



YOUTH WEEKEND 2026 (MATTHEW 9:35-38)

WHAT DID JESUS SEE?

Matthew 9:35-36, *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.*

- ✱ Jesus saw the needs of people.
- ✱ Jesus knew people needed leadership & care (a shepherd): The Scriptures often use the concept of a shepherd to talk about a person who leads, governs, and cares for people. (See Ezekiel 34:1-10)
- ✱ Jesus cared about what he saw.

WHAT DID JESUS DO?

Matthew 9:37-38, *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."*

- ✱ Jesus invited his followers into the needs he saw and asked them to pray with him.
- ✱ Matthew seems to present the story in Matthew 10 as an answer to that prayer. Jesus calls a select group of disciples and sends them out to minister.

Matthew 10:1-4, *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. 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; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.*

Matthew 10:5-9, *These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And proclaim as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay. ⁹ Acquire no gold or silver or copper for your belts, ¹⁰ no bag for your journey, or two tunics or sandals or a staff, for the laborer deserves his food.*

- ✱ Jesus often threw his disciples into situations where they were tasked to serve others or play a part in the work Jesus was doing to serve people.

Matthew 14:13-21, *Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a desolate place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick. Now when it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves." But Jesus said, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They said to him, "We have only five loaves here and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.*

John 4:1-3, *Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples), he left Judea and departed again for Galilee.*

WHY DID JESUS DO THIS?

Jesus was: 1) Showing more about himself and his heart for the world, and 2) Shaping their understanding of the mission he called them to.

- ✳ Jesus had a mission in mind when he called his disciples to follow him, see Matthew 4:18-20

Matthew 4:19, *And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."*

- ✳ God's designed humanity for partnership with Him. Humanity is made to partner with the Lord in what he is doing in the world. This is a message throughout the Scriptures.

Genesis 1:28, *And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*

Ephesians 2:4-10, *But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ...and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus...For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*

HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE:

1) EMBRACE THE GOOD NEWS OF PARTNERSHIP WITH THE LORD.

- ✳ In addressing anxiety, depression, and other things that plague young people in our world today, we can't forget to include the message of purpose and calling Jesus has for his people.
- ✳ Most of the encouragements God has for people to 'not be afraid' or 'have courage' or 'I am with you' are tied into a calling or purpose he had for that person to fulfill. See Moses (Exodus 3:1-12), Joshua (Joshua 1:1-7) for a few examples.

2) HELP THEM DEVELOP A HEART FOR OTHERS.

Three Helpful Questions To Consider:

- ✳ What can you do to help them with ministry opportunities they can't fully embrace on their own right now?
- ✳ What can you do to shape their perception of the 'harassed and helpless' people in the world?
- ✳ What kind of 'messiness' are you okay with as young people go through the process of learning and developing a hearts for others?