



8/7/26

On this week's episode of Chosen and Cherished, we talked about the forgotten form of prayer... lament. God wants us to bring our sorrows to Him. Jesus said in Matthew 5:4, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." If you'd like to hear the podcast, here's the link... <https://summitpoint.org/chosen-and-cherished/>

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Matthew 9:35-38, John 3:16-18 ~

This Sunday we turn our attention to storming throne for the harvest... and we're not talking about farming. Though I have to say, my daughter's father-in-law is a farmer and he works HARD!!! We're talking about a harvest of people hearing the gospel and turning to Jesus. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the one bringing good news, proclaiming peace, bringing news of good things (the gospel), proclaiming salvation, saying to Zion, 'Your God reigns'" (Isaiah 52:7).

So where does this good news start? Am I called just to go and start telling everyone about Jesus? Matthew 9:35-38 tells me that it doesn't start with doing the work. It starts with prayer. And it tells me God's motivation...

Matthew 9:35-38 ~

"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. When He saw the crowds, He had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.'"

Let me not miss this first... JESUS is the One who brings good news. The gospel IS the good

news. He went all through the cities and villages. He did exactly what He came to do. He was the perfect blend of sharing and caring.

- He taught... He shared... the good news of salvation to the people.*
- He healed... He physically cared for... the needs of the people, healing their afflictions and diseases.*

To teach the gospel without caring for people's needs is cold. "People don't care what you know until they know that you care."

To care without teaching the good news is ineffective for leading people to salvation. I've heard it said, and I've probably said at some point in my life, "Share Jesus with everyone you meet, and sometimes use words." Wellll... if they don't know why I'm being kind, they will probably appreciate ME, but will they really appreciate the gospel? Lots of people are kind... not all are kind because of Jesus.

Why did Jesus teach and meet needs? He was (and is) compassionate. He was MOVED with compassion. It wasn't just His action toward them. It was His emotion. He saw that they were "harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd." He saw that there were SO MANY in need. He saw what we do not always see... ALL human beings are harassed and helpless... wearied and cast away by the enemy of our souls who seeks to blind us from the truth and then destroy us.

ALL people are like sheep. Sheep are dumb. We wander into other pastures where we have no protection from the wolves. We don't like being called sheep, but that doesn't change the truth. O Jesus, let me not miss this, though... You care! In John 10, You spoke of the sheep and how the wolves and thieves come in to steal and destroy... and You called Yourself "the Good Shepherd who lays His life down for the sheep." You don't leave us in our helplessness. You give us hope.

What do You call us to do first? To be the good news? Do go out and labor? Not first. First, You call us to pray. Jesus said there are a TON of people in need... the harvest is plentiful. But there aren't a whole lot of laborers to go out and reap the harvest, to lead these wandering sheep to salvation and safety. PRAY to the Lord of the harvest to send people to HIS harvest to work for Him.

Why does He start with prayer? I believe He wants me to understand that I'm also a sheep... I need Him, the Good Shepherd, to lead me. I need the Holy Spirit to guide me, to give me the words, to care for people's needs. God knows that I personally will not have the strength, the wisdom, and sadly... the compassion to see their need. I will get wrapped into my own little world and miss the harvest, HIS harvest. I also believe that He knows that I don't have the power to change a heart. I need the Spirit to do the real work of leading a heart to Him. My

job is not to make someone turn to God, but to faithfully speak the truth and care for their needs in obedience to God, and leave the fruit of the harvest to Him. I need to talk with Him about it so that He can enlarge my perspective and make me aware of the need. And then I need to pray for wisdom from Him to know what to say. If I don't start with prayer, I will consider sharing the good news to be a chore rather than a privilege.

So... what is this good news I need to pray about? What is this harvest? The most famous Bible verse in the world tells me the answer... it's easy to treat it as a picture on the wall that just fades into the background over time. But what can I see from John 3:16 and the verses that follow to freshen the picture in my mind???

John 3:16-18 ~

Jesus said, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." The Father gave His unique, no one else like Him, Son... how beautiful are the feet of Him bringing the good news... the feet that were pierced for my sins... Why did the Father give His Son? SO THAT EVERYONE who would believe Him, who would put their trust in Him, who would believe so deeply that they would confess Jesus as Lord and Master of their lives... would not perish... would not spend eternity separated from the Lord in yes... hell. It is NOT God's desire that people spend eternity experiencing the wrath of God for our sin. It is His desire to give us eternal life with Him in heaven, so much so that His Son died and rose again to make it possible.

What does it mean that we are harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd? It means that the enemy of our soul will chew us up and spit us out, and he doesn't care about kicking us when we're down. BUT GOD the Father... loves us so much that He was willing to watch GOD, His innocent Son, become sin for us and bear the full weight of His wrath while we were His weak, ungodly, steeped in sin enemies (Romans 5). He does not send us to hell. He provided the escape, and sadly, some choose not to take it.

There will not be one person in hell who will be able to say, "I wanted Jesus but He didn't want me."

Here's the truth of why Jesus did and didn't come... "For God did NOT send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him." Jesus did not come to condemn any soul. He came to rescue us. He came to save us from "the god of this world who blinds the minds of the unbelievers" (2 Corinthians 4:5).

One of the ways the devil blinds the unbelievers is to put philosophies into their minds that are lies... just like he did in the Garden of Eden. He tries to make us believe things like...

- *There are many roads that lead to heaven... but Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but by Me" (John 3:16)*

- *You don't have to know Jesus. You just need your good to outweigh the bad... but Jesus says, "For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God... and the payment for that sin is death, but the free GIFT of God is eternal life IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD" (Romans 3:23, 6:23).*
- *Just do good works and you will earn your way to heaven... but Jesus says, "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).*

"Whoever BELIEVES in Him is not condemned..." (not whoever's good outweighs his bad or who works hard or who finds a different way, but whoever BELIEVES in Him will not face His wrath) "BUT whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God." Let me not miss this... because of the fall of Adam and Eve, the DNA of sin entered the world through Adam. ALL people are born into sin and spiritual death. We are born with a disease. We are condemned already. We don't sin at some point in our life and then become condemned. We are born as the walking dead... helpless and harassed, like sheep without a shepherd. The remedy for our disease is right before us... trust Jesus.

Why do I need to start with prayer? Because I need the Lord to give me His perspective and His compassion for the lost... because I'm so grateful that He saved me. Lord, please help me to take everything to You first and then follow You in putting my faith into action so that I can be a faithful laborer in Your harvest. Amen.