

Matthew 9:35 – 10:8 ESV

# Caring About the Lost!

Services: Sunday, 6/18 at 8:00 & 10:45 + Monday, 6/19 at 7 PM

Church Year: 2<sup>nd</sup> Sun. after Pentecost / 1<sup>st</sup> Sun. after Trinity – 2017

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: Since God deeply cared about us – *who were all condemned sinners*, He took amazing action, ➔ *first, through Jesus*, to take away the sin of the world, ➔ *second, through Holy Baptism*, to give us the eternal benefits of Jesus' finished work!

We are so blessed, *but what about many others?* Jesus has done the work, *but many have not yet received the benefits of His work or have fallen away!* Therefore, in this sermon, we will see ➔ how much Jesus cares about the lost, then ➔ the actions He took to demonstrate His care!

1. **Teaching and Miracles:** <sup>35</sup> **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.**
  - a. Teaching and proclaiming: So Jesus **taught God's truth** – that we have all fallen short, *thus condemned ourselves and have no way out*; and then He **proclaimed the gospel** – *that God is taking action through Him to open heaven for everyone!* **What radical messages!** Many might say, "I'm not that bad – *condemned*, so I don't need Jesus to open heaven for me!" Therefore...
  - b. Miracles: God the Father did them through Jesus to prove His words are true, ➔ *that we really are*

condemned and ➡ that Jesus really would take away the sin of the world! All people have their own beliefs, but it's best when we let go of our own beliefs and embrace God's precious truth!

2. **Harvest Plentiful, Workers Few:** <sup>36</sup> When he saw the crowds, he had compassion [*pity, sympathy*] for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. <sup>37</sup> Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; <sup>38</sup> therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.” // Jesus’ compassion was very strong! Lenski noted that “of the three words translated ‘being compassionate’ [the one used here] is the strongest, for it indicates not only a pained feeling at the sight of suffering, but in addition a strong desire to relieve and to remove the sufferings” (382-383).
- a. Many people need to hear God’s Word: In Matthew chapter 7, Jesus talked about the “many” and the “few.” The “many” are deceived and lost, while only the “few” know Jesus, *thus have God’s gift of eternal life!* Since Jesus said that “many” are lost, *let us know that is true!*
  - b. Pray for people to speak the Word: Since Jesus saw the need, He asked His disciples to “pray earnestly” about that need, *that the Father would send laborers to gather in the harvest!* What does that mean? To gather in “all those in whom the work of God’s grace [had succeeded]” (Lenski, 384-385). Think about this order: (1) The Father chose people in Christ before creation;

then (2) the Father sent His Son to do His saving work; then (3) the Father entrusted Jesus to gather the ones He chose; then (4) Jesus called upon His disciples to pray, and then (5) Jesus sent out His disciples to proclaim His work!

- c. Share the Word with others: **Let us** †pray for the LORD to send out laborers, †pray for those who do not yet know Jesus; and †use today's brochure insert, "**How Good Is Good Enough?**" to share God's saving truth with others!

3. **The Twelve are Identified and Given Authority:**

10:1 **And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction. <sup>2</sup> The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; <sup>3</sup> Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; <sup>4</sup> Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. //**

So the Father gave Jesus authority over unclean spirits and diseases; then Jesus gave that same authority to the twelve – *in preparation for sending them out.*

Notice the twelve are grouped into six pairs; *they were sent out two-by-two*; good advice for us *as we recognize our need for support and encouragement!*

4. **The Twelve are Instructed:** <sup>5</sup> **These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, <sup>6</sup> but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**

**<sup>7</sup> And proclaim as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ <sup>8</sup> Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay.”**

- a. Gentiles and Samaritans: Those words describe non-Jews and half-Jews. Doesn’t it sound unusual that Jesus told His disciples to avoid all such people? Why? Because **“the time for world-wide evangelization had not yet come”** (Lenski, 391).
- b. The lost sheep of Israel: Think about that phrase, it describes sheep that *were* in the fold, but have strayed and are *currently* in a state of *perishing*. That was Jesus’ concern when He sent His disciples; even Paul went first to the Jews, then to the Gentiles. What about today? Many who were baptized into Christ have strayed and are now perishing, so let us reach out *to them* and also *to those who have never heard God’s truth about our sin and Jesus’ saving work!*
- c. Proclaim and heal: Similar to what Jesus did earlier, *to* Jesus told them to proclaim; then, *to prove their words to be true*, *to* Jesus told them to heal! For us, we share God’s truth; then, *to prove what we share to be true*, we show them what it says in God’s Holy Word!

**Conclusion:** Let us pray: Lord Jesus, as You cared for the lost, then took action, *so help us to do the same!* In Your name!

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