

BPUC Pentecost study 3
Matthew 9:35-10:8a NIV

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and illness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.'

Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and illness. These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: 'Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. As you go, proclaim this message: "The kingdom of heaven has come near." Heal those who are ill, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, and drive out demons.'

Q.1. V.35 says Jesus was doing 3 things. Describe each one:

- i. *'teaching in their synagogues'*
- ii. *proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and*
- iii. *healing every disease and illness*

Q.2. *Jesus 'saw the crowds... harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd'.* What does each phrase suggest about these people?

Q.3. Jesus was moved by compassion, why? And what did it lead him to do?

Q.4. What might Jesus have meant by *'The harvest is plentiful'*?

Q.5. What might Jesus have meant by *'the workers are few'*?

Q.6. *'Ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest field'.* What does this verse imply about Jesus' view of God and prayer?

Q.7. Jesus sends out the 12 disciples as *'workers'* into the harvest field. What were they to do and under whose authority did they go?

Q.8. Some of the disciples are described. How are they described and what might that say about them?

Q.9. Why are they to only go to the *'lost sheep of Israel'* not Gentiles or Samaritans?

Q.10. What is *'the kingdom of heaven'* and how has it *'come near'*?

Application: for reflection, prayer and action

Q.11. Where is your harvest field? Where is our church's harvest field?

Q.12. Who moves you to compassion & prayer?

Q.13. Among who locally has the *'kingdom come near'*? More widely?

Matthew 9:35-10:8a (my suggested answers)

NB. Please answer the questions yourself. We all have different ways of answering; God may give you greater insights than mine. Put '*John thinks*' ... before each answer.

Q.1. i. *Teaching in their synagogues* would have been like our church services – praise & prayer (adoration & confession), hymns/psalms, and Jesus would have taught on a passage from the OT; ii. '*proclaiming the good news of the kingdom*' – a public, outdoors activity to anyone who would listen – the good news is that God's saving reign (kingship) is powerfully present in Jesus' ministry; iii. *Healing disease and sickness* – arising out of sought needs among the people. Signs of the kingdom

Q.2. These people were under great stress and hardship – uncared for (exploited by Rome and Herod) and many were ill.

Q.3. Jesus was moved by compassion because here were God's people; created in God's image and having God's Law and Scriptures yet many were living in poverty and hardship (from illness and exploitation)

Q.4. Jesus looked around and saw the people as in need of God's good news and saving power (as revealed by Jesus)

Q.5. Jesus looked around and saw the need by saw very little caring behaviour from the leaders (the Pharisees, Scribes and Elders). There were 'few' (= the 12?)

Q.6. Jesus saw the need among the people – he knew God cared (love) and could change things (ruled) – so he suggested prayer.

Q.7. The disciples were to go to 'Israel' i.e. God's people – to bring light, healing and hope – so Israel could fulfil her destiny as a 'light to the nations and holy people' Jesus hoped the people would rally to his movement of good news.

Q.8. Simon is 'Peter' (Rock); Andrew 'Simon's brother) James & John are both (fishermen) sons of Zebedee; Matthew 'the tax collector' (= shunned Roman traitor); James 'son of Alphaeus'; Simon 'the Zealot' (= insurrectionist); & Judas '*Iscaiot, who betrayed him*' (Iscaiot may be an unknown town, or a Latinised version of 'dagger', who did the unspeakable – betrayed the Messiah/Saviour)

Q.9. They are to initially go to 'Israel' (see Q.7. answer). Later Jesus broadens the scope of the sending to include Samaritans and Gentiles (all nations)

Q.10. The kingdom is God's saving rule and it has come in the ministry/mission of Jesus. He is bringing God's saving rule to bear in people's lives e.g. v.35

Q.11. Your harvest field is where you rub shoulders with non-churchgoers. The church's harvest field is Banora Point community through ministries like Mainly Music, Messy Church, Friday Craft, the Fete & stalls, Wed Fellowship, chira-companions, etc.

Q.12. Your own answer.

Q.13. It comes near to anyone who is influenced by our ministry/mission Q.11. More widely to those mission groups and individuals (children & missionaries) who we support.