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Matthew 9:35-38 Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. ³⁶ But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. ³⁷ Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. ³⁸ Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

INTRODUCTION

- A. Harvest. *Webster's: The season for gathering in agricultural crops.* It describes what happens after seeds have been sown, cultivated, and now ready to be reaped.
- B. It's universally understood because God has made it that way. It's woven into the fabric of everyday life. It's a law of life and of the spirit that God wants us to understand. God is the Lord of the harvest.

Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

II. WE MUST DEVELOP A VISION FOR THE HARVEST (V. 36, 37)

- A. What do we think about the area that we live in? Do you like your neighborhood? Do you wish it was different? Do you wish you lived elsewhere?
- B. When Jesus saw the multitudes. He saw differently. He's the one that leaves the 99 to go after the 1 lost sheep. He looks past the surface things. He goes past the cultural barriers, the economic barriers, the racial barriers. He sees with the eyes of a compassionate God.
- C. The harvest is truly plentiful. If we would open our eyes and look around us, we will see this neighborhood more and more as Jesus sees it.
- D. Some people do not think this. Some say that their city is too hardened. Too indifferent, apathetic. Too materialistic and not concerned about spiritual things. Too spiritually open to everything and would never be offended when they hear that Jesus as the only way.

John 4:35 Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!

III. WE NEED TO BE MOVED BY EXPERIENCING JESUS' HEART OF COMPASSION FOR THE LOST (V. 36)

Matthew 9:36-38 But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.

- A. Jesus was moved with compassion for them. Lit: moved in the inward parts. He was that they were weary (troubled, annoyed, vexed) and scattered (thrown, cast, tossed, set down, passed, dispersed).
- B. Jesus saw the multitudes. Do you see the multitudes? A good question to ask yourself is: "How would Jesus see that person?" Go past the exterior. Go past any judgments that you might be tempted to make. See if it makes you see people differently.

IV. WE MUST PRAY FOR LABORERS (V. 38)

- A. Jesus did not tell us to pray for the harvest. He told us to pray for laborers. There is nothing wrong with the harvest; the issue is with the laborers.
 - 1. People who are weary and scattered will act that way. It shouldn't come as a surprise that people do not receive truth.

2 Corinthians 4:4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.
 - 2. When the Church prays regarding the harvest, it is usually for ourselves, the laborers to have boldness and for God to release His power upon us.

Acts 4:29-30 Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word,³⁰ by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus."
 - 3. When you pray for laborers, God might answer that prayer by raising you up to be a laborer.
 - a. Jesus commands them to pray for laborers in v. 38, then in the very next verses (10:1-5), He gives them power over unclean spirits and sicknesses, and He sends the disciples out. The disciples had the privilege of leading people to faith in Christ.

V. WE MUST DO THE WORKS OF JESUS, THE GREAT SHEPHERD (V. 35)

Matthew 9:35 Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

- A. Jesus does the work of going to the people, teaching, preaching, and healing.
- B. We are called to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:18-20). This is one of the reasons Parkway is here in this community. We must do the works of Jesus. Someone else is not going to do this for us. Jesus said, *you go*. We have been sent by Jesus.

Mark 16:15-18 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶ He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷ And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; ¹⁸ they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." (c.f. Matt. 28:18-20)

VI. WE MUST MAKE PREPARATIONS BECAUSE THE HARVEST BELONGS TO THE LORD OF THE HARVEST (V. 38)

A. God is the Lord of the harvest. The harvest belongs to the Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.

1. Jesus is the firstfruits of a new breed of people. God has made the ultimate sacrifice of His Son Jesus to make it possible for Him to have a harvest.
2. If you want to know God, you have to understand the harvest because He is the Lord of the Harvest. If you don't know the harvest, then you don't know the Lord of the harvest.

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

1 Timothy 2:4-5 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.

B. It is God's harvest. He will give the increase. God is right now preparing people to be saved. We must get ready to receive them. We will reap what we have not sown.

1 Corinthians 3:6-7 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. ⁷ So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.

1. God gives the increase, but we must labor and work. Summary: Pray and go.

C. Conclusion and charge: When you look upon the multitudes, what do you see? What do you feel? Do you see what Jesus sees? Do you feel what He feels? Lift up your eyes. Look at the fields. Where is the harvest? It's where people are weary and scattered. Ask the Lord to open your eyes to the harvest. Receive the compassion of God for the lost.

D. Prayer:

1. Open our eyes and give us a heart of compassion.
2. The Lord of the Harvest to send laborers into the harvest field.
3. Commit yourself to speak of Christ where ever God sends you. Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit.