



LIFE *On* MISSION

ADVENTIST CHURCH *in Sydney*

THROUGH HIS EYES

Sermon Outline

Matthew 9:35-38

Prayer:

INTRODUCTION:

- Would be artists, are often told that they should attempt to MIMIC the masters.
- Some have said that copying from the master's reveals to us that drawing is always emotional. It does NOT just involve precision.
- As you study and endeavor to copy the master artists, you gain insight into what made them so gifted and successful.

- But what about Jesus and His ministry and His evangelism? Should we MIMIC the Master?

"Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, "Follow Me." Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, 143

- ****Does evangelism still work?**
- ****If Jesus' method of evangelism alone will bring true success, then what exactly was Jesus' method?**
- ****What did it look like in reality?**
- ****And, can Jesus' method of evangelism be replicated, and imitated by us today?**

BODY:

1. MINISTRY OF THE MASTER:

(A). Christ's Method:

Read Matthew 9:35

- Notice what Christ's method of evangelism was.
 - He continued to go through all the villages and towns of Galilee.
 - i. He **TAUGHT** in the Jewish synagogues – He preached to the religious.
 - ii. He **PREACHED** the "gospel of the kingdom". He preached to the non-religious.

- iii. He **HEALED** *“every sickness and every disease among the people.”* Jesus ministered to the hurting, the dejected, and the outcasts.
- This was Jesus’ method of ministry and evangelism. TEACHING, PREACHING and HEALING.
- However, this is NOT the first time we see Jesus’ method enacted in the book of Matthew look at what we find in **Matthew 4:23**.

“And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.”

(Matthew 4:23, NKJV)

(B). Jesus’ Ministry was Holistic:

- Jesus’ ministry to humanity was NOT an “EITHER / OR” ministry. Jesus’ method was holistic – It encompassed proclamation as well as social and physical concerns of humanity.
- Today in some Christian circles, we find a complete imbalance when it comes to ministry and evangelism. Perhaps it runs in cycles and cultures, and each generation can be in danger of replicating an imbalance.
 - There are those churches, who major on the proclamation, the 28 fundamentals if you like, with a total disregard for people’s personal – physical, social and emotional wellbeing needs.
 - There are also Christian churches who see the message of Jesus, consisting of social action, welfare, and meeting the physical needs of individuals, with a rather big neglect of the proclamation of the word and the teachings of Jesus.
- Remember, only Christ’s method alone... will be truly effective!

(C). An Overview of Jesus’ Ministry So Far in Matthew:

- If we were to take a quick overview of Jesus’ ministry so far in the Gospel of Matthew, we would see the following elements of ministry:
 - From Matthew 5-7 we come across the greatest sermon that was ever preached – commonly called the ‘Sermon on the Mount.’ It is a sermon full of controversial teachings. It includes hot-button topics such as:
 - The law
 - Divorce
 - The proper way to pray and to fast
 - What terms like ‘adultery’, and ‘murder’ actually mean.
 - Jesus is NOT toeing the party line, or trying to make any friends with His message. Instead He is turning the people’s worldviews on their heads.
 - Repeatedly He uses the phrase: *“You have heard that it as said...but I tell you...”*
 - But Jesus’ preaching message was also controversial. He was preaching ‘the good news of the kingdom.’ But this was NOT the ‘good news’ that the people were used to hearing.
 - He was preaching that the way to get into the kingdom was narrow, NOT wide.
 - He was preaching that for people to get into the kingdom, then their righteousness had to be greater than the most righteous people around.
 - Jesus was saying that those who anticipated a seat at the feast in the kingdom, would have their seat taken from them, and that they would be replaced by people who came from far and wide – those outside of Israel.

- But Jesus was NOT just all talk. Remember His ministry was holistic. It WAS NOT just “*talking the talk*”. Jesus also “*walked the walk*.”
 - He healed people of leprosy
 - He healed the centurion’s servant
 - He calmed the storm on the Sea of Galilee
 - He cured Peter’s mother-in-law of sickness, and then later that night we read that “*He healed all who were sick*”.
 - He cast out demons
 - He NOT only forgave the sins of the paralytic man, but also gave him physical healing.
 - He healed the blind, and those who were mute.
 - He healed a lady who had suffered from a blood flow for 12 years.
 - And He even raised a 12-year-old girl from the sleep of death.
- ****Okay, ... so what does all of this mean?**
- What we have seen in Matthew 4:23 and 9:35, are the two bookends to Jesus’ ministry so far.
- Everything in between these two parallel verses is the CONTENT of Jesus’ ministry. He is: TEACHING, PREACHING and HEALING.

2. MISERY OF THE MASSES:

(A). Contented Apathetic Christians:

- ****But is this all that there is to Christ’s method of ministry and evangelism?**
- You see, we can TEACH, we can PREACH, and we can HELP and HEAL, BUT all of these can be merely mechanical outward acts and actions.
- **The question, needs to be, ***“What is motivating us to minister?”***
- **OR perhaps putting it another way, what is often missing in us, which leads us into being CONTENTED APATHETIC CHRISTIANS?**
- Too often we feel CONTENT in merely attending church. We have ‘*clocked on*’ and we have ‘*clocked off*,’ and we have fulfilled our commitment or as we may see it, our obligation to God and the church.
- Or perhaps we are serving in a church ministry or two, and we believe that all is fulfilled, we may be TEACHING, PREACHING, or even HEALING, and our ministry is DONE. Our ministry is COMPLETE. ... BUT is it?
- Is there something missing?

(B). What Jesus Saw – Sheep Without A Shepherd:

- I would like to suggest that the next verse reveals the HEART of Jesus and the HEART of a kingdom worker.

Read Matthew 9:36

- Ministry and evangelism do NOT finish, once we have TAUGHT, once we have PREACHED and once we have HEALED. Jesus had done all of these things, right throughout the 200 or so villages and towns of Galilee.
- In Matthew 9:35, we have already read that Jesus had *healed “every sickness and every disease among the people.”* ****ISN’T the JOB DONE?** Every sickness and every disease among the people has been healed.

- BUT Jesus has NOT finished ministry. Because Matthew continues. *“But when He [Jesus] SAW the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them.”*
- We need to pray to have the EYES of Jesus. Ministry is NOT complete after attending church. Ministry is NOT complete after TEACHING, PREACHING and HEALING – OR after serving in church office. We need to SEE what Jesus sees.
- *****So, what was it that Jesus SAW?**
 - Matthew tells us that Jesus saw something that NO ONE else SAW.
 - Jesus pictured the people as if they were sheep. Sheep that had been harassed. Sheep that were confused, weary, helpless and aimless, the Greek word implies thrown down without any hope.
 - The people were all of this writes Matthew, because they had NO SHEPHERD to care and protect them.
 - With NO protection, they were vulnerable to being ripped apart by wild beasts.
 - What Jesus saw, were people who had NO spiritual centre, their whole existence was aimless, and their whole experience was one of futility, and hopelessness.

(C). Compassion – the Heart of a Kingdom Christian:

- When Jesus “saw the multitudes, He was moved with COMPASSION for them...”
- It was COMPASSION that moved Jesus. It was COMPASSION that moved Jesus from the courts of heaven, to the cross of Calvary.
- And truly effective ministry for each and every Christian must be motivated from a heart of COMPASSION.
- It is only seeing what Jesus sees, and having the heart of compassion that Jesus has, that can transform us from apathetic contented Christians into the disciples that Jesus wants you and me to become.

(D). Greek Meaning of ‘Compassion’:

- There are 7 different Greek words used in the New Testament that are translated into the English as ‘Compassion’. (NKJV).
- These 7 different Greek words translated into the English ‘compassion’ occur 20 times in the New Testament. However, 8 of those 20 occurrences instead of being translated as ‘compassion’ would be better translated as: ‘have mercy’, ‘show mercy’, ‘deal gently’, ‘sympathize with’, or ‘be understanding.’
- Only 12 of those 20 occurrences should be translated as ‘compassion’, and they come from the Greek word **σπλαγχνίζομαι *splanchnizomai***, which literally means “bowels” or “guts”.
- It is the strongest word that can be used for ‘compassion.’ It is a ‘sickening feeling in the stomach.’ It is a ‘pained feeling at the sight of suffering and a desire to alleviate that suffering.’
- The only person that this word **σπλαγχνίζομαι *splanchnizomai*** is associated with is Jesus. (Excluding the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:33)
- This is how he felt when he encountered the sick, the blind, the demon possessed, those who lost loved ones, the hungry, the lonely, and the bewildered.
- It is this COMPASSION that is at the heart of ‘Christ’s Method Alone!’

3. METHODOLOGY FOR THE MISSION:

(A). Jesus' Transition in Ministry Approach:

- Did you notice that the summation we looked at of Jesus' ministry from Matthew 4-9 everything was a solo ministry?
- It was ALL DONE by Jesus. And it was basically DONE by Jesus ALONE.
- But now we see a PIVOTAL ADJUSTMENT in Jesus' methodology.
- Up until now He had been a LONE minister, but now, He is about to send out the disciples (in the process they become Apostles), to also get into the action (Matt 10:1, 2).

- **Jesus gives His disciples SOMETHING TO BELIEVE, and SOMETHING TO DO.**

(B). The Great Potential:

Read Matthew 9:37

- The metaphor changes from sheep to an agricultural crop.
- The **GREAT POTENTIAL** – He said, ***"The harvest is plentiful."***
- Jesus is telling us that the harvest is ready, that there are multitudes of people that are ready to be gathered in.
- One of the greatest lies of the devil is to convince us that people are NO LONGER interested, and that it is a waste of time.
- ***So, do you believe the words of Jesus that the harvest is plentiful?**

(C). The Great Problem:

- The **GREAT PROBLEM** – He said, ***"The laborers are few."***
- The problem is NOT that the people are unready to receive the good news; the problem is that we are NOT ready to tell them.
- Imagine if you were a farmer had an incredible crop just waiting to be harvested, but you could not get enough workers to realize the harvest?

(D). The Great Petition – A Dangerous Prayer:

- If the harvest truly is great, and the workers are few – the solution would appear to be to further expend yourself trying to employ new and additional workers.
- You would anticipate that this is what Jesus wants His disciples to do. BUT that is NOT what Jesus asks of them.

Read Matthew 9:38

- The **GREAT PETITION** – He said, ***"Pray to the Lord of the harvest, that He will send our workers into His harvest."***
- Instead, Jesus asks his disciples to earnestly pray to the Lord of the harvest so that He/God can send out workers into HIS harvest.
- Before Jesus sends out His disciples in Matthew 10:1-2, he asks them to pray to the Father for more workers.
- I believe that it was this praying undertaken by the disciples that equipped them in being called 'apostles' meaning "one who is sent."
- Jesus knew that before we can have the ministry, which He had, we must have the same prayerful reliance upon the Father, which He had.
- Before we can have the compassion of Jesus, we need to have the connection with the Father, which He had.

- It was this praying to the Lord of the harvest that transformed these men. Because as they prayed, they would ultimately receive eyes that could see people as Jesus saw. It was as a result of praying to the Lord of the harvest for more workers, that they were given a heart of compassion, that then enabled them to be successfully sent out into the harvest by the Lord of the harvest.

CONCLUSION:

The situation is NO different today than when Jesus looked across at the multitudes 2,000 years ago.

An old preacher Vance Havner used to say, "*The tragedy of our time is that the situation is desperate but the saints are NOT.*"

Three weeks before President John Kennedy was assassinated, he said, "*Almost all presidents leave office feeling that their work is unfinished. I have a lot to do, and so little time to do it.*"

- As followers of Jesus Christ, we have much work to do and little time to do it.
- We must give ourselves to it. The times demand urgent action.
- Remember, the gospel is only good news if it arrives in time.

- **Will you believe that the harvest is truly great?**
- **And are you prepared to do what Jesus has asked of us, to pray that God will send out workers into His harvest?**