

“The Need of the Harvest”

Mark 6:31-44

Intro:

The **Barna Research Group** has been involved in gathering and analyzing information concerning the church since 1984. Many of their findings are startling and eye-opening. They have found **that 33% of Americans are unchurched; they have no church affiliation whatsoever**, while it found that **20% of those who have church membership believe that living a good life will gain them a place in heaven**. Given those two statistics alone, that tells us that **53% of Americans are lost and on their way to hell**. This does not take into account the people who are atheists, or are involved in occult forms of worship. Over half of everyone you run into is lost. And it is a growing population.

That is why Jesus said, **“The harvest truly is plenteous.”** There are people to reach; there is a work to be done. And one of the greatest dangers of the modern church is that we don’t see this as the most important work. Most everything else comes before the work of reaching the lost with the Word of God.

As Jesus ministered to the needs of the people all around Him, He met their physical needs, but He was able to see beyond just that. Jesus was able to see the deepest needs of their hearts. As Jesus looked at the multitudes around Him, He was moved with compassion for them. This word literally means **“to be moved in the heart.”** He saw the reality of the need of the people all around Him. He saw them as they were and He sought to share this insight with His disciples. He wants us to see people as they really are. He wants us to be moved in the heart just as He was. He wants us to be able to see the harvest through His eyes.

May the Lord help us to see the lost people around us like He sees them!

1. Let us see the heart of Jesus

Mark 6:31-34 *And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately. And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him. And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.*

- He always has time to help people

Mark 6:34.....*and He began to teach them many things.*

John 4:34 *Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.*

Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come **to seek and to save that which was lost.**

- He met their needs

Mark 6:37 He answered and said unto them, **Give ye them to eat.**

Mar 6:42 **And they did all eat, and were filled.**

2. Let us see the harshness of the disciples

Mark 6:35-36 And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed: **Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread:** for they have nothing to eat.

- They were more concerned about themselves rather than about others

Mark 6:31 And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, **and rest a while:** for there were many coming and going, **and they had no leisure so much as to eat.**

Many people would have been angry if their plans for rest were interrupted by the crowds. Many people would have seen the crowds as an interruption and a nuisance. Some people would just have ignored the people and their needs. Not Jesus!

We live in a day and age where people just don't want to be inconvenienced! As Christians we shouldn't live like that.

1John 3:17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

- They were looking at the problem and not at the people

Mark 6:35-36 And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, **This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed:** Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: **for they have nothing to eat.**

What do we see when we look at the people all around us? Do we see sinners lost in their filthiness and vileness? Do we see people as they are, or do we see them as the Lord could make of them if they came to Him? That is the view Jesus had of lost men. He saw them not as they were, but as they could be by HIS grace!

Sometimes if we're not careful, we can look at helping people as a burden instead of an opportunity to be a blessing.

- Caring for people takes work:

- It will cost our time

Mark 6:37 *He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, **Shall we go...***

- It will even cost our treasures

Mark 6:37 *.....and **buy two hundred pennyworth of bread**, and give them to eat?*

3. Let us see the hunger of the people

Mark 6:40-42 *And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties. And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all. **And they did all eat, and were filled.***

- People everywhere are longing for something!

Mark 6:34 *And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, **because they were as sheep not having a shepherd:** and he began to teach them many things.*

People are wandering aimlessly through life with no direction and planned destination, people who lived life with no shepherd for their souls. These are people who are utterly and hopelessly lost.

- Only Jesus can fill their need!

Mark 6:37 *He answered and said unto them, **Give ye them to eat.***

Mark 6:42 *And they did all eat, **and were filled.***

Matthew 11:28-30 *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, **and I will give you rest.** Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: **and ye shall find rest unto your souls.** For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

Oh, how we need to see the multitudes like Jesus saw them!

Over here is a family. They seem happy. They have good jobs, plenty of money, a nice house and all the things this world can offer them. Plenty of people like that live in our communities.

But, if you could look into their hearts, you would see turmoil, fear, loneliness and desperation. They have no answers to their questions. They need the Lord!

4. Let us see the need of the Harvest

Mark 6:43-44 *And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes. And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.*

According to **verse 44**, if we include their family, this crowd may have numbered between 15,000 and 20,000 people!

- The harvest truly is great and plenteous!

Matthew 9:37 *Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous,*

Luke 10:2 *Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great,*

- The labourers are few!

Luke 10:2 *Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.*

Matthew 9:37-38 *Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few: Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.*

- Let us pray for labourers!

Matthew 9:38 *....Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.*

Luke 10:2 *....pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.*

Notice that Jesus told them to pray that the Lord of the harvest (God) would send forth laborers into the harvest. As we develop a burden for the lost and begin to pray for them as we should, the Lord will develop a compassion for them within our own heart. If we pray as we should, the Lord will work within us so that a desire will be born within us to go into the field and work for the harvest. (We will be like Isaiah - **Isa. 6:1-9!**)