

Gospel of Matthew “Missional Hearts and Prayers”
Matthew 9:35-38
February 19, 2023

Matthew 9:35-38

35 And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 37 Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; 38 therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

Matthew 4:23-24

23 And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. 24 So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and he healed them.

Jesus understood that He had been sent.

Matthew 9:36

36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

Compassion means to suffer with.

The gospel is the declaration of Christ’s power expressed because of his compassion on those in deep sin.

Matthew 9:37-38

37 Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; 38 therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

Potential.

Present.

John 4:35-36

35 Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, then comes the harvest’? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. 36 Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together.

Jesus said there isn’t always the waiting.

Amos 9:13

13 “Behold, the days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when the plowman shall overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes him who sows the seed; the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it.

Providence.

Practical.

Spurgeon Quote -

“Some of you good people, who do nothing except go to public meetings, and Bible readings, and prophetic conferences, and other forms of spiritual dissipations, would be a good deal better Christians if you would look after the poor and needy around you. If you would just tuck up your sleeves for work, and go and tell the Gospel to dying men, you would find your spiritual health mightily restored, for very much of the sickness of Christians comes through their having nothing to do. All feeding and no working makes men spiritual dyspeptics. (A person who suffers indigestion or irritability) Be idle, careless, with nothing to live for, nothing to care for, no sinner to pray for, no backslider to lead back to the cross, no trembler to encourage, no little child to tell of a Savior, no greyheaded man to enlighten in the things of God. Let us have a practical Christianity.”

Being obedient is not just something we do for God but it is good for us.

“Therefore pray” because we do not make ourselves into workers, we pray for this making.

Grow Group Discussion Questions

- What did God say to you during our Sunday gathering?
- When we read that Jesus “went throughout” and walked among the people, how is Jesus modeling proximity to people in need? How do you the gap between you and people in need of the gospel? Has there been a time when you were closer? What changed?
- What other things besides compassion do you feel when you look at the crowds? Why do you think Matthew wants us to know that Jesus felt this way over all other things he could have expressed? What does this reveal about God?
- What is Jesus trying to convey as he describes the significance of the harvest and the size of the work force? In what ways does this tension challenge you personally?
- Does it surprise you that Jesus asks us to pray rather than just get busy? How might we understand prayer alongside the Christian commission to go?
- Spend some time in prayer. Challenge yourself to be specific rather than vague in your prayers, who you are praying for, and what obedience looks like.