

Harvest

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[0:00] Matthew 9, 35-38. Let's stand if we can.

And Jesus went about all the cities and villages teaching in their synagogues, and preaching! the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few.

Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest. Amen.

Let's be seated. And Matthew 9 tells us about the harvest.

Matthew 9, the harvest. We read here of the Master's plan, of God's strategy, of God's design, God's model for the harvest of souls, the harvest of souls, his plan to save the world.

[1:12] And I see three drivers here that we could point to, of God's plan, God's rescue plan for man. Three drivers of God's rescue plan for man.

And number one we see, the love of the harvest. The love of the harvest. Matthew 9, 36. But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted and were scattered abroad as sheep, having no shepherd.

The Lord Jesus, the lover of our soul. Jesus, he cares. He reaches out. He touches people. In the context we see of him reaching people, teaching people, preaching, healing people.

He was touched with compassion for the people. And our witness too should be prompted by his love. Our witness, our evangelism, our reaching out, our witness should be prompted because of his love for man.

Because of the compassion of the Master. The love of Christ constrains us, we read. It compels us. It prompts us. It urges us. The love of Christ is the love of the harvest.

[2:24] His compassion in us will translate into a reaching out to those yet unreached. They fainted and were scattered abroad as sheep, having no shepherd.

God is interested in people, in lost souls, in sheep, having no shepherd. As these ones were fainting, as they were scattered abroad, as they were having no shepherd.

Uncared for, unshepherded, a pitiful sight. And we are called too, to have compassion for the Christless. Compassion for the harassed and helpless.

The dejected, the torn, the neglected. We need to have his love in our hearts for others. For those without God, without hope in this world.

As we read of them in Ephesians 2, verse 12. Like sheep uncared for, we need to see the Christless ones. David Brainerd, an old time missionary, said, I cannot where I go or how I live or what I endure so that I may save souls.

[3:37] When I sleep, I dream of them. When I awake, they are first in my thoughts. Care for souls.

Care for souls. Love for souls. The love of the Saviour. Take the look of love as you go about these days ahead of you. Take the look of love with you. Take that different look as you look at people about you.

God is love. The cross is love. The gospel is love. God's love for man to that extent, to that extreme, to that extremity.

Take that look of love with you. It's a new focus. A new look. A transforming vision. A inspiring vision. A compelling vision. That prompts us.

As we shift our focus off the earthbound to that which God would put within our hearts. To open our eyes and see the need. To open our eyes and see the harvest.

[4:36] To open our eyes and let it impact us. That the truly, the harvest truly is plenteous. There's plenty of it. The need is so great. It's so abundant. And our motive is love.

The first driver I see is the love of the harvest. We need to have the love of Christ in us that will prompt us to want to witness. That will prompt us to want to share the gospel. That will prompt us to want to tell others of the Saviour and of His saving grace. And secondly we see the Lord of the harvest. The Lord of the harvest.

It's in verse 38. We read, Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth labourers into His harvest. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest.

One of the names of our Saviour is He is the Lord of the harvest. It's vital that we recognise who is in control of the harvest.

[5:35] That our Lord, our Master, is the Master of the harvest. It is His harvest. He is in control. He is the owner. He is the one in charge.

He is the Master of it. It's His. The souls are His. The harvest field is His. The glory is His. And the method must be His. Revival comes as we follow His Lordship.

His leadership. Our dependence must be upon our Lord. Upon Him. And as we pray. As we pray we seek His enabling. We seek His enduement with power.

We seek His empowerment from on high. As we pray. That the Lord would send workers. Send them out. Thrust them out. Forcefully push them out is the sense of the original Greek.

Thrust them out. Forcefully. And it's used likewise of the term cast out. Demons. That's the forcefulness of it. The forcefulness of this thrusting out.

[6:38] Of this sending out of workers. Of sending out of labourers. It's a very vigorous word. It's a very strong word. As cast out demons is the same word. He wants us to be thrust out.

To be thrown out. To be launched. To be rocketed out. As it were. To be sent out. Thrust out. Into that harvest.

He wants us to have that same energy. That same compulsion. So we see His compassion. The divine compassion. His love. The love of the harvest. We see the divine compulsion.

Of His power. As He impels us. As He compels us. As He expels us. As He throws us out. As He thrusts us out. Into that harvest field. And the harvest is His harvest.

It is not our doing. It is God's doing. Evangelism. And saving souls. We can only play a part. For God to use us. Because it is His doing.

[7:35] It's God's love. In action. Through people like you. And me. People. Ordinary people. Like you and me. Labourers. Sent. Into His harvest.

The harvest. Is His. As we see. Verse 38. Into His harvest. It's His harvest. The harvest is His. The saving power of the gospel.

Is His power. The salvation. Is His. And we. In response. Need to bow. Under His lordship. Yielding. At His command.

Yearning to know. His heart. His love. His lordship. And partner with God. In that great mission work. To tap into. His awesome power.

And friends. We can rest. In His strength. We can trust in. His power. To take us. Beyond ourselves. There's a famous quote. Of Oswald Chambers.

[8:33] Who said this. God not only expects me. To do. His will. But He is in me. To do it. That's encouraging. Isn't it? For all of our weakness.

And lack. And inadequacy. God not only expects me. To do. His will. But. He is in me. To do it. It's His power.

It's His harvest. It's His ability. In human beings. Just like. Frail people. Like you and me. So the first driver. Is the love. Of the harvest. To see.

Through His loving. Compassionate. Vision. To see the harvest. The love. Of the harvest. To see the lord. Of the harvest. It's His harvest.

It's in His hands. It's in His control. And the third driver. In God's rescue plan. For man. Is the labourers. Of the harvest. The labourers.

[9:27] Of the harvest. Thank God. That there's a place for you. In this harvest field. That is this planet. God uses human instruments. Just

like. People. Like us.

To do. His work. People. Like you. To be His hands. To be His feet. God uses men. To win men. God uses men.

And women. Calling them. To take up the plough. To come. And reap. To be harvesters. The harvest truly. Is plenteous. But. The labourers.

Are few. The crucial need. The great. Plenteous harvest. Yet. So few. So few. Will labour. There is a lack. Of labourers. A lack. Of labourers.

A lack. Of workers. And this is a vital message. To communicate. That God has given. To human beings. He's given to human beings. Of every. Look and character.

[10:21] Of every culture. And persuasion. He's given human beings. This call. There's a lack. Of labourers today. There's a vital message. To communicate. God is looking. For messengers.

To relay. This critical message. To our planet. Human mouthpiece. Through which he can speak. The labourers are few. The labourers are few.

There's a crying lack. Of labourers still. Why is this so? Why is there a lack. Of labourers? Fact is. Some. Of the harvest workers. Are sleeping.

Proverbs 10. 5. It says. He that gathereth. In summer. Is a wise son. But he that sleepeth. In harvest. He that sleepeth.

In harvest. Is a son. That causeth shame. It's a shameful thing. To be asleep. When it's harvest time. Let's not make that mistake brother.

[11:18] Not make that mistake sister. It's a shame. To sleep. In the harvest time. It's a shameful thing. To be slack. And sluggardly. When there's a harvest work. To be doing. To be doing.

Yet many will sleep on. Many Christians. Are sleeping. Hope you're not sleeping. Right now. We've got people. With long sticks. That prod you. If you don't watch it.

So. Many will be asleep. They'll be snoozing. And snug. And comfy. And cosy. Many will be putting off. Responding to God's call. The Lord Jesus.

In John 4. 35. Says. Say not ye. There are yet four months. And then. Come as harvest. Behold I say. Unto you. Lift up your eyes.

And look on the fields. For they are white already. Unto harvest. They're ready now. The fields are ripe. And ready. For the reaping.

[12:12] For the harvesting. It's time for harvest. And the harvest time. Is when the farmer. Will. Want to be busy. The farmer will want to be reaping.

To be bringing it in. And friends. It's time for harvest now. It's time for the harvest now. Don't do a. Pray. Pray. And go. In a recent Gallup poll.

Over six million people. Were asked this question. What would it take. To get you to church. And the number one answer given. Was. Someone to ask me to attend.

It's interesting isn't it. Six million. What would it take. To get you to church. Someone to ask me to attend. Not that an invite to church. Is necessarily the best way.

To witness. But I guess it's. One. One. Opportunity. Isn't it. But the fact is. Many Christians are. Silent. Not only sleeping. But silent.

[13:07] Silent. If we invited more people. To come to know. The Lord Jesus Christ. As our saviour. God can use. The words.

Of our lips. To reach people. Your lips. Your words. There are more people alive today. Than there ever have been.

The harvest is ripe. It's ready now. And the call is still the same. The call for labourers. The call to labour. Do not weaken your resolve. Brother.

Sister. You are called. To this harvest work. Work. Abound in the work of the gospel. 1 Corinthians 15. 58. It says. Therefore. My beloved brethren.

Be ye. Steadfast. Unmovable. Always. Abounding. In. The work. Of the Lord. For as much as you know that. Your labour.

[14:03] Is not in vain. In the Lord. Labour. Labour with zeal. Labour with gusto. There is tremendous power. In a seed. And the seed that we have.

There is tremendous power. In this seed. The seed. Is. The word. Of God. This seed. Is dynamic. It's life changing. It's transforming.

It's alive. It's powerful. Friends. This seed. The word of God. But this seed. Needs to be. Sown. The seed. Needs to be sown.

That means. Take it. And give it. To others. Take it with you. Don't keep it to yourself. The seed. Needs to be sown. It needs to be watered.

It needs to be nurtured. And God's game plan. If you like. Is about reaching people. By people. It's that simple. Through people. Like you.

[14:57] And me. I know some of you. Have had a heart. To witness. Maybe you've lost that zeal. Maybe you've lost that enthusiasm. Maybe it's grown dim. That love for souls.

That love for the harvest. That obedience to the lordship. Of the lord of the harvest. Maybe. It's time. To refresh that zeal. Maybe it's time. To refresh that love.

That longing to. Obey the lord. Of the harvest. To reach. Out. As a labourer. Of his. Friends. Be encouraged.

To re-fire. That zeal. Or let it even start today. For the first time. That love. Of the harvest. People like you. And me. Labourers. God's messengers. Harvest workers. We are called to be engaged. As labourers. Working together with God.

[15:53] Doing your part. God will bring the increase. Through you. Through your faithfulness. Through your lips. Some can hear the gospel. For the first time.

Some Christians are sleeping. Are we at ease in Zion. As it says in Amos 6. At ease in Zion. When the world is damned. Is there a coldness in our hearts.

Is there a complacency. A carelessness. A comfortableness. Are we preoccupied. Such that the vision. The mission is lost. The harvest.

Is neglected. When we ought to be concerned. And stirred to action. Friends. Stir yourself. Stir yourself today. Let today be a turning point. Let today be a decision point.

For you. Stir yourself. Shake yourself from your slumber. Let us avoid. Being sluggardly and slothful. Time is short. 1 Peter 3 verse 15.

[16:51] And again it urges us. To be ready. But sanctify the Lord God. In your hearts. And be ready. Always. To give an answer. To every man.

That asketh you. A reason. Of the hope. That is in you. With meekness. And fear. Be ready. Always. How can I.

Be a witness. How can we. Be witnesses. Someone has. Put that. There's different styles. Of witnessing. And here's some. To give you some thoughts.

About. Maybe that's me. Maybe I could do it like that. So here's some six ways. Six ways. That we can witness. Six styles. Of witnessing. Confrontational.

Acts 2. Peter. Repent. And be baptised. Save yourselves. From this corrupt. Generation. From this. Wicked.

[17:49] World. Repent. That's in your face. That's confrontational. Acts 2. Another style. Is intellectual. Intellectual. Acts 17. Where Paul was on Mars Hill.

And he was debating. With the philosophers. And the philosophies. Of the age. Seeking to convince them. Through. I suppose. Intellectual. Persuasion.

And. Argument. And counter argument. Intellectual. Acts 17. You know. Some of you. Uni students. You know. You've got that. That kind of environment. Where you're in. Where maybe you could get. Go mind to mind. With someone. And help to. Help them to see. The truth of God's word. In that sense. In an intellectual. Style. A third style. Is testimonial.

Testimonial. John 9. One thing I do know. I was blind. But now I see. It's giving a testimony. It's saying. I was lost. And now I'm found. He's saved my soul.

[18:46] He's transformed my life. He's turned it around. That is called testimonial. Witnessing. John 9. The fourth one. The fourth one.

Mark 5. Relational. Relational. Go home to your family. And tell them. What great things. The Lord has done for you. Go home to your family.

Go home to your friends. Tell them. Relate to them. It's relational. Kind of witnessing. The fifth one. Is invitational. Invitational. John 4.

The Samaritan woman. At the well. Begged the people of the city. To come and hear Jesus. For themselves. Invite people. To come and hear the gospel. Invite people. To come and hear. The message. Of salvation. When there's an evangelist come. It's invitational. Invite them to come. And hear the gospel. Invite people. To hear the word of God.

[19:40] And the sixth one. Is serving. Serving. In Acts 9. Acts 9. Dorcas. Impacted her city. By doing deeds of kindness. She was a witness. By the practical.

Way that she loved people. And cared for people. And gave to people. In Acts 9. Dorcas. Was a woman. Known for her good works. And she was a glowing testimony. Through the nature of her life. As a witness. Friends. These are different ways. That you can witness. Not everyone is a Peter and Paul. Standing in a marketplace. And publicly open air preaching. But don't ever think. That you're a second class Christian. Because that's not your method. That's not your style. That fits for you. Do what you can for the glory of God. Whether it be. Confrontational. Intellectual. Testimonial. Relational. Invitational. Or serving. There's a way for you. There's an opportunity for you.

[20:37] There's a space for you. There's a place for you. There's an opportunity for you. To be used of God. For his glory. So ask yourself. What's stopping me. From being a witness.

What's stopping me. What's blocking me. What's silencing me. What's muting me. Muzzling me. Preventing me. From stepping out in faith. And obeying God. Here's a few helpful pointers.

To help ignite that passion. Ignite that passion. Someone put it in four ways. Care. Dare. Share. And prayer. Care. Show concern for people.

Show a genuine concern for others in your life. Care. Show concern. Dare. It takes courage. Step outside of your comfort zone. It takes courage for a man or woman to witness.

To open their lips. To a stranger. Even more so to a friend or a relative. At times. Dare to be a witness. Share. It's a lasting impression.

[21:37] The effect of your very life. Of the example of who you are. Is a witness. Share. Be real. Be yourself. Be a genuine.

Honest. Genuine article Christian. And fourthly. Prayer. Prayer. Ask God to help you. Don't. Go on your own strength. When you're feeling. That you want to witness.

Or whether you feel like it or not. Pray. Pray. Ask God to give you that zeal. Ask God to help you to witness. Ask God to give you that. Power. To witness. Pray.

And he'll help you. He'll help you. To give the good news. As you prepare your heart in prayer. Share. So care. Dare. Share. And prayer. These are all simple things really.

This morning. But there is a time limit. For harvest. The harvest time. Is limited. It's seasonal. They'll come to a close. You know. The harvest has passed.

[22:32] And we are not saved. There is a harvest time. That will close. The time. Is limited. For harvest. We read in Revelation 14. And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven.

Having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them. That dwell on the earth. And to every nation. And kindred. And tongue. And people. Saying with a loud voice.

Fear God. And give glory to him. For the hour of his judgment is come. And worship him. That made heaven. And earth. And the sea. And the fountains of waters.

The everlasting gospel. Fear God. And give glory to him. And worship him. The hour of his judgment is come. He's going to close the books.

He's going to say. Time's up. He's going to say. Click on the stopwatch of eternity. Of time. As we know it. Friends. Time. Is limited for the harvest. Fear God.

[23:32] Give glory to him. And worship him. Be. A labourer. A labourer. A harvest worker. With that holy desperation. With that holy word.

In your hand. And on your lips. The holy fear. Of God. The holy power. Of the Holy Spirit. Sending you. Equipping you. Friends. We've seen. That there is.

A love. Of the harvest. Ask God. To help you love people. As he would love them. Ask God. To give you that compassion. Of Christ. In you.

Ask the Lord. Of the harvest. To truly be your master. And for you to truly be his servant. To be those labourers. To be his hand and feet. To be that hand extended.

To be Christ to your world. Go. Pray. Let us pray. Heavenly Father.

[24:27] We thank you that you are. Truly the Lord. Of the harvest. The master. Father. And Father. We thank you that. Each one here today. Who's a saved man or woman.

Is a messenger. Of this gospel. It's not. Some select crew. That does it. It's every Christian. Every man. Every woman. Who loves you Lord.

They're your witnesses. And we're called to go. Help us Lord. To heed your call. Help us to heed that call. Today. Help us Lord. To see. Souls with that new love.

To see. The harvest. Under your Lordship. And to be impelled. Compelled. Thrust down. We pray for harvest workers. We pray for labourers.

Lord. Yeah. We must go. Also. Help us to be faithful to that. Use us Lord. Whatever way you can. We pray for everyone here gathered. Some heading off to.

[25:23] One here going to WA. Shortly. And one to. The other side. To Brisbane. Lord. Use us. Take us. Fill us. Equip us. Send us. Employ us. In the great harvest work.

That every Christian. Is called to play a part in. Shake us Lord. From our slumber and sleeping. Shake us Lord. From our apathy and complacency. Take from us the fear of man.

That we might be faithful. And unafraid. To share what is the very greatest news. That anyone could ever tell. Another man or woman. Help us Lord. To be. Your people.

We pray. We repent. We repent. We repent. We repent. We repent. We repent. We repent. We repent. Take us where you want us to go and use us for your glory.

In Jesus' name, amen.