

The Harvest Is Plentiful

I. Matthew 9:35-38.

A. There are four words in this passage that are progressive in nature.

1. By that I mean doing the first causes the second to happen, which then causes the third, and then finally the fourth.

2. First, you need to go, which will cause you to see people the way God does; this in turn will cause you to feel and have God's heart for them; which will ultimately cause you to pray and ask the Lord of the Harvest to send out workers into His harvest.

3. This morning, from verses 35 & 38, I want to share on the concept of "praying."

a My premise is, if you will go where God sends you, you will then see what God sees, which will then bring a much needed burden to your soul.

b. This will ultimately cause you to pray and ask for more workers.

C. In verses 37, Jesus states that "*the harvest is truly plentiful, but the laborers are few.*"

1. Only someone who has seen the harvest up close can make this statement.

a. "*Truly*" is from the Greek word "*men*" which is used to add force or amplification to the words that it is connected to.

b. This word is used when the speaker knows that hearer will find it difficult to believe that the statement is true - because it sounds unbelievable,

c. This word is used by Jesus on several occasions.

1) 63 times He says it one time to emphasize what He is saying

2) 40 times He says it twice to emphasize what He is saying

2. Because from a distance the harvest appears to be comprised of only a few that would be open to the gospel, and the laborers for those few appear to be plentiful.

Matthew 7:13-14 - "*Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it.*"NASB

a. From a distance a promiscuous Samaritan woman (John 4), who had been divorced 5 times and was now living in sin with a man would not appear to be open to the things of God.

1) From a distance she would appear to be brazen and rebellious toward the covenant of marriage.

2) But Jesus, because He was in the harvest field, saw her up close.

3) He was able to see that in the midst of her shameful behavior, there was a heart that was searching for something better.

4) He saw a heart that was seeking, others saw only a life that was sinning.

(She was one of the many on the wide road to hell, but she became one of the few to find the narrow road to eternal life)

b. From a distance a greedy tax collector by the name of Zaccheus (Luke 19) would not appear to be interested in the treasures of heaven.

1) From a distance he would seem to be consumed with worldly wealth.

2) But again, because Jesus was in the harvest field, He saw him up close.

3) He was able to see that in the midst of his greed there was a heart that longed to give.

(He was one of the many on the wide road to hell, but he became one of the few to find the narrow road to life)

c. Here is a powerful truth:

1) Everyone of the many has the potential to become one of the few.

2) Let's in faith echo the words of Jesus: "The harvest is truly plentiful."

3. It is impossible to see how plentiful the harvest is from the pew.

a. You have to go, again going will disengage your mind which is full of facts about peoples sins and will engage His heart which is full of faith for their soul.

b. Faith allows you to see people the way that God does - 1 Samuel 16:7

1) Faith will allow you to see the precious in the midst of the worthless - Jer 15:19
From a distance you see the worthless, only up close can you see the precious

2) Faith will allow you to see the treasure in the midst of darkness - Isaiah 45:3
From a distance you see the darkness, only up close can you see the treasures

c. Here are a few people that God sent me to that surprised me on how different they looked up close when I saw them through His heart of faith.

1) Rob Knuck - From a distance a man of cruelty - up close a man of courage.

2) David Hornsby - From a distance a con man - up close a counselor

4. But those who actually go will see the plentiness of the harvest.

- a. Their compassion for the harvest will then cause them to become workers.
- b. They will also realize the harvest is more than what one man or woman can do.**
- c. So they will pray for more harvest workers.

D. Verse 38 states, “*therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.*”

- 1. The first thing I want you to see is that the Lord of the Harvest instructs, authorizes, and empowers those who are in the harvest to pray to Him, and ask Him to send them some help.

- a. **Isaiah 59:16 - “*He is astonished to see that there is no one to help the oppressed.*”**

“He was amazed to see that no one intervened to help the oppressed.”

- b. **Isaiah 63:5 - “*And I looked, and there was no one to help, And I was astonished and there was no one to uphold.*”**

“I looked around for someone to help, no one. I couldn't believe it, not one volunteer.” The Message

- c. **So God decides to send an involuntary volunteer.**

- 1) It's where God volunteers someone who wasn't wanting to volunteer.

- 2) **Movie Scene of a Drill Sargent asking for a volunteer**

- 2. **The Greek word that is translated “*send out*” is “*ekballo*,” which Thayers's Greek Lexicon defines this way, “*to send one forth or away somewhere with a force which he cannot resist.*”**

- a. In other places in scripture, this word is translated with words like, “*thrust, expel, drive out, and cast out.*”

- b. **In fact, the Amplified Bible translates verse 38 this way, “*so pray to the Lord of the harvest to force out and thrust laborers into His harvest.*”**

- 3. All of this implies that when someone who is in the harvest prays and asks the Lord of the Harvest to send out workers into His harvest.

- a. **That He will use supernatural force to get His children from worship services into witnessing situations.**

b. God knows how to get His people where He needs them most, even if initially they don't want to go. From scripture here are a few of God's involuntary Volunteers.

1) In the Old Testament God needed someone in Egypt to administrate the abundance of seven years of plenty, during the following seven years of want, so He sent Joseph.

- Only Joseph would never have went willingly, so God "*send him forth with a force which he could not resist.*"
- **Psalm 105:17-19 out of the Message tells us how God did this, "*But He sent a man on ahead: Joseph, sold as a slave.*"**
- Was getting dropped into a pit, then sent to prison, before going to the palace, better than sitting on his butt in his fathers tent, showing off his coat of many colors, making his brothers mad.
- **Again as I said in the first message of this series, that I Think the great tragedy of life is not the sins we commit, but the life we fail to live.**

2) God needed someone in Babylon to interpret a dream for a heathen King by the name of Nebuchadnezzar, so He sent Daniel.

- **Only Daniel would never have went willingly, so God "*send him forth with a force which he could not resist.*"**
- Daniel 1:1-2 tells us how God did this, "*In the third year that Jehoiakim was king of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylonia attacked Jerusalem and surrounded the city. The Lord let him capture King Jehoiakim.*"

3) In the New Testament God needed someone to be an Apostle to the Gentiles, so He sent Saul, who later became Paul.

- Only Paul would never have went willingly, so God "*send him forth with a force which he could not resist.*"
- **Acts 9:1-6 tells us how God did this, *When Saul had almost reached Damascus, a bright light from heaven suddenly flashed around him. He fell to the ground blind, and heard a voice*"**

4) Jesus was to be the Savior of the whole world but the disciples confined the Gospel within the Jewish ranks. God needed to get it out to all the world.

- Only the Disciples would never have went willingly, so God “*sent them forth with a force which they could not resist.*”
 - ***Acts 8:1&4*** tells us how God did this, “*That set off a great persecution (the stoning of Stephen) of the church in Jerusalem. The believers were all scattered throughout Judea and Samaria . . . Forced to leave home base, the Christians all became missionaries. Wherever they were scattered, they preached the Message about Jesus.*”
4. Here is my point, we can willingly go where God is sending us, or the people who have gone can pray and ask the Lord to now “*send us forth with a force which we cannot resist.*”

a. I don’t know about you:

1) But I would much rather the Lord direct me by His Holy Spirit.

2) Then to draft me by harrowing situations.

- Harrow means, a tool with teeth which is dragged over plowed land to spread the soil.
- **Or something very distressing**
- Like, allowing someone to be sold into slavery, or to be taken prisoner, or to allow a bright light to knock them off their high horse, or to allow a great persecution.

3) Acts 27:22-26 - “*And yet now I urge you to keep up your courage, for there shall be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. For this very night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood before me, saying, Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar; and behold, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you. Therefore, keep up your courage, men, for I believe God, that it will turn out exactly as I have been told. But we must run aground on a certain island.*” NASB

b. Let me give you some personal examples of God “*sending me forth with a force which I could not resist.*”

1) The harvest field of parents of “still born children”

3) The harvest field of the “loss of a loved one.”

4) When you get thrust out into a harvest field, you will always hear that the few workers that were there were praying for help.