

THE CHURCH IS LEAVING THE BUILDING: TO GATHER THE ABUNDANT HARVEST

ATTENTION:

We live in a world today where everybody is looking for somebody...

- Major corporations - looking for just the right employee
- Hospitals - looking for medical students who graduate at the top of their class...
- The Marines are looking for The Few And The Proud...
- The Army is looking for those who are willing to Be All That They Can Be...
- The Navy is looking for those who want not just A Job, But An Adventure...
- The Air Force is looking for those who want to Aim High.
- You've got men looking for women - Women looking for men...
- And our text informs us that the Lord Is looking for somebody...!
 - The Lord is looking for someone too
 - Someone willing to give their all and go the second mile
 - Someone who is willing to help in the harvest of the lost
 - Someone willing to labor for the Kingdom!

³⁵ Jesus continued going around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness. ³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. ³⁸ Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest."
Matthew 9:35-38

ATTUNE: There is a constant harvest to be gathered

- A harvest of people with spiritual needs.
 - They need Jesus Christ.
 - Without Him they will not know true life on earth... nor eternal life in heaven.
- What if your knowledge of Christ could literally change the course of their life and of their eternal destiny?
 - God using you to take them to the cure = to Jesus.
 - Like wandering sheep, they are heading off a cliff!
 - God uses you to stop and redirect their way to the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

- Did you know that God can use you and wants to use you in bring in the harvest? His plan is to use His children to bring in the harvest of lost souls.
 - But how can we keep from missing that harvest?

BODY:

FIRST: BEGIN CLOSE TO HOME (Matthew 9)

v.1 So he got into a boat, crossed over, and came to his own town.

There he taught and reached out to the people

- What is the point?
 - There are people next door, across the street, that need Jesus Christ.
 - Maybe in your own house or extended family!
 - You are their hope - their life-line.
 - Look out your window - within eye-sight = The harvest!
 - What a blessing for them that you are there to share Christ.
- The harvest is there for you to pray over – work in – and reap.

SECOND: BE A FRIEND TO THE LOST

- A farmer cannot reap the harvest in his fields if he spends all his time in town at the stores, restaurants or in his easy chair.
 - He has to go where the crops are = the fields
 - He has to go to the harvest!
- What we are doing in here this morning is vital the Christian and Kingdom Business, but this is not harvesting!
 - The harvest is your neighborhood in the houses, cars, parks, beach, the mall, etc.
- We are making a simple point - If all I do is talk to and hang out with believers, how many people am I going to lead to Christ?
 - You must spend time with the lost - those in need of Christ.

⁹ As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the toll booth, and he said to him, "Follow me," and he got up and followed him. ¹⁰ While he was reclining at the table in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came to eat with Jesus and his disciples. ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"¹² Now when he heard this, he said, "It is not those who are well who need a doctor, but those who are sick"
Matthew 9:9-12

- What if LBCoC was known as “friends of sinners”?
 - Could we make a difference in this community?

THIRD: GET YOUR EYES ON THE HARVEST

- All through this chapter, there was a group that continually missed the harvest – it was the scribes and the Pharisees!
 - They would resemble a lot of church people. *vs. 3, 11, 34*
 - ³ At this, some of the scribes said to themselves, “He’s blaspheming!”*
 - ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”*
 - ³⁴ But the Pharisees said, “He drives out demons by the ruler of the demons.”*
 - The Pharisees were worried about many things that had little or nothing to do with Kingdom business
- It’s easy to be expert navel gazers!
 - Busy questioning every decision, everything said, taught, preached, done and be oblivious to the harvest.
 - Consumed with what happens within these four walls and forget that the harvest fields are outside of here.
 - Much that fulfills of our purpose happens out there – not optional!
 - This is where we get encouraged, inspired, and prepared to go out and reap the harvest!
- We must get our eyes off of ourselves and onto the harvest.

PROJECT: FINDING LABORERS FOR GOD’S HARVEST

In all of this discussion we have left the emphasis of the words of Christ to be discussed now.

³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. ³⁸ Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.”

Matthew 9:37-38

- The harvest truly is plenteous...
 - There are lots of people who need to know the Lord and what He has done for them = The harvest is plenteous.
- but the laborers are few.

- Then Jesus gives the disciples the key to finding laborers. *PRAY to the Lord of the harvest*
- pled, petition; request

- Jesus states the problem v.36-37 - Two-fold.
 1. There are multitudes of hurting people who have no one to care for their soul!
 2. People aren’t exactly lining up to caring for these people
 - The laborers are few.
- Notice Jesus didn’t give them tips on how to recruit workers: No tricks, gimmicks,
 - He says, **“We have a serious issue. You have to pray.”**
 - The ultimate solution in dealing with these problems is prayer
- Notice Jesus called God “the Lord of the harvest.” and, He calls it “his (God’s) harvest.”

ACTION:

There is a harvest of hurting and lost people that need somebody to reach out to them, and Jesus said to pray.

- Jesus made this personal, and He desired for the disciples to pray specifically that the Lord would send laborers into His harvest.
 - Obviously, Jesus believed God answers prayer.
 - Believing that our prayers move the Lord to action we pray fervently, passionately, and specifically. Colossians 4:12
- As the church leaves the building this morning we are in a position to do something quite extraordinary:
 - We can pray for the people around us who are without Christ and for the Lord to send workers into His harvest fields
 - We can also become a partial answer to this pray by opening our eyes to the abundant harvest and become workers/reapers.