



Harvest Time!

Matthew 9:36-38 (Topical Message)

Jesus talked about a harvest in Matthew Chapter 9:36-39. The harvest He talked about was a spiritual harvest. Jesus told His disciples to pray for this harvest. So today I want to examine what Jesus said to His disciples (Then) that is still important for us as his disciple to understand today. Jesus describes 3 actions His Disciples should take:

Actions:

1. Harvesting In

2. Working From

3. Sending Out

Matthew 9:36-38 (NASB)

³⁶ Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then He *said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. ³⁸ "Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."

Background (Context)

Matthew 9:35 (NASB)

³⁵ Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, **teaching** in their synagogues and **proclaiming** the gospel of the kingdom, and **healing** every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

Jesus during His 3-year public ministry it says in verse 35 was going to all the cities and villages teaching in the synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom.

This was before Christ was crucified and resurrected from the dead. He was proclaiming the gospel (Christ's death, burial and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins) looking forward to the cross. We are now looking backward to the cross – Amen!

Jesus was also healing every kind of disease and sickness. The healings of Jesus of people authenticated who He was. He was the God-Man who came to earth to be sacrificed for man's sins, and by His resurrection offers man spiritual life by belief in Him. Amen!

Matthew 9:36 (NASB)

³⁶ Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.

Now it says seeing the people –

Jesus felt **compassion** for them:

Other translations say (felt sorry), (moved with compassion), (moved with pity and sympathy):

Jesus felt Compassion:

Compassion (Merriam / Websters Definition)- sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it

Why?

because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.

Distressed – Harassed, Troubled, Weary, Bewildered, Confused, Fatigued (*Verb Tense – Habitually in this state) from laboring*

Dispirited – Helpless, Worn out

a. The Pharisees with their 613 laws and traditions were crushing the people with excessive burdens & rules causing distress. This was their attempt at being religious.

Religious distress still occurs in our society today. Religion is all about doing something to be accepted by God. Jesus had compassion on these peoples, because He knew the pressure from the Pharisees in attempting to keep the Law would never give man eternal life, peace, joy, a purpose or contentment in life. No, It's only by faith in the Him, and the Gospel message.

But these peoples were under the thumb of the religious Pharisee in a constant state of distress.

Brothers & Sisters – This also occurs in many Christian circles in the world today. Many Christian leaders just substitute Christian Rules & Procedures (C.R.A.P.) for Old Covenant Law. The result is the same - Distress

Jesus doesn't want man's religious activities; He wants a relationship with man!

Jesus made this point very clearly in Matt 9:13, speaking to the Pharisees

Matthew 9:13 (NASB)

¹³ "But go and learn what this means: 'I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT SACRIFICE,' for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Jesus desires that men have compassion on those lost and their need of spiritual life (Sinner), and not men's sacrifices and religious activities. Religious activities (Look Religious) in attempting to keep the Law for righteousness (Salvation), and those attempting to keep (After Salvation) Christian rules to grow and be used by God. Jesus desires to have a relationship with man (That's not rule keeping).

Every religion in the world today requires man to do something to be accepted by God and maintain acceptance by God, except for Christianity. Man, only has to believe in what was done by Christ on the cross (the Gospel Message). It already done – No more rule keeping and distress. Just faith and Rest!

Like a Sheep without a Shepherd

Jesus further explains His compassion is because these peoples are like sheep without a Shepherd. They have no one to guide them, to follow, to listen to and to be cared for them. Sheep are completely lost with out a Shepherd. And so is man without Jesus Christ our Chief Shepherd:

Hebrews 13:20 (NASB)

²⁰ Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, *even* Jesus our Lord,

John 10:11 (NASB)

¹¹ "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

Psalms 23:1 (NASB) - David

¹ The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

Jesus loves man and has compassion for man that are distressed, dispirited and like sheep that have no Shephard. Amen! That means Jesus has compassion for you and me, and Jesus wants to alleviate man of the distresses of life by offering them Eternal Life: Jesus desires all men are saved. But that's man's choice!

2 Peter 3:9 (NASB)

⁹ The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

Question – Do you feel **Distressed, Dispirited, Like a Sheep without a Shepherd?**

Answer – If you answered Yes, Come to Jesus Christ and He will give you rest for your soul

Matthew 11:28-29 (NASB)

²⁸ "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.

Soulical Rest – Rest for one's mind, will and emotions

If you are already a Christian and answered yes to this question – Remove yourself from law based teachings (Christin Rules and Procedures) to live the Christian life and rest in Christ. Christ's yoke is easy (United to Him), learn from Christ. Learn about God's Grace, the New Covenant of Grace, and your new source from which to live life (Christ)

Action 1 - Harvesting In

³⁷ Then He *said to His disciples, "**The harvest is plentiful**, but the workers are **few**."

Now Jesus equates people in verse 36 to a harvest: The Harvest of people who are distressed & dispirited and like Sheep without a Shepherd are plentiful.

Brothers & Sisters – All peoples of the world are the Harvest. There are a lot of people in the world. There are 7.8 billion people in the world. That's 7800000000 (78 with 8 zeros after) – That's a lot of people. In the United States there are 331,000,000 people (331 million). In Monmouth County NJ there are 620,000 people.

How many people in the world, country and county feel Distressed, Dispirited, Like a Sheep without a Shepherd?

All of them that don't know Jesus Christ and have spiritual life – Amen!

Why?

Romans 1:25 (NASB)

²⁵ For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

They have knowingly or unknowingly exchanged the truth of God (Salvation offered by Belief in Christ) for a lie. And worship and serve created things, and not the creator God. Disregarding God or being religious in attempt to be accepted by God. **Brothers & Sisters In Christ** – The harvest is Plentiful.

Action 2 - Working From

³⁷ Then He *said to His disciples, "The harvest is **plentiful**, **but the workers are few**."

Jesus tells His disciples that the workers are few. In other words, there are not enough workers to harvest what needs to be harvested. Who are the workers? All Christians are the workers – Amen!

There are 2.4 billion Christians in the world today according to Wikipedia. In the United States about 30% of the population is Christian according to Wikipedia. But that number is decreasing yearly: In addition, how many associate themselves as being a Christian but really don't believe in Christ? I'm sure that there are many that fall into this category

How many Christians see themselves as workers in a harvest field?

How many Christians can verbalize the Gospel message and the spiritual life that it offers?

Brothers & Sisters – The workers are few mainly because the average Christian hasn't discovered ***working from Christ*** (In Them) versus ***working for Christ***. Working from is dependance of Christ inside a believer, and the overflow of Christ to the outside world. Christ manifest's Himself in many ways to the outside world through a believer, which includes working the harvest (Sharing the Gospel, Leading someone to Christ).

Instead, many mistakenly think they are working for Christ like an employee seeking wages, benefits and bonuses. This working even though it may be a good work, it isn't a God work. Amen! Dead Works don't harvest people into the Kingdom of God. The few will become many when the Christian lives in dependance on Christ, and allows Christ to Harvest through Himself (Sharing Ones Faith).

Action 3 - Sending Out

Matthew 9:38 (NASB)

³⁸ "Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."

Jesus tells His disciples to beseech (Pray) to the Lord of the Harvest to send out workers into His Harvest: To solve the problem of having a plentiful harvest, with too few workers, Jesus tells His disciples to pray to the Lord to send out workers:

What a great idea? That we should pray! Amen! (So obvious)

Who is the Lord of the Harvest? That is referring to God the Father – Amen!

Prayer – How Powerful is Prayer Amen!

I recently heard a talk Billy Graham gave about what went into setting up and conducting one of his crusades. He said what you see at the actual event is only the tip of the iceberg of what went into preparing of the crusade. Below the surface is a lot of preparation.

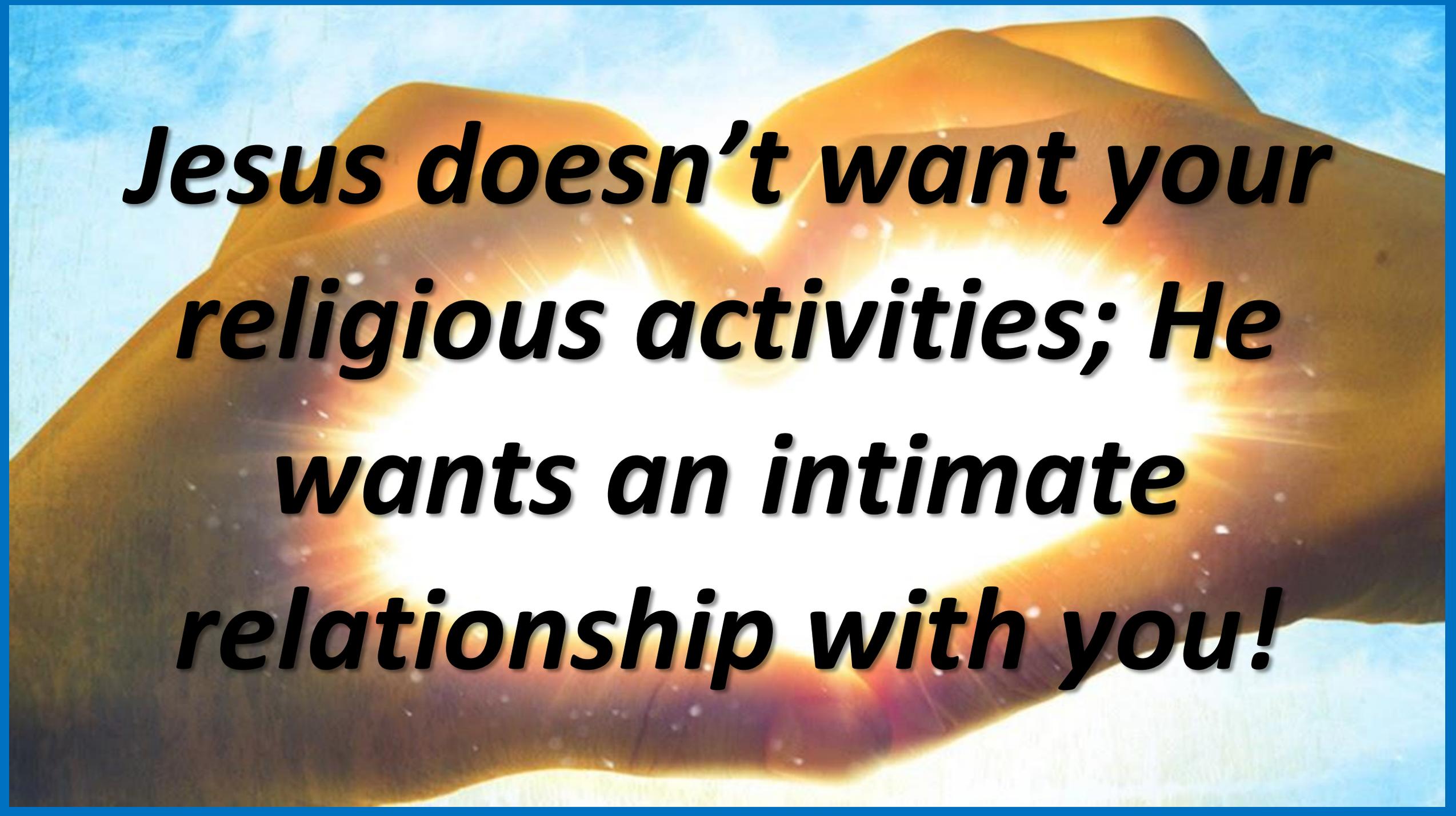
But he said the most important preparation for a crusade is prayer. Not only his prayers, but the prayers of all the Christians in the communities surrounding the event. All Christians, no matter what the denomination would pray months and weeks leading up to the crusade.

Question:

Do you feel right now God thrusting you and forcing you out to be a worker in the Harvest field?

If yes, pray the Lord of the Harvest will show you where to harvest (Amen!).

If no, pray the Lord of the Harvest will send out more workers (Amen!).



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