



SCRIPTURE GUIDE

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MATTHEW 9:35

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CITIZENS CHURCH



BEGIN YOUR TIME WITH SILENCE AND PRAYER

Invite the Holy Spirit to lead and guide your time with the Lord. Quiet your mind and spend a few minutes in silence.

READ THE FOLLOWING PRAYER

Father, You have promised to pursue me all the days of my life with Your goodness and mercy. I praise You for this assurance. You are always compassionate and loving, and I confess that when others are helpless or harassed, I can be uncaring, lacking in compassion and impatient. Father, forgive me. I sometimes stray like a sheep without a shepherd, looking to idols in my heart for comfort or justification. Jesus, thank You for Your love for me and for Your wounds by which I am healed. Holy Spirit, enable me to show compassion and care for others. Remind me to pray for the harvest. Use my gifts to build Your Church. I praise Your holy name. Amen.

BRIEFLY REFLECT

If you have been saved by God, you are now a temple of the Holy Spirit who counsels, sanctifies, teaches, empowers, illuminates sin and seals your salvation. The work of the Holy Spirit in you produces a likeness of Christ. Spiritual gifts are given to every believer to edify the body of Christ, His Church. The gifts are to be used in ministry to the Church and to the world. No one person has all of the spiritual gifts nor is any one of the gifts given to all persons. All gifts are equally important and necessary to build God's kingdom.

What interest or hobby do you enjoy most? Is this an area in which you can use your spiritual gifts?

KNOW THE CONTEXT

Thus far in his gospel, Matthew has focused primarily on Jesus' preaching and teaching (Sermon on the Mount) and on His miracles. Our passage this week begins Jesus' second discourse in which He instructs the disciples to pray for His harvest because the workers are few. Jesus' expectation of His disciples in this passage is prayer. He commands them to pray before He sends them out to proclaim, "the kingdom of heaven has come near" (Matthew 10).

READ MATTHEW 9:35-38

³⁵ And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. ³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; ³⁸ therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

DIVE INTO SCRIPTURE

- What do you think is the mission of the Church?
- What is a disciple? What marks a true disciple of Jesus Christ? Read Luke 6:40, 14:25–33; John 13:34–35; John 14:15; Matthew 28:20.
- What three areas of ministry did Jesus carry to all the cities and villages? What did He teach and proclaim?
- Summarize “the gospel of the kingdom” in one or two sentences.
- According to verse 36, what is the state of the crowd? What is Jesus’ heart toward them? How did He feel when He saw so many lost people?
- What is Jesus referring to when he says “the harvest?”
- What is the connection between verses 35–36 and 37?
- According to verse 38, whose harvest is it? In our “participation trophy” society, does it seem counterintuitive that you are the laborer, but the harvest is not yours to claim?
- “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few.” This is a matter-of-fact statement by Jesus. Do you believe the harvest is plentiful today? Are there enough workers in Plano and its surrounding cities? Share a few reasons for your answer.
- The only specific action Jesus mentions in verse 38 is prayer. How often do you “pray earnestly,” specifically for the Lord of the harvest to send you, His laborer, into His harvest? Where is your harvesting field?

BE ENCOURAGED

“Real love, the Bible says, instinctively desires permanence. In sharp contrast with our culture, the Bible teaches that the essence of marriage is a sacrificial commitment to the good of the other. That means that love is more fundamentally action than emotion. But in talking this way, there is a danger of falling into the opposite error that characterized many ancient and traditional societies. It is possible to see marriage as merely a social transaction, a way of doing your duty to family, tribe and society. Traditional societies made the family the ultimate value in life, and so marriage was a mere transaction that helped your family’s interest. By contrast, contemporary Western societies make the individual’s happiness the ultimate value, and so marriage becomes primarily an experience of romantic fulfillment. But the Bible sees God as the supreme good – not the individual or the family – and that gives us a view of marriage that intimately unites feelings and duty, passion and promise. That is because at the heart of the Biblical idea of marriage is the covenant.” – Tim Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage*

PRACTICE WISDOM IN THE WEEK AHEAD

Whether you are single or married, consider what you have learned from the passage that might lead you to praise God, repent of sin and trust in His gracious promises.

CONSIDER READING THESE ADDITIONAL PRACTICES

SCRIPTURE

WORSHIP

CONVERSATION

LITURGY

