

# UNEXPECTED MISSION

## Lesson 8

### Matthew 9:35–38

#### RECAP

Take a moment to share about your experience with last week's "Spiritual Practice" and "On Mission" sections.

#### BIG IDEA

While it was Jesus alone who paid the price for our sins and restored relationship with God the Father, sharing this Good News with others was something He didn't plan to do alone. There is a clear call throughout Scripture to participate in the mission of Jesus—to bring the peace, power, and presence of Jesus wherever we step in our city and spheres of influence.

#### CONTEXT

After Jesus gave His Sermon on the Mount,<sup>1</sup> He performed many miracles.<sup>2</sup> He healed leprosy, illness, and paralysis, He cast out evil spirits, and He calmed a storm. **Matthew 9:35–38** serves as a bridge or connection between the narrative of Jesus' ministry in **Matthew 5–9**<sup>3</sup> and the extension of that ministry to His disciples in **chapter 10** and beyond.<sup>4</sup>

#### READ MATTHEW 9:35–38

<sup>35</sup> *Jesus traveled through all the towns and villages of that area, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom. And he healed every kind of disease and illness.* <sup>36</sup> *When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.* <sup>37</sup> *He said to his disciples, "The harvest is great, but the workers are few.* <sup>38</sup> *So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields."*

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<sup>1</sup> **Matthew 5–7**

<sup>2</sup> **Matthew 8–9**

<sup>3</sup> This ministry is succinctly summarized in **Matthew 9:35**.

<sup>4</sup> *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition*. IVP Academic, 1994. Bible Gateway Plus



- d. How do you share or announce that Good News in your everyday life?

2. What was Jesus' response to the crowds? (9:36)

- a. "The word which is used for moved with compassion (σπλαγχνίζομαι/*splagchnistheis*) is the strongest word for pity in the Greek language. It is formed from the word σπλάγχνον/*splagchna*, which means the bowels, and it describes the compassion which moves a man to the deepest depths of his being. In the Gospels, apart from its use in some of the parables, it is used only of Jesus. When we study these passages, we are able to see the things which moved Jesus most of all."<sup>6</sup> From the following verses, underline the things that moved Jesus to compassion:

i. **Matthew 14:14**

*Jesus saw the huge crowd as he stepped from the boat, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick.*

ii. **Matthew 20:30–34**

<sup>30</sup> *Two blind men were sitting beside the road. When they heard that Jesus was coming that way, they began shouting, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!"* <sup>31</sup> *"Be quiet!" the crowd yelled at them. But they only shouted louder, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!"* <sup>32</sup> *When Jesus heard them, he stopped and called, "What do you want me to do for you?"*

<sup>33</sup> *"Lord," they said, "we want to see!"* <sup>34</sup> *Jesus felt*

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<sup>6</sup> Barclay, William. *The Gospel of Matthew*. Vol. 1, Westminster Press, 1975. 354-355

*sorry for them and touched their eyes. Instantly they could see! Then they followed him.*

iii. **Mark 9:20–22**

*<sup>20</sup> So they brought the boy. But when the evil spirit saw Jesus, it threw the child into a violent convulsion, and he fell to the ground, writhing and foaming at the mouth. <sup>21</sup> “How long has this been happening?” Jesus asked the boy’s father. He replied, “Since he was a little boy. <sup>22</sup> The spirit often throws him into the fire or into water, trying to kill him. Have mercy on us and help us, if you can.”*

iv. **Luke 7:11–15**

*<sup>11</sup> Soon afterward Jesus went with his disciples to the village of Nain, and a large crowd followed him. <sup>12</sup> A funeral procession was coming out as he approached the village gate. The young man who had died was a widow’s only son, and a large crowd from the village was with her. <sup>13</sup> When the Lord saw her, his heart overflowed with compassion. “Don’t cry!” he said. <sup>14</sup> Then he walked over to the coffin and touched it, and the bearers stopped. “Young man,” he said, “I tell you, get up.” <sup>15</sup> Then the dead boy sat up and began to talk! And Jesus gave him back to his mother.*

v. **Matthew 15:32**

*Then Jesus called his disciples and told them, “I feel sorry for these people. They have been here with me for three days, and they have nothing left to eat. I don’t want to send them away hungry, or they will faint along the way.”*

vi. **Mark 1:40–41**

*<sup>40</sup> A man with leprosy came and knelt in front of Jesus, begging to be healed. “If you are willing, you can heal me and make me clean,” he said. <sup>41</sup> Moved with compassion, Jesus reached out and touched him. “I am willing,” he said. “Be healed!”*

b. Jesus saw people's pain and suffering and He was moved in the deepest part of Himself. What situations and people move you to compassion?

c. What are the places, specific people, or situations where you struggle to show compassion?

3. How would you like to experience Jesus' compassion for you today? Spend some time asking Jesus to make His compassion for you known.

4. What compassionate observation did Jesus make next?  
(**Matthew 9:37**)

“When [Jesus] and the orthodox religious leaders of his day looked on the crowd of ordinary men and women, they saw them in quite different ways. The Pharisees saw the common people as chaff to be destroyed and burned up; Jesus saw them as a harvest to be reaped and to be saved.”<sup>7</sup> How do you view the people around you who don’t yet know Jesus?

5. After His observation, what instruction did Jesus give?  
(**Matthew 9:38**)

In the next chapter, Jesus gave the 12 disciples the authority to cast out evil spirits and to heal every kind of disease as He sent them out to the lost sheep of Israel.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, “It is worth noting that those who are here called to pray are in the next chapter sent out themselves!”<sup>9</sup> Why do you think Jesus asked them to pray for workers before He sent them out as the workers?

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<sup>7</sup> Barclay, William. *The Gospel of Matthew*. Vol. 1, Westminster Press, 1975. 356

<sup>8</sup> **Matthew 10:1–8**

<sup>9</sup> *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition*. IVP Academic, 1994. Bible Gateway Plus

6. Today, we are able to look at the whole story and read how Jesus commissioned all of His followers, including us,<sup>10</sup> before He ascended into Heaven. Jesus didn't stop by just asking us to pray. What instructions do you see in the following commission?

*<sup>18</sup> Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. <sup>20</sup> Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:18–20)*

- a. From all that you have witnessed Jesus doing in His ministry, how are you modeling your life after Him?

- b. In what ways do you see your life as ministry?

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<sup>10</sup> "While Matthew normally emphasizes a small group of disciples around Jesus, it need not be restricted to the Twelve here. The disciples are all those who have responded to his summons to the kingdom of heaven. Jesus will send out the Twelve on a special mission within Israel (**10:1–15**), but as long as there are needy crowds, he calls disciples throughout the ages to become harvest workers (**10:16–23**)."  
Wilkins, Michael J. *Matthew: The NIV Application Commentary from Biblical Text to Contemporary Life*. Zondervan, 2004. Bible Gateway Plus

c. In what ways is the Church modeling the way Jesus did ministry?

7. Each of these stories tells us more about Jesus, the unexpected King. What is one thing you have learned about Jesus from this lesson, and how will it impact how you live?



## **SPIRITUAL PRACTICE**

We are all called to be disciples of Jesus, as well as make disciples of Jesus. Therefore, at times, we need to take inventory of the ways we are both being developed and the ways we are developing others. Take some time to pray and reflect on the following questions:

How am I being developed as a follower of Jesus? Who is helping me develop?

How am I helping develop someone in the ways of Jesus? Who could I begin to help develop?

Spend some time sitting and listening to Holy Spirit. What are you sensing Him saying to you?

## ON MISSION

There are many instructions given in the Scriptures, but one that stands out is the Great Commission (mentioned before), found in **Matthew 28:18–20**:

*<sup>18</sup> Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. <sup>20</sup> Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

One way to interpret this Scripture is, “We are called to be the peace, power, and presence of Jesus everywhere we step foot.”

How does this interpretation help your understanding?

In what ways are you the peace, power, and presence of Jesus in your spheres of influence?

How is God calling you to expand the peace, power, and presence of Jesus?

## PRAYER REQUESTS

# SERMON NOTES

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