



PART 3: THE PRAYER CHALLENGE

Sermon Notes

Text: Matthew 9:35-38

Intro:

Summer Challenge – being purposeful about growing in faith and blessing our community

The Prayer Challenge: Matthew 9:35-38 - Jesus uses the metaphor of a ready harvest to describe people's openness to the gospel.

Romans 10:14-15

Gospel proclamation is not just about going; it's also about sending. It's about being sent by the Lord of the harvest. (Matthew 28:19, Mark 16:15)

1. Prayer is the most basic task of Gospel promotion

Matthew 9:38

The first reaction of the disciples would have been to suggest sending more workers, but Jesus' solution is to first pray that God would send workers.

"Prayer is the hidden mission of God"

Gospel promotion, from first to last, is a God ordained and God empowered process.

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"Prayer is not a passive, sideline aspect of evangelistic commitment; it is a fundamental expression of that commitment" ~John Dickson

Of all the things Paul urges the church to pray for, prayer for the work of the gospel is most common. Of all the things the New Testament mentions as gospel promoting activities, prayer is the most frequently urged (Ephesians 6:19-20; 2 Thessalonians 3:1; Colossians 4:2-4; 1 Timothy 2:1-4)

Even if you are not yet confident to speak to others about God, you can be confident in speaking to God about others.

2. Praying for people begging by having compassion for them

Matthew 9:36

The word "compassion" here is translated from the Greek word "Splachnizomai." It's a verb that comes from the word for internal organs. In common language you might say Jesus was gutted, or the sight was gut wrenching.

We must examine our own attitude toward the "crowds" and seek to have the some compassion for the lost that Jesus had.

Jesus was literally "gutted" for us on the cross.

The Prayer Challenge: Pray every day this week for the Lord of the Harvest to send out workers.

3. Consistent prayer for the work of the gospel will naturally move us toward personal action

Chapter 10 - Jesus sends out the 12 disciples as an answer the prayer he commanded in chapter 9.

We may be the answer to our own prayer, or the answer to someone else's.

Conclusion:

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Life Group Discussion

Warm up:

1. Discuss Jesus' use of the "harvest" metaphor. How is gospel proclamation like work in a harvest? What's our role? What's God's role?

Study & Discussion:

1. Read the prayer requests of Paul (Ephesians 6:19-20; 2 Thessalonians 3:1; Colossians 4:2-4; 1 Timothy 2:1-4). What do these requests tell you about the work of the gospel? Do your own prayers reflect Paul's sense of urgency? What specific ways can you start praying for the work of the gospel?
2. Do you think some people are meant to be the "prayers" and some people are meant to be the "preachers"? Or should all people participate in both? What's your tendency? How can you develop the other part?

Application:

1. Do the Prayer Challenge: Pray every day this week for the Lord of the Harvest to send out workers.

Prayer:

1. Pray to the Lord of the Harvest to send out more workers.
2. Other Requests
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