not to run out into the street. That's not a mean thing. That's a very loving thing That's something of a mother's heart Wanting her children to be able to live a fullness of life And so yes, the mother might once in a while get upset or have to discipline the child But he's going to save that child But what about a father that sets down with a daughter and begins to explain what men? Sometimes you really want is that a controlling father or a possessive father? Or is that a real loving father and from a daughter standpoint? No doubt that's controlling and that's being possessive But from the father's heart he's trying to bring this woman into the world that she would not be hurt or Used by other men and so many times in our lives God is going to warn you or encourage you and here we have a passage that he's now saying It's time the time's up and the sickle is about ready to drop in and we have a moment Or maybe a few years or wherever it's going to happen to really make a difference in this world And I believe you really can I heard an interesting story the other day It's a great little story just about these two battleships, and it's a true story a sign to training squadron that have been out and see Maneuvering in heavy weather and for many days and in serving on one of these battleships the watch the bridge at night fell and the visibility was really poor because of fog and so the Captain decided to remain on the bridge and just keep an eye on everything and after a while the darkness fell and the Lookout on the wing reported light bearing on the starboard bow.

It is steady or moving Stern the captain called out the look men replied steady captain Which means we are on a dangerous collision course with another ship the captain then called Once again for the signalman to signal the ship we are on a collision course with you I want you to turn 20 degrees right now The light came back and said listen you need to turn 20 degrees I'm not going to turn well the captain just came apart He said I want you to send another message you tell this man that I'm a captain And he needs to do exactly what I tell him tell him to turn this thing 20 degrees and the reply came back I'm a seaman and I'm telling you you need to turn 20 degrees or you're gonna crash and by this time Boy, the captain

had it started cussing going crazy. He says you tell that man whoever he is I'm the captain of a battleship and he better turn 20 degrees and Back came the light and it was very simply I'm a lighthouse turn 20 degrees You know So we turn 20 degrees and I'm telling you it just stuck with me in such a powerful way that you can be a lighthouse in your heart you need to make a Tremendous stand and shine for the glory of God and when you're a shining for the light You're gonna shine for truth and you're gonna have a conviction and you dare not move From that conviction and there are be moments that your children try to move you and there might be times that your spouse Wants to move you but if you're in God's Word and you know what God's calling you to do Then you must be like Elijah as for me and my house We are going to serve the Lord so we need to make a decision Are we going to compromise or are we going to hold on to what we really believe now? We might lose the kids or we might lose the business But I cannot move because God's called me to be a lighthouse and there's always going to be an obstacle coming but you have an answer and so often the church is beginning to pull away from the Foundations and people are becoming shipwrecked all over the place And I think we need to understand the importance of what friendships all about I hear it all the time Why really love people? Well, if a mother loves her child, she's going to warn that child and if a father loves that daughter He's going to warn that daughter, but I think about Moses. He was the best friend Israel ever had now They didn't want to listen to him.

They griped and murmured and complained But when they listened to Moses, they were able to see the blessing of God and inherit so much of the promise And then I think again not only of Moses, but what about sometimes the prophets? They were the best friends of the kings of the southern kingdom and the northern kingdom and we know according to the Bible None of them like to listen to the prophets because they told him what were the truth? They said to the northern kingdom You guys are going to perish by the Assyrians if you don't repent and they hated that in fact They threw him in jail. They put him in prison They persecuted them but those Prophets lived for the glory of God and they went in and stood before a king and they spoke the truth and they didn't care in fact They did care they cared so much They were willing to die and the southern kingdom the same thing if you guys don't repent Babylon's going to take you out and so the best friend of the kings were the prophets But the kings didn't think so and then I think of Christ he was the best friend this world ever knew he wept over Jerusalem and he said if you would have known this night why I came and now the pain you're gonna go through But they wouldn't listen the Pharisee the scribes They wouldn't listen because they did not want to change their lifestyle But the greatest of all I think is Ezekiel and if you have your Bibles turn with me to Ezekiel 33 verse 1 and I want to read this to you and then we'll give you five things to think about before you go home Ezekiel 33 verses 1 through 7 and I want you to mark this down Because I believe this is exactly what you need to do as parents as business as a church and as leaders in your community It says in Ezekiel 33 verse 1 speaking of the watchman Again, the word of the Lord came unto me saying son of man speak to the children of thy people Say unto them when I bring the sword upon a land if the people of the land take a man of their coast Set him for their watchman. In other words Ezekiel I want you to teach Israel to raise up watchmen to put them on the walls and to Understand the time and the seasons they're living in and when they see the enemy come or they see the Lord coming They can begin to speak out and they can blow a trumpet and we see three different things verse 3 If when he sees the sword come upon the land, he blows the trumpet and warns the people good Then whosoever Heareth the trumpet in verse 4 and take it not warning if the sword come and take him away His blood shall be upon his own head Understand I blow the trumpet.

I share my heart I share God's Word people don't want to listen now It's between them and God I can live with that verse 4 and whosoever hears the trumpet Sound and take not the warning that blood will be upon

his own head verse 5 He hears the sound of the trumpet and took not the warning his blood shall be upon him but he that taketh the warning shall deliver his soul second if I share and Speak out and you hear the word and run to God and receive from God you're going to be saved and still I'm not responsible because I Faithfully have blown the trumpet here verse 6 is a killer but the conjunction if the watchman me or someone else see the sword come and blow not the trumpet and The people be not warned if the sword come and take any person from among them He is taken away in his iniquity But his blood will I require at the watchman's hand if I'm afraid to blow the trumpet Like they did in Hitler's day The church didn't stand up and then once again all the people died Because the church was too afraid and we have the very same thing happening today The church is so afraid of the government coming in and the church is so afraid to speak the Word of God Because they're going to lose people Then the blood will be upon the pastors and upon the leaders and upon the country here in which we live We must be faithful to God.

He says in verse 7 so thou o son of man I've set thee as a watchman into the house of Israel Therefore pointing back for thou shall hear the word at my mouth and warn them From me in other words you need to speak and so parents you need to speak your kids are not going to listen But you must speak and listen you single people you need to listen To what God is saying to you and you that are business owners? You need to listen and speak the Word of God and when I look at this I realize We have an opportunity and a great challenge to change this world now you say well, that's impossible I don't believe so I believe that one by one people can begin to make a difference You know if you could win your family to God it would win another family to God if you could win that child That child is going to leave another child to God, but it starts with me I need to make a commitment and to do that.

I think there are five things I want to share with you And I want you to really think about What you can do to make a difference in your community in your home and in your personal life to win People to Jesus Christ to blow the trumpet, and I think very simply all of us can do this so number one very simply It says here that I am to have a loving Lord in other words I want to be the light of the world L-I-G-H-T and the first L stands for loving the Lord I'm to love the Lord with all my heart now very simply all I know that but listen It says in Matthew 22 verse 37 Jesus said unto him thou shall love the Lord thy God With all thy heart with all thy soul and with all thy might now listen to what he's saying He is saying that the number one thing in my life To be the light is to have the gift of love in my heart now the other day Went to look at for furniture don't like shopping don't think it's in a man's DNA to go shopping I think God put that in women's heart I know exactly what I want to do.

I know where I want to go I want to grab it and get out my wife meanders, and she just kind of helplessly Meanders and gets pulled into things and that's what women do they know what's going on, but it's kind of therapy for them It's nightmare for us guys, but we went shopping and so on our day off We went and she wanted to look at furniture, and I don't like that because it means money It means changing a pillow means changing the couch means buying new carpet new walls buy a new house We can't you know I understand where that goes that little 995 you know pillow can cost you \$99,000 when it's all said and done, so I just want to cut it right there We don't need a pillow, but she looks at me. You haven't been around for weeks I want a pillow and so I just died so we went in this furniture place And we're looking and all of a sudden she finds what she wants and she comes look at this, and it was Unbelievable it was a great piece of furniture And so I walked up to the guy, and I said I'd like to buy these two chairs He goes oh, no we got to keep the family together I Said keep what together we got to keep this family together this family goes We can't divide a family, and I'm saying okay, okay Help me Lord here and all of a sudden something kicked in and I just begin to really have a heart for this guy He says you know the family's to

stay together I said well I like the family all to come to my house really cheap and We went back and forth I said how about if I take three quarters of the family you take the other family He says no. I really really want to keep the family together I said okay, how about if you give me everything for 70% off you take the whole family I said I'll take the whole family if you throw the tax in 70% off.

I've never done that I said you want the family together or not Well, let me call he came back. He said you can have it for 70% off I said I noticed one of the Ottomans and miss it he goes yeah, we don't know where's that I said I can't take the family There's an orphan. Where's the orphan because I don't know I said I can't do that.

I destroyed the family I said Go call Frisco and see if you can find that piece of her because that's where it came from Frisco He says okay, so he came running over because I found the other family I said put the family together for free and bring the other kid in you know so So we walked out with a great deal for 70% off and my wife set me down She goes I've never ever ever seen you love anybody that way in your life And so I gave him a book and the Lord really kind of has been speaking to my heart about just loving people number one They have to know that you love them people need to know your wife needs to know you love her and Your children need to know you love them in your heart your soul in your mind every facet of your life Talks about the Lord feels the Lord knows the Lord senses the Lord and when you walk into the house It's not bitterness and greed and anxiety and uptightness and yelling shut up to the kids It's having a passion and a heart to win those kids and if those kids do not see the love of God all the preaching is not going to happen and When I get in trouble with my wife, and I need to repent I know what I have to do I need to walk over to her and put my hand on her shoulder show back away Because she knows if I touch her that's the first thing that's going to break a woman you touch her life It's going to begin to break down So I'll hold her shoulder and I'll say I'm sorry and she'll begin to smile But all of a sudden if I say hey, honey, I'm sorry. It doesn't work But if I reach out and hold her she knows I'm loving her and this thing's for real I want to encourage you if you're going to win the world People need to know that you love God more than anything else more than material things more than fame More than your ministry more than anything else that your love for God when Rob and I hang out together We love God more than anything else. We take counsel together.

We hang out together. It's all about God It's our love for each other and for the Lord Jesus Christ number one number two Not only L, but the second is I for light. I must imitate the Lord I must imitate the Lord it says in first Peter 2 21 For even here unto were you cold because Christ also suffered for us and here it is Leaving us an example why that we should follow now, how did he do it? He turned his cheek.

He walked a second mile He let them nail them to the cross into the cross So he said that he loved us and now he showed us that he loves us sometimes you go home or you're in business and you tell people you love God and you treat people bad or Sometimes you say to your kids Hey, I really love you and then you begin to yell and cuss at them that they can't understand that they need to see the love of God in eyes and ears and feet and flesh and the Bible says Christ came and Tabernacled among us we were able to hold him and see him and touch him and experience him And when your kids come or someone comes and they hear you talking about the love of God But you have no time for them. That's not what Christ did He ministered he touched he shared by example And he would make the moment and take the time and he walked in their footsteps the example So in my life, I can tell people I love God But when they see me at home watch HBO R rated stuff and they hear me talking about the love of God It doesn't make sense to your kids when all of a sudden you say honey I love God, but you need you're an idiot Doesn't make sense and the woman can't compute that you really do love God. You love yourself You don't love her if I say that

I love God, then there must be an example Let me give you a great one Paul on the way to Rome the ship sunk You remember a Malta his hands were handcuffed.

He was now in the water because the ship was broken up He went into shore he began to gather the wood he built a fire and in the building of the fire he got bit by the serpent and People around him were saying this guy is going to go down because the gods are against him But the Bible says when he didn't die the people changed their minds and they came to Christ why? Paul shared the love of God But he showed them what love looks like love is picking up wood and love is set in a fire and love is not being weird About being bond and love gets bit but doesn't react as shakes it off. That's the example and So number one Oh God help me to love the Lord with all my heart Put in him first number to help me to set the example in my office here outside Starbuck no matter where I go. I need to set that example number three.

I need to thirdly glorify the Lord so Lig I need to glorify the Lord and what that means is they must see my life Giving glory to God it says here in 1st Corinthians 10 31 Whether therefore we eat or drink Whatsoever we do we do all for the glory of God now. This is what it means well Stephen I love God and Stephen I'll be a missionary for God, but all of a sudden we get there, and it's all about me No, it has to be about him. Do I have the freedom to do what I want Yes, if I went down to In-N-Out got me right now.

I said double double second service got me a three by three animal style protein right now and Took a bottle of wine right over there and poured me a little glass of wine and had that would it be wrong and the? Answer is no I can do all things in Christ But it's wrong in my life because it will stumble you there you are coming in you're listening to me in the radio Sniffing that little wine down with that double double triple. What's he doing? Well you can do it, but I can't do it, but more important is it gonna bring glory to God What is it gonna? Do is it gonna sharpen my mind is that gonna cloud my mind is it gonna change my emotions? So anything that's gonna change me or make me not give glory to God. I don't want to do it Maybe put it in practice

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