

- I. The Message: The Gospel of the Kingdom (9:35; 4:23)

- II. The Compassion of Jesus (9:35-36; Isa 53:3-4; Heb 4:15)

- III. The Spiritual Diagnosis: Like Sheep Without a Shepherd
(9:36; Num 27:15-17; 1 Kings 22:17; Ezek 34:5; Isa 53:6; 1 Peter 2:25)

- IV. The Promising Problem: The Harvest is Plentiful, but the Laborers are Few
(9:37; John 4:35; Acts 18:9-10)

- V. The Response: Pray! (9:38; Luke 18:1, 7-8; 1 Thes 5:17; Rom 12:12; Matt 10; 28:18-20)

“Sheep are defenseless animals. Without a shepherd they are vulnerable to any attack. . . . Goats manage very well by themselves, but sheep do not. Sheep without a shepherd points to people who are in great danger and without the resources to escape from it.” —Leon Morris

“No creature is more apt to go astray than a sheep, and when gone astray more helpless, shiftless, and exposed, or more unapt to find the way home again: sinful souls are as lost sheep; they need the care of shepherds to bring them back.” —Matthew Henry

“Personal working for souls is good; giving money is good; but praying is best of all. By prayer we reach him, without whom work and money are alike in vain: we obtain the aid of the Holy Ghost.” —J. C. Ryle

Reflection and Application Questions (for personal reflection and family conversation):

1. What does it mean for a person to be like a sheep without a shepherd?
2. How can you develop a heart of compassion like Jesus?
3. What role does prayer play in missions?
4. How are you obeying the command to “pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest”?