

Growing a Heart for the Harvest

Matthew 9:18-38

Goal

To model our lives after Jesus. To be a disciple is to follow and learn from Him. We are to see people as He sees them and to feel deep, gut-wrenching compassion for people as He feels. We are called not only to pray for the harvest but are sent out to be workers too.

Connect

- If you are willing to share, in what ways is God shaping your heart for the harvest? Where are you being challenged in this?
- In what ways, as a connect group, might you be able to make a difference in the harvest?

Read

Matthew 9:18-38

For a fuller context you may like to read the whole of Matthew 9 & 10

The synagogue leader and the bleeding woman Mark 5:21-43 & Luke 8:40-56

Discuss

- Discuss any words or aspects of the passage that stand out to you.
- Why did Jesus asked who touched Him? Did He not know the answer? What was the result of this question? For the woman? For the crowd? For the disciples?
- How did Jesus respond to the lady? What can we learn about His character and heart for the harvest from this?
- What do you notice about each of the healing accounts? How does each person approach Jesus? What can we learn about our faith posture from them?
- A sheep without a shepherd. Often lost people seem to be fairly “together.” How can we make an opening for the gospel with people who don’t seem to sense their need for it?
- As you read the journey Jesus has been on so far, when you get to v35-38, how and what do you think Jesus would have been feeling at this point in His ministry?
- What are the influences in our lives that increased our compassion for the lost? How could these influences be passed on to others?
- What is the “work” Jesus is looking for workers to do?
- What is Jesus’ first command to the disciples in this section? What was it NOT to do?
- What is God saying to you today? And how will you respond in obedience?

Application

Here are the four suggestions given to grow a heart for the harvest:

1. Pray for compassion:
2. Pray for the harvest
3. Spend time in the harvest
4. Be a worker

Pray Together.

PRAYER WALK IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

GO FOR A WALK IN YOUR "NEIGHBORHOOD" – WHERE YOU LIVE, WORK, OR PLAY. USE THE QUESTIONS BELOW TO HELP INFORM YOUR PRAYERS. EACH QUESTION WILL OPEN YOUR HEART AND MIND TO FEEL THE HEARTBEAT OF YOUR "NEIGHBOURHOOD". AS YOU WALK AND ENGAGE WITH YOUR "NEIGHBOURHOOD" BE OPEN TO WHAT GOD MIGHT REVEAL. AFTER YOU COMPLETE YOUR WALK, YOU MIGHT LIKE TO JOURNAL YOUR THOUGHTS AND OBSERVATIONS.

1. As you stand just outside your house or on the footpath—what do you see as you look in each direction? What do you hear or sense? What activity do you notice?
2. What do you notice about the front gardens or entrance ways to each of the houses or apartments? Does your neighbourhood feel like a cared-for place?
3. How many houses are for sale? What indicators of transience do you observe? Does the neighbourhood have a feeling of permanence or change?
4. Stop—sit if you can—in a tree-lined street or quieter spot and also at a busy intersection. How quiet or noisy is it? Where do you sense peace?
5. What public spaces are provided for children, teenagers or adults? Are they being used? If so, in what ways?
6. If there is a local park, what do you notice about it? Does it feel like an inviting place? Who is there? How is it used?
7. Do you pass any churches or religious buildings? What does their design or appearance communicate to you?
8. What kinds of commercial buildings are there? Walk around a supermarket or local store and identify who makes up the clientele.
9. What do you notice about the places you can sit, relax, or gather? Are there any?
10. Excluding the areas of business, how many people did you pass walking? What age, race, and gender are they? How pedestrian-friendly is the neighbourhood?
11. Imagine yourself as an old, infirm person, or as a young child living in the middle of this neighbourhood. How disadvantaged or advantaged would you be?
12. Are there places in your neighbourhood that you wouldn't go? Why?
13. Where are the places of life, hope, beauty or community in this neighbourhood?
14. What evidence of struggle, sadness, despair, neglect and alienation do you see?
15. What sense of connection do you feel to your neighbourhood as you walk through it?
16. In what ways do you sense God's presence where you live?
17. What is "good news" for these people?
18. Where is God already at work? And how can we join with God?

