

WHEN THE NEEDS NEVER END

Text: Matthew 9:35-38

Key Word: Needs

Key Thought: What Jesus Did When the Needs Became Overwhelming

The reward for serving God is that we are given a greater opportunity to serve Him. Ministry leads to further ministry. Opportunity builds upon opportunity.

God has recently been giving an outpouring of His Spirit in such a way that many lives are being brought into the Kingdom of God and becoming grounded in His Word. God is breaking forth in a fresh wave of his glory.

It has become easier to preach, teach and witness the Good News of Jesus Christ. A few of us have received a miracle of healing. Many minds have been renewed in Christ Jesus. Our Youth are catching the flame that is burning the desire of God into their hearts. Radical transformations are taking place.

As Jesus travelled throughout the hills of Judea, Samaria and Galilee He demonstrated the power of the Living God. The more He touched the more the crowds came. There seemed to be no end to the opportunities to touch lives.

As the needs increase around us we need to keep focused so the people will not be left without help. Matthew gave us some very important guidelines when we reach a point where the needs never end. **What did Jesus do when He reached this point in ministry?**

I. HE SAW THE CROWDS (Matthew 9:36a)

II. HE HAD COMPASSION ON THEM (Matthew 9:36b)

III. HE CALLED HIS DISCIPLES TO PRAYER (Matthew 9:38)

I. HE SAW THE CROWDS (Matthew 9:36a)

Have you ever noticed how people can look at you and yet be looking right past you at the same time? Their mind and thoughts are far from you and yet they are looking directly at you.

It was during the midst of Jesus' preaching and teaching campaigns throughout the towns and villages that He began to take special notice of the people. You would think that if you were healing people of every kind of sickness and disease that you would notice them. But we know that we can become just another person in the crowd.

I. HE SAW THE CROWDS (Matthew 9:36a) (Contd.)

People can simply become faces in a crowd. There can be no relationships developed. People can become a mass of empty faces following the flow. All are unique and yet they appear the same - at least on the surface. Our lives are getting so complicated that we have no time or strength to develop in-depth relationships.

The Bible shows us that Jesus refused to get caught up by the normal approach of Temple service practised by the scribes and Pharisees.

"When he saw the crowds . . ."

Matthew 9:38a

The word "**saw**" does NOT mean "*a casual glance.*" The word carries with it the meaning that Jesus "**knew them.**" He was aware who they were and what their real needs really were. **He understood them.** Anyone can preach the gospel with a little training - but it takes someone with the heart of Jesus to "*see the crowds.*"

There are two stages in preaching the gospel. There is first the **PROCLAMATION** of the Gospel. The Greek word "*kerusso*" means to "*announce, proclaim or herald.*"

Jesus said,

"This gospel of the kingdom will be preached (kerusso) in all the world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."

Matthew 24:14

After our Lord's resurrection,

"He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach (kerusso) the good news to all creation.'"

Mark 16:15

The second stage of preaching the Gospel is the **AFFIRMATION** stage. We must not only preach the Gospel, we must also model it for others to see. The world needs to know that we are truly concerned about them.

"I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day."

We need to **SEE INTO** a person's heart cry before we can truly **SPEAK INTO** their heart. We must get beyond the surface facade in order to really help people. Jesus was a Master at this. We must carefully get beyond the boundary walls that people keep in front of them.

I. HE SAW THE CROWDS (Matthew 9:36a) (Contd.)

The nerves leading to the eye are much larger than those leading to the ear. Science tells us that we give 25 times as much attention to what we see then to what we hear.

As the crowds increase, our spiritual eyesight must sharpen so we can see as God would see. The abundance of needs will never be met until we see them **through the eyes of Christ.**

II. HE HAD COMPASSION ON THEM (Matthew 9:36b)

Seeing the crowds will not in itself solve the problems. Our seeing must lead us to further action. An action that will be lead by an emotional, mental and physical response.

We can all watch the horrid pictures and hear the news about the ethnic cleansing and become desensitized to the needs of others. We can all agree that the Afghan plight is due to injustice and yet never become involved in touching even one life. We can leave the needs into the hands of our government to solve but thats not the answer.

I've watched people change as we see their needs and begin to have compassion on them. Every one of us has a voice to speak, a hand to be extended in loving care, a home to invite others into, a heart to express love with. Don't we all have a chair and table where we can sit down and share some fellowship around?

We are over-equipped in Canada to serve the needs around us. We need to ask ourselves why the needs are continuing to increase. **People do not need to be harassed and helpless.** I know in many cases I'm speaking to a converted crowd. You are already doing it. Please don't stop even when the needs get overwhelming

The word "*compassion*" was often associated with Jesus in regards to His response toward the increasing needs around Him. The word means to have our inwards moved with a deep concern or yearning for someone else's need. In our times of prayer and fasting we need to ask God to instill within our hearts the desire to have even a greater compassion for others.

Jesus saw the crowds like sheep without a shepherd. As our churches grow we will need more caring shepherds. These people will make it their need to meet the needs of others. They will oversee and care for the flock. They will also protect and comfort those who are being harassed by the enemy of their souls.

II. HE HAD COMPASSION ON THEM (Matthew 9:36b) (Contd.)

1958 Butcher Drives Sheep

*** A group of tourists was on its way to Palestine and its guide was describing some of the quaint customs of the East.

"Now," he said, "you are accustomed to seeing the shepherd following the sheep through the English lanes and byways. Out in the East, however, things are different, for the shepherd always leads the way, going on before the flock. And the sheep follow him, for they know his voice."

The party reached Palestine, and to their amusement, almost the first sight to meet them was that of a flock of sheep being driven along by a man. The guide was astonished and immediately made it his business to accost the shepherd.

"Why is it that you are driving these sheep?" he asked. "I have always been told that the Eastern shepherd leads his sheep."

"You are right, sir" replied the man. "The shepherd does lead his sheep. But you see, I'm not the shepherd, I'm the butcher."

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III. HE CALLED HIS DISCIPLES TO PRAYER (Matthew 9:38)

It is important to see with a heart of compassion. Yet if we go forth without prayer the work will be left uncompleted and often in shambles.

The problem is NOT in having enough harvest when it comes to the kingdom of God. The people came to Jesus in multitudes. **Not even Jesus was able to meet every need on a personal level.** He therefore, called His disciples to prayer - but not just prayer. He called them to specific prayer. When was the last time you prayed for God to send forth labourers into the harvest field of lost souls?

*** When I was a teenager, I had the opportunity to work for a local farmer to help bring in the hay. I can still remember travelling down the country roads on a tractor that was drawing a bailer and several wagons. It looked a small train.

When we arrived at the field, the equipment was set up and driven to the first windrow. One of us would be involved in arranging the hay in a special pattern on the wagon. Steps were made out of the hay so we could pile it in many layers.

(Contd.)

III. HE CALLED HIS DISCIPLES TO PRAYER (Matthew 9:38)(Contd.)

As the wagon got full, the work load increased. One of us climbed to the top while the other one passed up the remaining bales. The work was extremely labour intensive. I often thought how nice it would be for someone to take my place so I could regain some strength. Instead though, the temporary break came once the wagon was loaded . . . all 13 layers.

But the work was still only half completed. The hay had to be brought in from the field and elevated into the hay loft. I was the hired teenager so of course, I ended up in the hot, dusty hayloft. If there had been a simpler way, I'm sure I would have thought about it.

Some farmers had a team of laborers in the field as well as one at the barn. Yet no matter how it was done, it took a lot of hard work and healthy sweat to complete. I can remember quickly falling to sleep on those nights. I wish I could say the same about waking up in the morning. Even young muscles hurt after a good day of work

The farmer's son was always excited to see the wagons as they drove into the barnyard. He was oblivious to all the hard work that had been done. Once the fun turned to work, he quickly disappeared. I don't blame him, He was a smart kid. I wouldn't want to compete with him today. ***

There are no shortcuts in getting the harvest of souls into the kingdom for God. **It will take consistent, intensive and sacrificial labour.** It will take labourers who have a heart for the lost. It will take workers who have an eye out for the needs around them. They also need a heart of compassion. **All of what they do must be drenched in prayer.**

Have you seen the increasing needs that have to be met? If so, perhaps God is calling you to become involved in one way or another. There will never be an end to the work. Let Him have His way in your life today. You may be the answer to someone's prayer.

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Date: Sept 12/21

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: Lord, Be Glorified (In My Life) - D

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