

Matthew 9:35-38

When? When the Holy Spirit has come upon you.

1. Luke 24:49 *Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.*
2. Acts 1:4-5 *And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me; 5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.*

What did they do in response?

1. They went to the upper room and they prayed.
2. What happened when they prayed? Nothing.
3. So they prayed more...they read and discussed the word...and prayed some more.
4. And in God's time, the Holy Spirit came upon them and made them bold witnesses to all Jerusalem, and eventually the world.

This coming of the Holy Spirit for the mission was rooted in prayer for the mission. With that said, let us think about how this can practically look today as we consider our next question: when?

READ/PRAY

I want us to see 4 major points from this text this morning.

I. What Jesus Preached v35

Jesus preached the gospel of the Kingdom.

1. We understand the gospel.
 - a. Literally the good news
 - b. THE GOSPEL
2. But what is the gospel of the Kingdom?
3. As the gospel goes forth and hearts are transformed, the Kingdom advances and that kingdom transforms individuals, families, communities, cultures, and countries.

We often act like everything is negative and going down the drain.

1. We are just waiting on Jesus to come back and get us out of this mess...and there is some truth in that, but let's not miss this fact.
2. Christ's Kingdom is advancing, will advance, and will forever advance until the end.
3. In the Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe we read:

The Beaver said, "They say Aslan is on the move- perhaps has already landed." And now a very curious thing happened. None of the children knew who Aslan was any more than you do; but the moment the Beaver had spoken these words everyone felt quite different...At the name of Aslan each one of the children felt something jump in its inside. Edmund felt a sensation of mysterious horror. Peter felt suddenly brave and adventurous. Susan felt as if some delicious smell or some delightful strain of music had just floated by her. And Lucy got the feeling you have when you wake up in the morning and realize that it is the beginning of the holidays or the beginning of summer.

4. **Aslan is on the move!**

- a. We must keep an optimistic outlook.
- b. The way we view the Kingdom will change how we operate in the kingdom.

Looking out across Israel are forests which seem awkward. These forests almost look like a plantation... not as if God planted them in creation, but man cultivated them. The thing that makes the difference is what the people who lived in the land were told about the land. One group was told it was a barren wasteland and treated it that way. The other group was told it was a land of milk and honey and they treated it that way. The way the inhabitants looked at the land made all the difference.

The way we view the Kingdom will change how we operate in the kingdom.

1. If we see a kingdom spiraling until Jesus come again, we will live one way: likely ball up in the fetal position and wait on Jesus to come and snatch us out of here
2. If we see the kingdom as advancing, victorious, and wonderful, we will live another way: We will recognize that even in the midst of so much pain, sorrow, and tragedy Aslan is on the move and we will join Him!

II. **What Jesus Saw v36**

Jesus came preaching this optimistic, hope filled gospel of the Kingdom. What He saw however, was anything but optimistic and hopeful. He saw the crowds.

1. There were some 200 cities and villages in the region of Galilee.
2. Josephus wrote, "*The cities are numerous and the multitude of villages everywhere, crowded with men owing to the fertility of the soil, so that the smallest of them contains above 15,000 inhabitants.*"
3. Galilee, in Jesus' day, likely contained more than three million people!
4. This was not something doable!

This was an overwhelming situation. What did he see in this overwhelming number of people?

A. **They were distressed**

1. This word often conveys the idea of being battered, bruised, mangled, ripped apart, worn out, and exhausted.
2. Not much has changed.
 - a. 1 out of 8 people are chronically undernourished
 - b. This is greater than the combined number of people in the U.S. Canada, and the European Union.
 - c. Children, just like yours, went to bed with tears in their eyes because they were hungry...not hungry for the candy bar at the grocery store counter, but really hungry!!!
3. There are roughly 780 million people who do not have a source of safe drinking water.
4. Every day more than 2200 children die from water, sanitation, and hygiene issues.

B. **They were dispirited**

1. This word can mean downcast.
2. The Greek OT uses the same word in Judges 4:17-22 "there lay Sisera dead" or "helpless"
3. The crowds were helplessly dead in their trespasses and sins. Nathan's illustration
4. Over 11,000 people groups out of 7.5 billion people and roughly 6000 are unreached
5. Unreached peoples are people who have such a small population of Christians that they cannot reach them on their own.

C. They were directionless

1. They were like sheep without a shepherd!
2. They have been left to the wolves.
3. They have no one that is helping them. They are alone.
4. More than 1200 people groups today are unreached and unengaged
5. Unreached/Unengaged means they have no access to the gospel
6. The epitome of hopelessness is to be without a gospel witness!!!

III. What Jesus Felt v36

He felt compassion.

1. When Jesus saw the multitudes he was not moved with wonder, or with admiration, or interest.
2. He wasn't on a mission vacation to see the sites and get his passport stamped!
3. He was moved with compassion. His heart filled with tears; he said "it is a sad sight."

The word means feeling with, feeling for, sympathy.

1. It is a taking upon oneself the pain, poverty, and anguish of those who are suffering.
2. The word literally points us to the gut.
3. We might say today, "my heart aches for the crowds."
4. In Jesus' day they would say my intestines churn or my stomach is upset.
5. As most of us know from personal experience, intense emotions can directly, and often immediately, affect the stomach. So this makes perfect sense.

We must step out of the temporal and into the spiritual and see the world with Jesus' eyes.

1. And if Jesus is torn up inside, how should we His children, feel?
2. If he is in compassionate agony over the state of the world, is it really the best time for us to be living our lives like all is well?

IV. What Jesus Determined

A. The Harvest is Plentiful v37a

1. John 4:35 *Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest.*

B. The Laborers are Few v37b

1. It has been said that the evangelization of the world waits not on the readiness of God but on the obedience of Christians.
2. *"Believers who have the gospel keep mumbling it over and over to themselves. Meanwhile, millions who have never heard it once fall into the flames of eternal hell without ever hearing the salvation story."* — K.P. Yohannan,

C. There is an Answer v38

1. Pray

- a. *"Prayer is the mighty engine that is to move the missionary work."* — A.B. Simpson

2. Earnestly Pray

- a. Not just prayer, but earnest prayer is the answer!
- b. *Prayer is primarily a wartime walkie-talkie for the mission of the church as it advances against the powers of darkness and unbelief. It is not surprising that prayer malfunctions when we try to make it a domestic intercom to call upstairs for more comforts in the den. God has given us prayer as a wartime walkie-talkie so that we can call headquarters for everything we need as the kingdom of Christ advances in the world.* John Piper.

3. Earnestly Pray for Ekbalo

- a. And no, Ekbalo is not the waiter at the Mexican restaurant.
- b. It is the Greek Word used to describe what we are to pray for. Pray for what?
 1. The harvest? No.
 2. For God to send out “ekbalo” laborers.
 3. Squeeze out, fling out, send out.
- c. Praying earnestly for laborers to be squeezed out by God, with a P.S. “not me” doesn’t work.
- d. When we earnestly pray to the Lord to send someone to witness to them, we place ourselves at his disposal to become one of His workers in that ministry.
- e. Luke 10:2-3 *And he said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves*

When do we go?

1. We go when we feel what Jesus feels and begin to pray earnestly...Lord, send laborers and P.S. Here am I,
2. Are you willing to add that to your prayer for the nations this morning?

Discussion Questions:

1. What did you learn about God in this sermon and in the biblical texts used? About Christ? About the Holy Spirit?
2. What did you learn about yourself in this sermon and in the texts used?
3. Were there any clear promises or commands in the biblical texts used?
4. What is the hardest truth that stands out to you from this message or the verses referenced?
5. What is the most impactful point or statement from the sermon?
6. How can you respond to this message?