

The Ingredients: Mission - Matthew 9:35-10:8
Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading

Notes from the Sermon

One of the basic premises that is foundational for our *The Recipe* series is that when Jesus commanded His disciples that their mission was to go and “make disciples,” they knew exactly what their Savior and King communicated. They spent three years having the greatest disciple maker of all time pouring the ingredients of discipleship into their lives. Over and over he reminded them of the Gospel of the Kingdom, and the truth that love for God and neighbor had to be the motivational structure of their hearts. He taught them how to read Scripture, pray, fast, and do other disciplines while also showing them generosity and kindness. He brought them into a Christian community, a band of 13 (12 and Jesus) who did faith and life together and Jesus was clear about their need to be holy. Yet, all of this had an intended goal, and the goal was not that they sit in a circle forever, singing praise songs, and “going deeper.” The goal of their discipleship was to ready them for a mission, His mission. He would send them as His representatives into the world as an extension of His mission into the world. Without this aim, this sentness that defines discipleship, the task of making disciples will turn in to a culture of self-focused spirituality with little or no ability to actually look at the fields that are ripe for harvest.

Matthew 9 and 10 represent one of those places where the editors probably put the chapter break in the wrong place. Remember that the Biblical books were written as collective wholes, the authors did not add the chapter and verse headings. While we should be thankful these have been added so that we can easily find our place, we can misread the flow of a text at time believing that a chapter break represents a change in flow or topic. But Matthew 9:35-10:8 is a continuous narrative that I believe when brought together shows us something that is essential in understanding Jesus investment in the original 12 disciples, and therefore is the intended aim for all discipleship.

This section begins with a short synopsis of Jesus’ ministry, a re-voicing of the things Jesus had been doing with the 12 for several chapters. Jesus is going from city to city and village to village on His mission. He is the King in the Kingdom of God, and His appearance is the bursting in of that Kingdom. So He came preaching in their worship gatherings and proclaiming the nearness of the Kingdom in His person and work. We too see the motivational purpose for everything Jesus did, as he has deep compassion on them because the people were, “Harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.” We can’t skip over this here. Everything Jesus did with the twelve had the masses in view. How could they ever turn in on themselves when they always saw the broken heart and tears of their Lord over the lost sheep of Israel. Because of this Jesus got among the people and met their needs, healed their sicknesses and affliction.

But there is a drastic change in this text as Jesus tells his disciples that their task was to lift their eyes and see these people too, to be moved and grieved over people who were broken and hurting, who were like a white field of wheat ready for harvest. The problem was not that God was not at work, the problem was that there are insufficient workers headed into the fields with harvesting sickles. And if workers don’t show up the crop will spoil. So he tells His disciples to pray, that they are to pray intentionally for the ripe harvest. Yet, the content of this commanded prayer is curious, as Jesus does not tell them to pray for the lost (there are other places where we have commands and examples of this). They are to pray for harvesters, laborers that God will raise up and send into His harvest. At this point we have a chapter ending, so we put down our Bibles and pick up the reading the next day.

But the text flows right into the call of the 12 “disciples” and Jesus gives them authority and power to do the very things He was doing. And then a curious thing happens in the story. Up until this point they were known as the 12 disciples. As we have said, “disciple” means a follower or learner who has attached him or herself to a specific teacher. Starting in verse 2 we have a list of the 12 by name. Yet, rather than calling them disciples they are now called “Apostles”. This is a title that comes from a word that means “A person sent on an official or

diplomatic mission". Then in verse 5 we are told that "These twelve Jesus **sent** out." The word sent in verse 5 is *apostello*, which is the verbal form of the word "apostle." Now, I do have to be careful here, as the word Apostle gets used in the New Testament in two ways. The first is the office of Apostle, a role only the 12 and a few others in the story have. The requirements are that they had to see Jesus personally. To keep this short, for clarity, there are no people in our present time fulfilling the office of Apostle. Yet, there is a time when every disciple should realize that the intended aim of this process is that they realize they are "sent" on a mission. So it is here that we see the flow of the text. As disciples they were called by Jesus to pray that the Lord would raise up harvesters. Now they are being sent to the villages. They became the answer for their own prayers. God had raised up harvesters, and it was the same people called to lift their chins in compassion to look on the fields and pray. This is the aim for all of our discipleship, being sent to our neighborhoods and to the nations.

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Psalm 112	Psalm 113	Psalm 114	Psalm 115	Psalm 116	Psalm 117	Psalm 118

Reading from this past week: Matthew 9:35-10:8

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Family Worship

Song - *His Mercy is More*

<https://youtu.be/l1GiZL60c80?si=R0CNF3R4UDePEocv>

Gospel Project

Unit: The Church is Opposed

Story: Gentiles became part of the church

Big Picture Question: What is the church?

Answer: The church is all Christians everywhere, who gather together in their communities to worship and serve God.

Scripture: Acts 11

New City Catechism

Question 17: What is idolatry?

Answer: Idolatry is trusting in created things rather than the Creator.

Verse: Romans 1:21,25

Scripture

Matthew 9:35-10:8

- What are some things we see in the ministry of Jesus? How is the church an extension of Jesus' ministry?
- How does Jesus teach His disciples to pray? What does it look like for us to lift up our eyes to see the harvest and pray? How can we do this individually and corporately?
- What is the difference between a disciple and an apostle? While there are no people in the role of Apostle, on another level, all disciples should move toward becoming an apostle with a lower "a". What does this imply about our discipleship and how we make disciples?
- What is the mission of Jesus? How can I find my place in this?

Prayer

*Pray that we would be disciples on mission, seeing that God has sent us into His world.

*Find ways this week to lift up your eyes in compassion and see the harvest while praying to the Lord of the Harvest to send workers into His field.

*Pray for the conflicts in Ukraine and Israel.