

(A message on challenging people to go into ministry)

Title: Laborers For the Harvest

Text: Matthew (9:35-10:31) (Use 9:35-38)

I would like you to open your Bibles, please, to Matthew chapter 9. If it seems that the messages in the last few weeks have been dealing with discipleship and commitment, it is because ^{perhaps} it is because Jesus has so much to say in the Gospel of Matthew about commitment ^{and} ~~And we want to learn what Jesus taught.~~ ^{Disciple} ~~And we want to learn the principles that Jesus taught, his disciples.~~ ^{and} ~~and we want to learn the principles that Jesus taught, his disciples.~~ ^{and} ~~and we want to learn the principles that Jesus taught, his disciples.~~

Today we want to look at the subject of "LABORERS FOR THE HARVEST." And there are three verses in this passage that are often very familiar to christians. But, the large majority of what I am going to read is not. I would like to begin at Verse 36 of Matthew chapter 9 and continue reading on into chapter 10. Our subject: LABORERS FOR THE HARVEST....

(READ Matthew (9:35-10:31)) (Use 35-38)

This is God's Call To The Church - God is calling us to ^{move out into the fields to labor}

(We have read this extended portion of scripture because it deals with Laborers for the harvest. ^{all who are serving the Lord in the church and community. what ever you are doing for the Lord})

(LET US LOOK TO THE LORD IN A MOMENT OF PRAYER)

LABORERS FOR THE HARVEST....In this portion of scripture, Jesus is sending forth his twelve.

(IA) Now, first of all, I would like to share with you, before we began to look at the principles he outlines for laborers, I would like to share with you one important point.

What Jesus says to the twelve does not necessarily apply to us today. WHY DO I SAY THAT? If you will notice down in chapter 10 beginning at Vs 5 He tells the twelve not to go to the Gentles, or into the cities of the Samaritans. That was not ^{time} of the Great Commission that he gave to the twelve and the church. At the Great Commission He said to begin at Jersulem, and go into all Judea, and Samary and unto the uter most parts of the world...

But here we have a restricted commission that he gave to twelve men. It is to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. It is to proclaim a message. A particular ~~kind~~ kind of message. And that is THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND. That is the message that John the Baptist proclaimed. When John went into Prison, the Bible tells us in Matthew 4 that from that time forth, Jesus began to preach, "REPENT, FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND."....

But, following the death and resurrection of Christ, the message is no longer "THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND". IT IS GO AND PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY SINGLE PERSON."

Matthew deals with the subject of the Kingdom and the King in a way that no other Gospel writer does. For example: the Phrase "KINGDOM OF HEAVEN" only appears in Matthew. Matthew was concerned about a king and his kingdom.

But, the commission to these twelve is in relation to their ministry with the Lord during the time that he was here before his death and resurrection. But, later on in his ministry, Jesus will announce to the 12 that he is going to Jerusalem to die. He will die on a cross and his body will be resurrected. And that is a different set of circumstance in what we have here. Following the death and resurrection, the Great commission came. Which is to go to every person, all the world, make disciples of all nations, But here it is restricted. And that is important for us to know.

For example, in Verse 8, I am not sure how many of you have been involved in raising the dead, lately. But, I would say, that no one here today has ever experienced "RAISING THE DEAD"....

Now, if you have, I will be glad to talk with you after the service.

And, also, I don't believe any of you have healed the sick. I believe God heals the sick.....I believe that many of us have had prayers of faith that have healed the sick....But, I don't believe we have direct power to heal the sick.....If you have, I would be interested in talking with you....

"Casting out demons"....Maybe you have done this. I don't know...Maybe you have. That is possible. Freely you received, freely give."

Many of the circumstance of this passage do not apply to us. But there are principles of the harvest that Jesus uses with his twelve that He also continues to use. And even the Apostle Paul uses....PRINCIPLES OF THE HARVEST.....^{SO}

(2A)

Now, I would like to share with you a few things about laborers, today, LABORERS IN THE HARVEST.

all Under The Topic of

(1B) First of all, ~~I would like to talk to you about~~ motive. MOTIVE!....

You know, God is the judge of motive....God knows why you do² things you do. And often times people are involved in the work of the Lord, on the bases of wrong motives. WHAT ARE GOD'S MOTIVES FOR BEING A LABORER IN THE HARVEST. I believe there are four indicated here by Jesus. FOUR BASIC CHRISTIAN MOTIVE IN BEING INVOLVED IN THE HARVEST.

(1C) Number one, in chapter 9 verse 36 we read this: "and seeing the ~~multitudes~~ multitudes, he felt compassion for them.".....

Open Friend

The compassion of Christ is the highest motive of all christian service. There is nothing greater. Paul wrote in 2 Corinthinas 5, "the love of Christ constrains us." It motivates ~~us~~ ^{us}

What motivates you to serve the Lord? Maybe not ~~anything~~ anything?

Maybe you are not serving Him.

But, I hope the principle that motivates

~~But, what does~~ ^{should} motivate us to serve the Lord? The highest motive ^{YOU} ~~is~~ is the compassion of Christ.

And notice, it says: "~~when he~~ saw the multitudes"....Now, I believe we should see individual people and be concerned about them. But, there is, also, the burden Jesus had when he saw the multitudes. When he saw a ~~multitude~~ ^{multitude} in need of himself. He was moved with compassion.

And we too, if we are really right with God, and are sinsistive to the Holy Spirit, we can not look at a world that doesn't know Christ and not be moved with compassion.....

Folks, if we can hear statistics and reports from mission fields all over the world about the need of people for the Gospel, both here at home and abroad, and not be moved, there is something wrong with us....

~~THE END~~

The compassion of Christ is the highest motive of christian service/
"He saw the multitudes and he was moved with compassion.

Most of us do not see very many non christians. And maybe that is why we are not moved. But, if you will go out any day of the week and just stand down on the street corner and look at the multitudes. People who are without Christ. They are on our compasses. *They are in the world here* ~~There in the United States.~~
Over and over again we hear reports of those who have stopped going to church Attendance is going down. It dropped ¹⁹ 9% last year. People have stopped going to church. You go to any large metropolitan area, today, in the United States and only 1 out off ~~10~~ ²⁰ people will be in church on Sunday. 19 out off 20 people are not attending church anywhere. Not counting the fact that multitudes who ~~are~~ are going to church are not hearing the Gospel of Christ.

My friends, when ~~he~~ *you* saw the multitudes he was moved with compassion. And I believe in my heart that it is the motive of all motives that should ~~compell~~ *plentiful* believers to be concerned about a ~~plenteous~~ harvest.

(26) Then secondly, I notice another motive here in Vs 36. And that is the condition of the people ~~you~~ saw. It says he was moved with compassion because "they ~~were~~ *were* distressed and downcast, like sheep without a shepherd."

In other words they ~~lacked~~ *were lost* strength. They lacked ~~unity~~ *salvation*. ~~They were~~ *distressed* all ~~scratched~~ *and* ~~lacked~~ a leader. Jesus saw people in their confession ~~and~~ He saw them as though they didn't know where to ~~turn~~ turn next. And the Bible tells us that "Satan has blinded the minds of them that believe not. Lest the blessed light of the Gospel shall shine into them."

And if our Gospel be hide, remember it is hide from the lost...The condition of the people of this world is a motive for the laborer to be involved *in the harvest field*

(30) But, third, I notice in Vs 37 that the character of the harvest is a motive that Jesus gives. He said to his disciples "the harvest is plentiful." The harvest is plentiful. *In John it says that the fields are white unto harvest*

You know, there is a lot of folks to reach, isn't there? There is a lot to be done. And some one ~~where~~ *will* come along every now and then, and say:

"Well, I don't think there is anything that God has for me to do. ~~And~~ I don't think I could do this. Or, I could do that."

My friend, the harvest is ~~plentiful~~ ^{plentiful}. It always has been. It is a ~~plentiful~~ ^{plentiful} harvest. *We need to look up and see the field ripe for Harvest.*

(4) There is a fourth motive, here, that I see. And that is the challenge that Jesus gave to the laborers, themselves.

This fascinates me, for Jesus said in Verse 38: "Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."

Notice Jesus commands us to 'pray' or 'baseech' that God would send forth laborers. And isn't it interesting that in chapter 10 he starts right out by saying what he has called ~~unto~~ ^{unto} him, his twelve disciples, and Vs 5 says, "these twelve he sent forth"...

Now, isn't it interesting that the people ~~he~~ ^{we} ask to pray that the Lord would send out laborers are the very ones ~~He~~ ^{He} is sending forth.....

I wonder, how much praying ~~do~~ ^{do} we do about the ~~need~~ ^{need} of the world..or for that matter the need of ~~the~~ ^{the} world, for the Gospel? How much praying do we do that God will send out laborers? Maybe, if we did more praying we would find ourselves going? PRAY THAT GOD WOULD SEND FORTH LABORERS INTO HIS HARVEST. And this is a responsibility that Jesus lays upon his disciples...PRAY....

(2) NOW, HAVING LOOKED AT THE MOTIVES, I WOULD NOW LIKE TO LOOK AT SOME PRINCIPLES IN REGARDS TO THE METHOD BY WHICH LABORERS ARE CALLED.

You set there and you ask: "Pastor, are you really talking to me?" "How would I possible know whether I am called or not?" "How do I know if I should be involved"?

showed Well, I would like to share with you three things, here, that the Lord ~~showed~~ ^{showed} me out-off his Word.

(1) One, was something I just mentions. The method by which laborers are called ^{is} in an answer to prayer. And I ask you ^{the} question: HOW MUCH HAVE YOU PRAYED ABOUT WHAT GOD WANTS TO DO IN YOUR LIFE? HOW MUCH HAVE YOU CAREFULLY, HONESTLY, SENSERELY, REGARDLESS OF WHAT YOUR BUSINESS IS OR YOU ARE DOING, HOW MUCH HAVE YOU PRAYED ABOUT WHAT GOD WANTS YOU TO DO?

I believe that God will lay upon your heart, in prayer, the impression of his will. I believe that the principle of the ~~Bible~~ ^{Bible} is to wait upon the Lord, to be of good courage, and he will strengthen ~~my~~ ^{your} heart. That God will reveal his will to the person who waits on him.

Maybe, the reason why many of us are not ~~going~~ ^{witnessing and ministering}, is because we are not praying. HOW MUCH DO WE PRAY? HOW MUCH ARE WE CONCERNED ABOUT DOING WHAT GOD WANTS US TO DO?

(26) There is something else I notice about his method in calling ~~of~~ laborers. It is by his own action. Not ours....

Notice, Vs 1, "And having summoned His twelve disciples....."

Notice Vs 5: "These twelve Jesus sent out....."

Now, I would like you to turn over to Acts chapter 13....Acts chapter 13. And I would like to show you this point from ~~the Bible~~ what is considered to be the bases for Christian missions. Acts 13....This is the sending forth of Paul and Barnabas.....Acts 13 beginning at Vs 1...

~~Professors~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

OM

"Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was ~~there~~, prophets and teachers."....Now, according to Ephesians chapter 4, there are four kinds of gifted men that God has given to the body of Christ. There are Apostle, there are prophets, there are evangelist, and there are Pastor-teachers. That is one word in the original language: PASTOR-TEACHER...

In other words: Prophets, Apostles, Evangelist, and teachers....Those are the four gifted men that God has given to the body of Christ.

Now, God has given many gifts to the Body. But, you must make a distinction between "things" and "people". God has given to his church ~~things~~ "people"...to further his work. He has given to his whole body "spiritual gifts". Whereby we help one another. This is found in I Corinthians chapter 12....We are not talking, here, ~~about~~ those spiritual gifts. We are talking about people who are God's gift..to..the Body of Christ.

Now, notice, two of these four are in the church at Antioch: Prophets and teachers. And then we have ~~5~~ ^{5 men} of ~~them~~ listed....Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manean, and Saul. Two of them: Barnabas and Saul are the ones under discussion.....

Now, five men were prophets and teachers at Antioch. Now, notice what it says, Vs 2: "And while they were ministering to the Lord"..... And "they", the prophets and teachers...five of them....and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

The method by which God calls laborers into his harvest is by his own action and direction. God....calls...individuals...

And I hope that I have never taught you that you can go into the Lord's service, you can be involved fulltime in the harvest field somewhere, without knowing that God has called you. I hope that I have never taught that. The Bible teaches that the Lord calls people. And he is the one that sends us forth.....That is very, very important.

Now, I have heard many people teach that it is the church which sends forth the laborers. That is not true. Notice, it again. As they...these five men? were ministering to the Lord and fasting? the Holy Spirit??

(Read Vs 2-4)

Now, turn over to chapter 14 of Acts....Chapter 14. I would like you to notice Vs 4. This is still Paul's first missionary journey. It says: "But the multitude of the city was divided; and some sided with the Jews, and some with the apostles."....Apostles....The first time that Saul and Barnabas were ever called Apostles is in Acts 14:4.

Notice, they were prophets and teachers. And the Holy Spirit sent them out from the five in Antioch. God called them and sent them. And then they are called Apostles.

The word "apostle" simply means "one who is sent forth". Did you know that there are more apostles in the Bible than the 12 disciples. A lot more. In Romans 16 you can read about a couple....Apostle...Barnabas was an apostle. Saul was an apostle. There were many that were called apostles. And what was there job? They were sent forth. They were ones who by very nature of the case are ones who are going. They are traveling. They were sent forth.

Now, come back to Matthew chapter 10...Matthew chapter 10...

The Bible says in Vs 2 that the names of these 12 men and it calls them Apostles. One's who are sent forth.

The point that I have taken a great deal of time to make is this: the call of God, that call by which he takes out from other responsibilities, people for his work, is a personal call from God, himself, to that individual. It is God who calls. And the person is involved. And in the case of the church in Antioch the prophets and the teachers as they were waiting before God, discerned also that the Spirit of God had laid his hand upon Barnabas and Saul.....And they were sent forth for the work that God had called them.

Now, here we have an example of Jesus sending forth 12 men. And they were the 12 Apostles....But in I Corinthians 15 in talking about the post resurrection appearance of Christ, we have mentioned that he was seen of the 12. Then of all the other Apostles. There were more apostles than the 12. And the principle, here, that is often missed, is the fact that the word "Apostle" means "to send forth"....

Ad. Cogan & reward

Do you remember Jesus after his resurrection saying to his disciples:

"As my Father has sent me, so I send you."?

We use ~~that~~ so much as a missionary passage. And it should be. But the word is "Apostle." As my Father has made me an Apostle, so I make you, Apostles. I am sending you forth. And the whole point of this is that when a laborer goes into the harvest, he ~~is~~ under the commission of God. And no one else. It isn't because Mom and Dad wanted me to go. It ~~is~~ ^{isn't} because my friends encouraged me. It isn't because others are doing it. It ~~is~~ ^{isn't} because I thought I should. It is because God has called me. God has laid this upon my heart. And I know that God is calling me.

Laborers for the harvest are called by God, himself.

(3C) And I notice something else about ^{the method of} his call in Matthew 10. In Vs 1, it says that he gave them power. God never calls anyone without providing ability for the task. It is not our ability. It is God's ability. He gave them power. Maybe their power was a little different than ours. But there is no less power in human vessels today than there was then....God still gives the power of the Holy Spirit....

And God is calling us.

And if ~~God has called you.~~ God will provide all the power and ability you need.....LABORERS FOR THE HARVEST.

The Third Purpose
(30) Now, ~~secondly,~~ and I have mentioned this, but notice again the message they were to preache.... It is found down in Vs 5 to 7. He said "don't go to the Gentiles, don't go to the Samaritans; but go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

And I just point this out: You know, the message that we are to preach is to lost people.....LOST PEOPLE.....~~And notice he calls them lost sheep.~~

And the message is: THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND.

you to see
(4B) Now, in the fourth place, I would like ~~to indicate to you that from this passage I believe Jesus outlines the manner in which people are sent forth.~~ And *you* does it in several ways.

(1C) First of all, in Vs 9 to 15 he talks about provisions for the journey.

And he indicates that you may not have everything you have now. In fact, there are many things that might have to go. And as you go, God will provide your needs. For as he says very clearly in Vs 10: "the worker is worthy of his support.".....Trusting God....

I don't know ~~if~~ God has called you. But there is one thing I do know. I know this every time I stand before an audience. That God has called more people than those who are answering that call.

A group of the body of Christ this size cannot set for yeears as spectators in the great harvest field. God is calling more people than are answering the call. *Not just professin men and women* And to me it is exciting. Because when the Holy Spirit gets ~~awholed~~ of us...when we make ourself available to God. And we say, "God I will go where ever you want me to go." When we make that gomitment When we let Go of the hold that we have on ourselves. When we give ourselves to God. We are in better calling distance than we have ever been before. And folks the need of the hour is for every christian to total dedicate himself to Christ. All of his interest...all of his ambitions...And from that group of available people, God will now call out clearly those who he wants for his harvest ~~in the~~ fields around the world.

The professional ministry

out

And if we are going to be a N.T. Church, if we are going to be the body of Christ as God wants, we will be constantly sending out people. No matter how old they ~~are~~, or, how young they are.....

Now, I don't know if God has called you or not. But I do know that when we make ourselves available, when we make that total commitment, you are now in a place where you can understand and hear the call of God.

I hope you understand that.....And it may be sacrifice as God ~~indicates~~

indicates in these verses. It may mean that we will have to trust God for every provision. But God will meet the needs....TRUST IN HIS PROVISIONS.

(20) And I notice something else, In verse 16 to 23 He discusses the possibility of persecution.....Persecution.....It must be something that

we should be ready to face...Persecution...And this challenges my heart.

Because we here in the United States are not under persecution like other places in the world. We have more of an opportunity than God has given to any nation on the face of the earth. And yet, many of you do absolutely nothing. You don't even talk to people about Christ. And now we have the freedom to do so.

It challenges my heart to read and hear about what other Christians are going through in this world. Many who are tortured...Many who suffer.. just for the sake of hearing or teaching the Word....Many who are called upon to deny the faith or die... And we sit here

But the thrilling thing to me is that in spite of persecution God is doing a wonderful work. Christians are involved and God's work is still going forth....

And I liked what Watchmen Need had to say in an article on sending forth laborers. He said this: The only way we will ever know who are the gifted men in the Body of Christ is only when the whole body makes themselves available to God.

And I thought: "HOW TRUE"....Only when Christians in a local assembly really come to grips with commitment. And everyone decides that this is the time, let's give our lives to Christ...then there is an atmosphere in which God can easily lay his hands upon the people and draw them forth....

We

and

and

into personal words

Must be involved - For God to call others

The Harroga

sending

in prayer

Making yourself available is such an important issue....Total commitment ~~to~~ Christ.....

(30) There is also something else I notice. In Verse 16-31 we have the promise of protection. Protection is guaranteed....

So, don't be afraid. God made the sparrows. He cared for them. He knows the very hairs of your head. And Vs 31 says: "Therefore do not fear; you are of more value than many sparrows."

Now, I want to close with these few thoughts.....Maybe you have wondered about commitment? And ~~maybe~~ you have wondered what it would mean. What will it mean one year from now or five years from now?

Vs 31 - ~~chp 10~~

Fear not for you are more valuable than many sparrows!...God knows what things we have need of before we ask him. We have nothing to fear. The Lord will send us forth. He will provide our needs. He will do for us what we can't understand at this point.

But we need to be open....available....committed....

And ~~folks~~ ^{dear friends} I know and I believe that God ^{wants to use all of us here} has ~~many folks~~ here today.

that he wants to use. The big issue is availability....Will we say: "God, I am willing to do anything you want me to do. I am willing to go anywhere you want me to go."

It is not ability, ^{not} God is asking for....It is availability....It is like Isaiah said: "HERE AM I, SEND ME".....Use me, God.

I hope you will be able to make that discassion with a clear conscience Yes, God. I AM WILLING TO GO WHERE EVER YOU WANT ME TO GO.....

LET US CLOSE IN PRAYER

The fields are white unto harvest. There are the folks out there in the world ~~not~~ ^{not} only you can reach.

6/2