Mathew Ch9v35-Ch10v42 - Sent Out

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Date: 06 March 2022

Preacher: Jonny Grant

[0:00] This morning, thanks Chris. Our reading this morning is taken from Matthew chapter 9 beginning at verse 35 and continuing on into 10 on to verse 8.

So that's Matthew 9 beginning at verse 35 and that's page 974 of the Church Bible. Matthew 9 verse 35.

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and illness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

Then he said to his disciples, the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.

Jesus called out, called his 12 disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and illness.

[1:20] These are the names of the 12 apostles. These 12 Jesus sent out with the following instructions.

Jesus sent out with the Holy Spirit, but the Lord of the apostles. Jesus sent out with them and gave them free to heal them and heal them. Jesus sent out with the Lord of the apostles. Jesus sent out with them, therefore, to the lost sheep of Israel. As you go, proclaim this message.

The kingdom of heaven has come near. Heal those who are ill. Raise the dead. Cleanse those who have leprosy. Drive out demons.

freely you have received freely give thanks Chris let's pray Father give us give us hearts that will listen carefully to your word today may words that may be familiar to us strike deep down into our lives so that we have a vision that you have that we are filled with your desires and priorities that they would shape how we live and how we go about our day to day

Father we've come in to this building in one way and we want to go out changed and transformed and so we ask that the power of the Holy Spirit would work in each of us individually and corporately as a church and do an amazing work in all of our lives may each one be truly changed today Amen well as we think about what we've seen on the news in these recent days and we see the desperate impact of war and the destruction it causes and we think about our own country and our own families and troubles that people are in we long to see change we long to see transformation we long that things would be different and I want to encourage us all today to say to us that we can all be part of an amazing change an amazing transformation in three simple ways by how we see how we pray and in how we obey in three simple steps by seeing as God wants us to see by praying the kind of prayers

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[5:44] God wants us to pray and by obeying the commands he gives us God can use us to bring about an eternal change to the community we are in and the world around us I truly believe it and I hope that we will see that this morning so the first thing that we're going to look at is seeing forget all of that seeing with compassion that's the first thing we want to think about when you walk around Carragoline imagine you're going into to Lidl's or into Dunn's or you're driving through the village how do you see the people around you maybe you see them as people who are to avoid just in case they have COVID maybe you think of them as frustrating because they're slowing you down of where you want to go or maybe you just see them as there to serve you to get you what you need how do you view people well when

Jesus looks at people he sees sheep look at verse 36 when he saw the crowds he had compassion on them because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd shepherd now sheep without shepherds wander we don't have to know too much about farming to know that they get lost and they get themselves into trouble they don't do very well on their own and people are no different in verse 36 he describes us as being harassed and helpless to be harassed is to be overcome with anxiety and fear it's the consequences of living a disordered life that has been corrupted by sin constantly overwhelmed and frantically trying to control our life and our future we're not at peace always searching never finding we live aimless and empty lives we're harassed but we're also helpless helpless to see how serious the situation actually is helpless to do anything about it because our sinful condition means that we're in danger of God's judgment and the problem is people cannot see it we're in a helpless situation on one of my mountain walks

I stopped to take in the views and just over to my right in the grassy heather I heard what I thought was a frog it was kind of like a croaking sound so I went wandering off to investigate and as I pulled back the grass all I could see was this beady little eye looking up at me it was a sheep almost submerged in the bark wrestling and struggling well that's how Jesus sees people no matter who they are where they come from what their background may be we are all wandering sheep harassed because of sinful choices and decisions and helpless to do anything about it but thankfully we have a compassionate shepherd because the response of

Jesus to these wandering leaderless sheep is compassion again look at verse 36 when he saw the crowds he had compassion compassion on them compassion is much more than just having concern for somebody or care for someone it's a deep feeling that churns within you from the inside and that feeling is not quelled until something is done it's an emotion a strong emotion that leads to action in other words it's feeling a need and wanting to alleviate that need as one writer put it the compassion of Jesus is his spontaneous reflex to move towards sinners and sufferers he is compelled into action he sees and he is moved to do something about it you see

Jesus is the shepherd that has come the shepherd we all need the prophet Ezekiel helps us to understand this you can keep your finger in Matthew and go back to Ezekiel the prophet if anybody has a page number that might help Ezekiel chapter 34 anyone got a page number no different bible sorry 866 thank you Ezekiel 34 and here God through the prophet Ezekiel is showing the damage that is caused to people where there is the absence of healthy leaders where people do not have the instruction and the love and the care of the Lord we'll pick it up in verse 4

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[11:58] God is speaking against those who've led people astray verse 4 you have not strengthened the weak or healed those who are ill or bound up the injured you have not brought back the strays or search for the lost you have ruled them harshly and brutally so they were scattered because there was no shepherd and when they were scattered they became food for all the wild animals my sheep wandered over all the mountains and over every high hill they were scattered over the whole earth and no one searched for them or looked for them verse 11 for this is what the sovereign Lord says I myself will search for my sheep and look after them as a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them so will I look after my sheep

I will rescue them from the places where they were scattered on the day of dark clouds and darkness verse 16 I will search for the lost and bring back the strays I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak but the sleek and the strong I will destroy I will shepherd the flock with justice let's go back to Matthew you see Jesus is making it abundantly clear that he is that shepherd he's saying I know your sin I see your suffering I feel deeply for your brokenness and disorder and I have come to meet that need you know as I watched that sheep wrestling and struggling as it slowly submerged beneath the bog

I was moved I reached down and grabbed a hold of that sheep and grabbed a hold of its horn and I just pulled with all my might taking it away from danger away from further harm and certain death these things how much more has God reached down with us through his mighty hand through his son Jesus he has seen people as harassed and helpless he has been compelled into action he has taken our sin and died for us he has risen from the dead and given us life he has given us his spirit so that we might be with him He has moved towards sinners and sufferers like us and with compassion he has helped us.

So as we want to see change and transformation in our community, amongst our families and within this dark, broken world, we need to see people with the compassion of Jesus.

To stop running around so frantically, running about doing our things and living my life the way I want to, but have our eyes open and see people with compassion and point them to a shepherd who alone can save.

[15:37] What brokenness there is. If we have our eyes open, what change we can bring.

So seeing, praying, the next step in seeing change in our world. Jesus moves from his metaphors, from sheep to one of harvest, from people who are helpless to a people who are now ready.

Because he tells us in verse 37 that the harvest is plentiful. As Jesus scans the crowds, he sees not just harassed and helpless sheep, but now he sees as if it were an orchard full of ripe fruit trees.

A harvest that's ready for picking, which tells us two things. That people are actually ready to hear. They're ready to hear the good news about Jesus and his kingdom.

The people that we bypass every day. They're fed up with empty promises and false hopes that the world offers. They're tired by the weight of expectation that they put on themselves and that everybody else puts on each other.

[17:02] People scrambling as they search for an identity, longing to be accepted, striving for some kind of purpose in life that somebody will say your life matters.

People are harassed and helpless, crushed and broken, and they're longing for somebody who would come and say to them, you have a saving king who will lift your burdens and will give rest to the weary.

There is one who will bind up your wounds, who will strengthen the weak, a shepherd king who has given his life for you that he might live.

people are ready to hear that message. And not only are they ready to hear, but people are ready to repent.

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They're ready to turn from themselves and turn to Christ because repentance is the door into God's kingdom. They just need to know how.

[18:14] They need somebody to come alongside them to share, to tell them of a saviour that will never fail them, who forgives all their past and gives them a secure future.

These sheep are ready to follow a shepherd. Rico Tice, who's an author and evangelist, put it like this.

He says, there is an increasing hostility to the gospel message today. But something else is going on too. There's also an increased hunger.

The same rising tide of secularism and materialism that rejects truth claims and is offended by absolute moral standards is proving to be empty and hollow.

And that means, excitingly, more and more people are hungering for the content of the gospel. You see, I can become very cynical.

[19:30] Cynical with the world and everything that's going on. But I need to see what Jesus sees. Rather than a barren land, we're in a fruitful orchard.

A plentiful harvest. Well, you see, if it's so plentiful, then where are all the new followers of Jesus?

Wrong question. There's a problem. Let's read verse 37. There's a problem.

He said to the disciples, the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. You see, the problem isn't out there with people.

The problem is here. There are few workers. There's a harvest that is ripe and ready, but there are few who are willing to go.

[20:44] And what I find incredible about this is Jesus doesn't come along with a big stick and berate us and scold us and say, I want you to do better and I want you to do more.

In grace, he simply says, look at verse 38, Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.

Couldn't be easier. could it? Rather than knock us down, Jesus says, Ask me. Come to me in prayer and ask me to raise up more workers.

Because our priority to the needs around us is not to start running more outreach events. Our response is not to go into a big recruitment drive.

It's not to guilt people into service or berating them into service, but to gather together and to pray for new workers. You see, this isn't our mission.

[21:55] We don't get to make it up. This is his mission. He is, verse 38, the Lord of the harvest. He's the one who's sovereign over all things.

He's the one that will change any heart so that they follow Christ. And he is the only one that can change or move any of us to do what he calls us to do.

And so, through prayer, we are depending on God to do what we can never do. And that is to send out workers.

Now, while we're all called to go and serve, and I deeply believe that, I think there is a particular need for full-time workers.

And by that, I mean pastors, teachers, evangelists, church planters, people who will specifically lead gospel work and equip their churches to do the same.

[23:01] That's the great need. There are people groups all over the world who remain unreached. There are towns scattered throughout Ireland without a gospel witness.

Carragaline is a town of 16,000 plus people. It's in need of more workers. And how is this huge need ever going to be met?

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Very simply, Christ says to us, ask, ask the Lord to provide and to send out.

So instead of getting frustrated and complaining about the lack of workers, pray. Instead of thinking it's all up to me and getting overwhelmed with all that's around me, pray.

Instead of trying to guilt people to do more, pray. Ask God that he would provide workers and send out workers.

[24:17] The third step in bringing about the change and seeing people enter the kingdom of God is not just seeing, not just praying, but obeying.

Look at verse 10. Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and illness.

It's like a general calling his soldiers to action and sending them out. Now I don't know about you but that's the kind of mission I want to be on.

Authority to drive out impure spirits, heal every disease and illness. Grab your attention, does it? In fact, it gets even better.

Look at verse seven. As you go, proclaim this message. The kingdom of heaven has come near. Heal those who are ill. Raise the dead.

[25:24] Cleanse those who have leprosy. Drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. Is this our mission?

Is this what we're expected to do as we walk out through that door? Could it happen? Well, let's think about that for a moment. first, the priorities we have.

You see, we need to think about the miracles that Jesus has done. We looked at some of them last week through chapters eight and nine. And the primary purpose of the miracles is to confirm who Jesus says he is.

Have a look at chapter 11. Just have a look ahead. Chapter 11, verses 2 to 5. Chapter 11, verses 2 to 5.

When John, this is John the Baptist, who had baptized Jesus, was in prison, he'd been put in prison because he'd been preaching about Christ. when he was put in prison, he'd heard about the deeds of the Messiah, the miracles that Jesus had been doing.

[26:49] And he sent his disciples to ask him, are you the one who has come or should we expect someone else? Are you the Messiah? How do we know if Jesus is God's King?

Jesus replies, verse 4, go back and report to John what you hear and see. The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.

You see, how do we know Jesus is the Messiah? By the miracles he did. They affirm and confirm that Jesus is God's King with absolute power and supreme authority and we can trust him.

That's why Jesus did all those miracles. Now, in a similar way, Jesus now gives his chosen disciples the authority to do miracles.

That's what it says in 10 verse 1. He gave them authority and we see these lists of disciples, the names are given to us in verses 2 to 4.

[28:05] These are ones who would become apostles. They were the first eyewitnesses of Jesus and his message. Some of these very men would become authors of scripture.

Even Matthew who's mentioned there, were reading his gospel. How do we know that we can trust Matthew's words that he's written down? The miracles that the disciples did confirm they authenticate their eyewitness account.

disciples. You see, this was a particularly unique time. This is not a blanket command for all disciples of all times.

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It's not that we're to go up to every funeral and raise the dead. Just because something is written in the Bible doesn't necessarily mean it still applies to us today.

For example, look at chapter 10 verse 5. These 12 Jesus sent out with the following instructions. Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans.

[29:14] Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. He gave them a very specific command. Just go to the Jews. Nobody else. Are we meant to follow that command too?

Well, clearly not because Jesus has made it clear as time has gone on that we are to reach all people, all nations. This was a particular time in history given to a particular group of people.

But yet, I think it does set the pattern for us, for mission, for the command that we have been given. Because we are to both proclaim the word and demonstrated in need.

Proclamation and demonstration. The good news of the kingdom is a message, it's a word. The kingdom of heaven has come near.

Repent. So we proclaim that same good news. We tell of a great king who has come. We must open our mouths that God has given us so that we can speak about Jesus.

[30:31] But our message should also be accompanied by good deeds. We are to care for the most needy, to help the poor, to stand up for the vulnerable.

We are to hate evil and love justice. We are to care for the sick and dying. We are to pray for them and we can pray for their healing. And if they are not, we continue to care for them.

In other words, the gospel is to be proclaimed through our words and demonstrated through our deeds. We are to look like the message that we are talking about.

What's the point in talking about a God of love if there is no action of love? What would it look like for us to proclaim the word and demonstrate it in need?

Well, let me give you one. We've seen the streams of people coming out of Ukraine. No doubt many of these people are going to find their way to Ireland.

[31:38] No home, no belongings. Where would they stay? Would we as a church, would you consider getting involved in opening up your home and giving of your finances to give a home for a family?

Demonstrating love and good deeds and at the same time trusting that God brings people across our path that maybe they could meet the King, the King Jesus.

God's love and love and God's love and love. You see, our priority is clear. We are to obey the command of Jesus, our Captain, displaying the love of God through our lives and declaring the truth of God through our words.

Jesus. How are we ever going to see change in our families, in our communities, in this world in which we live?

Open our eyes to see people as Jesus sees them. Pray. That's why we meet for our home groups. That's why we gather together to pray.

[33:05] and obey the command to go. Get involved in Rock and Rooted. Become a teacher in Sunday school.

Pray for your children. Not just that they will have a good career and that they'll have a good life and have their own house, but would you dare as a parent to pray for your children that they would go to the unreached peoples of the world.

the harvest is plentiful. The workers are few. Let's pray.

Let's pray. Father, there is so much need, but wonderfully we have been shown today through your word how that need is met.

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So would you start by changing us, changing me. Give me eyes to see people as harassed and helpless.

[34:35] Give me eyes to see people who are ready to hear and listen. We pray, Father, that you would send out workers into your harvest field, convict and change the hearts of people, raise up new leaders, pastors, church planters from within this congregation.

congregation. We pray it for our children. And we pray, Father, that you would supply us as a church with a new worker.

prayer. And we pray that together we would obey the command to speak your truth, to love others well, just as you have loved us and have spoken your truth to us.

Help us, Father. We ask this in your name. Amen. Well, we're going to sing.

It's a task that is unfinished because the Lord Jesus has not yet come again. The task remains. Let's sing this as a prayer.

[36:02] Let's sing this to each other to encourage each other in all that God has called us to do. Let's sing. Sorry, John. Let's stand if we can.

Thank you.

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