

# The Mission

## Week 4: The Church's Mission

### HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

There are four crucial components for a group to maintain its health: Word, prayer, relationships, and reaching out. In this guide, you will study the biblical passage in three steps: observation, interpretation, and application. As the group leader, you are free to use any part of this guide that can assist you in achieving this goal. This week, we are studying the concept that **reaping the blessing of the harvest requires faithfulness in God's mission.**

### CONNECT

- What's something in your life—work, calling, or relationship—that feels energizing rather than draining? Why do you think that is?
- Have you ever had a moment when you realized an opportunity was right in front of you, even though you hadn't noticed it before?
- What usually helps you trust someone more: what they say, what they do, or a mix of both?

### INTRODUCTION

This final reading on the topic of God's mission in the world from the Gospel of John grounds our understanding of the Church's calling. There are so many good things that we *can* do in the world, but the thing that we *must* do is what Christ has commanded of us as our King. As we read this short passage today, take time to consider well the calling into God's mission as the highest calling man can enjoy in this life. As we think together on this matter, prayerfully ask the Spirit to show you areas where you must grow in this regard.

### OBSERVATIONS & INTERPRETATION

**Read:** John 4:35

**Discuss:** Jesus challenges a common proverb about waiting for harvest. What contrast is Jesus drawing out between human expectations and God's timing, and why is that important in this moment with the disciples?

**Read:** John 4:36-38

**Discuss:** Jesus speaks of sowing and reaping as shared work. According to the text, who sows, who reaps, and how does this challenge individualistic views of ministry or spiritual success?

**Read:** John 4:38

**Discuss:** Jesus tells the disciples they are reaping that for which they did not labor. How does this statement shape our understanding of grace, inheritance, and participation in God's mission?

### APPLICATION

- In verse 34, Jesus says His "food" is to do the will of the one who sent Him and accomplish his work. What does this metaphor reveal about Jesus' relationship to the Father and His understanding of mission?
- At the end of the passage, Jesus states, "Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor." As we were all once separated from God by sin, we were all also once fruit of someone else's harvest. How does this shape our motivation to go all-in on God's mission?
- In a parallel passage in Luke 10:2-3, we are told that the harvest is more plentiful than those who labor in it, and also that as we are sent on God's mission, we are sent as sheep in the midst of wolves. How do these realities undermine our desire to be on God's mission in the harvest?

### PRAYER

- Pray together that our apprehensions and fears concerning the mission of God would turn to joy to labor in his harvest.