

MATTHEW 9:35- 10:5

YOU'RE IN THE ARMY NOW!

As Christians we all know that Jesus is our example. We know that He is the standard we are to exemplify. On the other hand, because He is perfect and we know we aren't, sometimes I think we can sort of give up on living a life wholly given to Him. What I mean is that a Christ-like life, can be to some of us as impossible to live as the Law was for us to fulfill.

I'm often asked, "What can I do to help?" Or others come to me and say that they aren't sure just what their calling is. They want to help but they don't know what it is that they're supposed to do. Today, our perfect example, Jesus, shows us how to find that calling.

If you were tasked with 'getting the word out' about something, how would you do it? If you had the answer everyone was looking for, how would you tell people in a world with no television, radio, or internet? Today we see how Jesus, the God of the universe, got the ball rolling.

Matthew 9:35 tells us that Jesus went all over the Galilee teaching, preaching, and healing.

Mat 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.

notice the order - teaching was the priority

notice the distinction made between preaching and teaching.

As He was making His rounds though, something happened to Him.

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

He saw the multitudes and was moved, literally pained for them.

Why? Because they were weary - not necessarily physically, but spiritually.. That's what religion will do for you. The burden of the Law and of sin will weigh you down. It is depressing.

They were scattered, literally far-flung, like sheep.

Sheep aren't the smartest of animals. They will graze and graze never paying much attention to where they're going until they finally look up and realize they're lost. You've heard the expression, 'That boy couldn't find his way around a pole.' They can walk around a pole and get lost. We aren't much different spiritually speaking.

Jer 50:6 "My people have been lost sheep. Their shepherds have led them astray; They have turned them away *on* the mountains. They have gone from mountain to hill; They have forgotten their resting place.

We graze on whatever tends to come down the pipe, and then suddenly lookupto find out we're lost.

Fortunately, all we have to do is to cry out to our shepherd - Jesus

Story of 2 flocks getting mixed up.

Joh 10:14 I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.

Mat 18:11 For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.

Mat 18:12 "What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying?

Mat 18:13 And if he should find it, assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that sheep than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray.

We read that Jesus was moved - His humanity

Far flung, nothing to unite them, they had no hope.

People were united in the early church. There was a sense of family, of hope, and of a mission.

What mission?

The mission was the call spoken of in verse 37.

Mat 9:37 Then He said to His disciples, "*The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few.*"

To begin with, Jesus saw a need. He saw, if you will, a ministry opportunity.

You want to know what you can do to help? Start doing whatever needs to be done. If it is your calling, you'll probably be good at it. If not, keep doing it until someone else comes along to take over or help.

Also notice that Jesus said it was time for harvest not planting. Although we are to be constantly planting seeds in people's lives, there are many seeds that have already germinated, and the plant needs to be harvested. There are plenty of folks ripe for

the picking.

Jesus realized, that though He is all powerful, the mission was too large for any one man. Help was needed. But where would the help come from?

Mat 9:38 *Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."*

In agriculture, it is the responsibility of the farmer/ landowner to supply the labor to harvest the crops. However, there has to be a supply of laborers willing to work. Otherwise the crops will rot in the field.

It is no different with us. God owns the field, but He needs laborers to help with the harvest. WE have to get the word out, or souls will literally rot in the fields. God isn't interested in slave labor. He wants willing participants. We need to see the lost sheep and be moved with compassion for them like Jesus was.

Remember, He is our example.

We should also see that our prayers move God. He says pray for more laborers. We should. Look at the result of those prayers.

Mat 10:1 *And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease.*

The ones He told to pray were the ones that were sent to the fields. Many pray for laborers, expecting others to be sent. Often Jesus will use you. Once again, if you see the need, then it may have been revealed to you so that you can fill that need.

The disciples were given "power." The power spoken of here is "exousia" in the Greek. It means authority. This is different from "dunamis" given them at Pentecost.

This authority showed that they were, in fact, commissioned by God. It gave them credibility. They were more than just talk.

When Jesus calls us to do a job, He empowers us to accomplish it. His calling is His enabling.

"I can't do that!" Yes, you can.

1Co 1:25 **Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.**

1Co 1:26 **For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called.***

1Co 1:27 **But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty;**

1Co 1:28 **and the base things of the world and the things which are despised**

**God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are,
1Co 1:29 that no flesh should glory in His presence.**

JESUS CHOOSES THE LABORERS

Mat 10:2 *Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;*

Mat 10:3 *Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;*

Mat 10:4 *Simon the Cananite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.*

We're told in Luke 6 that after He prayed all night, Jesus came down the mountain and chose His disciples.

Disciple - learner

Apostle - one sent

Peter always listed first, Judas always last

Peter - foot in mouth disease - name changed from Simon to Peter; Petros - little rock/stone

Andrew was Peter's little brother / always in Peter's shadow; maybe you can relate, Jesus will use you also

James and John - the sons of Zebedee - "sons of thunder" John later known as the Apostle of love

Phillip and Bartholomew (Nathaneal) the skeptic; can anything good come out of Nazareth?

Doubting Thomas

Matthew the publican

James the son of Alphaeus - an unknown

Thaddaeus - not much said of him

Simon the Canaanite, or the zealot. A political rabble-rouser wanting to overthrow the Roman Empire. He would have certainly been at odds with Matthew.

Judas Iscariot - the traitor

So Jesus was going to spread His word all over the world with 12 men. One constantly said the wrong thing, one was always in his brother's shadow, and two of them had

bad tempers. Another was a skeptic. One was a doubter, while one was a rip-off artist working for the oppressive occupying foreign government. Two are virtual unknowns while another is a revolutionary wanting to overthrow the government. The last is an all out traitor. And they all work together on the same team for the same cause. These men all had different levels of education and different political ideologies. All united for the same cause, to reap the harvest of folks that they were once like.

Conclusion: (Please bring these points up one at a time as they are mentioned. You can stack more than one on a slide if necessary.)

Jesus saw a need, a ministry and filled it.

He brought others alongside to help.

He empowered and encouraged them.

He depended on word of mouth and the power of the Spirit to get it done.

These are all things we can do.

He depended on a rag - tag bunch of mostly uneducated guys with every flaw imaginable. We probably fall into at least one of these categories.

You are sitting here today because they did their job. It trickled down to us over some 2,000 years.

Once you identify a need, fill it. Don't wait on someone else. You will have what you need to do the job. If you see it, do it.

If you see it, you've seen it for a reason. You're probably qualified for the mission.

We have all been called to witness by living the life Christ has called us to live.