

How To Find Laborers For God's Harvest Matthew 9:37-38

Introduction:

1. The context of this passage is found in vs. 35-36. Jesus is very disturbed because He sees multitudes of people that need somebody to care and to show them the way to true life.
 - He said, "They have no shepherd." In other words, they have nobody to care about them – nobody to care for their soul. They were like dying, scattered sheep.
2. Then Jesus said in vs. 37, "*The harvest truly is plenteous...*"
 - In other words, there are plenty of people that need the Lord and need to know about Jesus Christ and what He has done for them. The harvest is plenteous.
3. Then He said, "*...but the laborers are few.*" This reminds me of what Christ said in Matthew 7:13-14. "*Few there be that find it.*"
 - Few want anything to do with the Lord, but even fewer want to labor for Him in His harvest fields. There will be a special reward in heaven for those who labor to bring people to Christ while on this earth. **1 Corinthians 3:6-8, 14**
4. Then Jesus proceeded to give the disciples **the key** to finding laborers. What is the first word of verse 38? "**PRAY** ye therefore the Lord of the harvest..."
 - The word "*pray*" means "to beg; to petition; to make request."
5. Jesus believed in prayer and believed that:

Prayer is the ultimate solution to our problems.

1. Jesus establishes the problem in verse 36-37. The problem is two-fold.
 - The first part is that there are multitudes of hurting people that have nobody to care for their soul.
 - The second part of the problem is that people aren't exactly lining up at the door to serve the Lord by caring for people and reaching out to them. The laborers are few.
2. Jesus said, "*Pray ye therefore...*" I love the "*therefore.*" It's as if Jesus is saying, "You have a problem, so it's obvious what you need to do – pray!"

- Notice that Jesus didn't give them tips on how to recruit workers or say, "Hey guys, let's offer these incentives to people if they will labor." No tricks, no gimmicks, and no course on how to win friends and influence people. He says, "Guys, we have a serious issue. You have to pray."
3. When you think of Jesus with all of His mighty power to heal people, cast out demons, and even raise the dead, you might think, "With all that power, He didn't need to pray."
 4. I submit to you that He had all that power to do those mighty things **because** He prayed so much. Jesus was constantly praying to His Father. Luke 5:16; 6:12; 9:18; 11:1
 5. Jesus was encountering problems every day – He was dealing with people's personal problems, spiritual problems, problems with His disciples, and His own problems (like the scribes and Pharisees always hounding Him, people wanting to kill Him, etc.).
 6. Jesus knew that the ultimate solution in dealing with these problems was prayer.

Prayer must be in accordance with the Lord's will.

1. Notice that Jesus called God "*the Lord of the harvest.*" At the end of verse 38, He calls it "his (God's) harvest."
2. In other words, it is God's will that these hurting people be cared for and reached out to. It is **His** harvest. So when we pray for laborers, we can pray confidently knowing that we are praying right in the center of God's will.
3. God's will is revealed in God's Word. This is why the study of God's Word (rightly divided) is so crucial. It will help you to pray with greater intelligence and understanding.
4. Sometimes we pray for things that are in clear violation of God's will, and we cannot expect those prayers to be answered. 1 John 5:14-15
 - "*Hear*" carries the idea of considering. I tell my child, "I don't want to hear any more about it." This doesn't mean I can't physically hear them talk, but that I am not going to consider it.
5. You say, "Pastor Dan, what if I'm not sure, and it seems to be a gray area in my mind?" I don't think you can go wrong praying like Jesus did right before He went to the cross. Matthew 26:39, 42

Prayer moves the Lord to action.

1. Notice the correlation between our prayers and divine action: **You** pray and **God** sends forth (vs. 38). Notice the action: “...*send forth.*” Literally, this means “to eject.”
2. Isn't it interesting that it is **God's** harvest, and He is the one that needs laborers, yet **we** are told to pray! This lets you know how committed God is to working in response to the prayers of His people.
3. Some things are clearly God's will, but He still needs men and women to pray. This is the story of the Bible – God and man working together. God is committed to working through humans in regards to His dealings here on earth.
4. This is why Jesus Christ prayed, as a man, and why we must pray. Prayer is what gets God involved in a situation. We see this in the Bible from beginning to end.
5. Do you know what God told Solomon in 2 Chronicles 7:12-15? “Solomon, I have heard your prayer. But the day may come that I have to judge Israel by not sending rain and by devouring the land, but *‘If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear them from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.’*” **2 Chronicles 7:14-15**
6. Let's return to the thought of our text. There is a harvest of hurting and lost people that need somebody to reach out to them, and Jesus said to pray. This is exactly what Paul taught in 1 Timothy 2.
 - God “*will have **all men** to be saved...*” **1 Timothy 2:4**
 - As well, Paul said that prayers and intercessions should be made for “***all men.***” (vs. 1) God's will is accomplished through His people's prayers.

Prayer is personal and specific.

1. Did you notice that Jesus did not just say, “Pray the Lord of the harvest...” He said to His disciples, “*Pray ye...*” The word “ye” is the Old English for “you,” and it is in the plural form. He is speaking specifically to the twelve.
2. Jesus made this very personal, and He desired for them to pray very specifically that the Lord would send forth laborers into His harvest.
3. Obviously, Jesus believed that God answers prayer. I think one of the reasons we don't pray specifically is because we don't really believe that God answers prayer. Therefore, we pray in very generic and broad generalities.

4. If we believe that our prayers move the Lord to action, it should cause us to pray fervently, passionately, and specifically. Colossians 4:12

In Conclusion:

1. What is the key to getting additional laborers to serve in God's harvest fields? The key is **prayer** according to Jesus.
2. Of course it would be quite hypocritical to pray for additional laborers if we are not serving the Lord ourselves.
3. Will you labor for Jesus Christ? Will you pray for laborers? Souls are in need and are at stake!