

Prayer



What do we know?

In Matthew Chapter 9 we read

Then Jesus went into all the towns and villages teaching in their synagogues preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and every sickness. When he saw the crowds, He felt compassion for them, because they were weary and worn out, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His Harvest."

What do we know?

- God has already been at work – after all the "harvest is abundant".
- Jesus saw people as they really are:- weary and worn out like sheep without a shepherd.
- We have been encouraged to look with compassion. To see people as they really are.
- Jesus didn't want them in the Kingdom because they were vulnerable to an approach.
- He wanted them to be free from weariness and their depressed state.



Why do we need to pray?

- Is God not aware that workers are needed?
 - Hard to believe that is true.
- Does God the father not have the same compassion as his Son?
 - Even harder to believe because the Father had enough compassion to send his Son to die for the whole of humanity.
- Do we need to change God's mind in some way?
 - God does move in a different way if people repent but we can be quite sure that God's mind is set on the path of salvation. We have already seen that the harvest is great because God has already been at work.



Jesus tell us to pray because:-

- If we pray for workers to go then we are committed to dealing with the harvest.
- Jesus wants us to pray so that we are invested in the success of the harvest.
- If we pray then, ***and be warned***, it is possible that we will be one of those sent by God the father.
- Prayer is not an alternative to action, it is the action that we are called to.

How do we pray for workers to be sent?

- Dear God, we believe that you are working in our locality. We have tried our best to look at those around us with compassion and to recognise that they need a saviour.
- We know that you have looked at them with compassion and that you have already started to work with them.
- Please send people out there and we will try ur best to deal with them when they come in!
- IS THAT IT?
 - Probably not!

What do we know about harvesting?

- **Amongst all the ripe crops, you separated, select the ripest.**
- **The farmer must cut the stalks by hand or with a machine.**
- **The crop must be threshed to release the fruit from the useless stalks.**
- **The fruit and the stalks are separated and the stalks are burned or used for animal bedding.**
- **The precious grains are stored in a specially designed place that is clean and dry.**
- **Oftentimes pesticides are added to protect the crop from harm.**

What do we know about God's harvest?

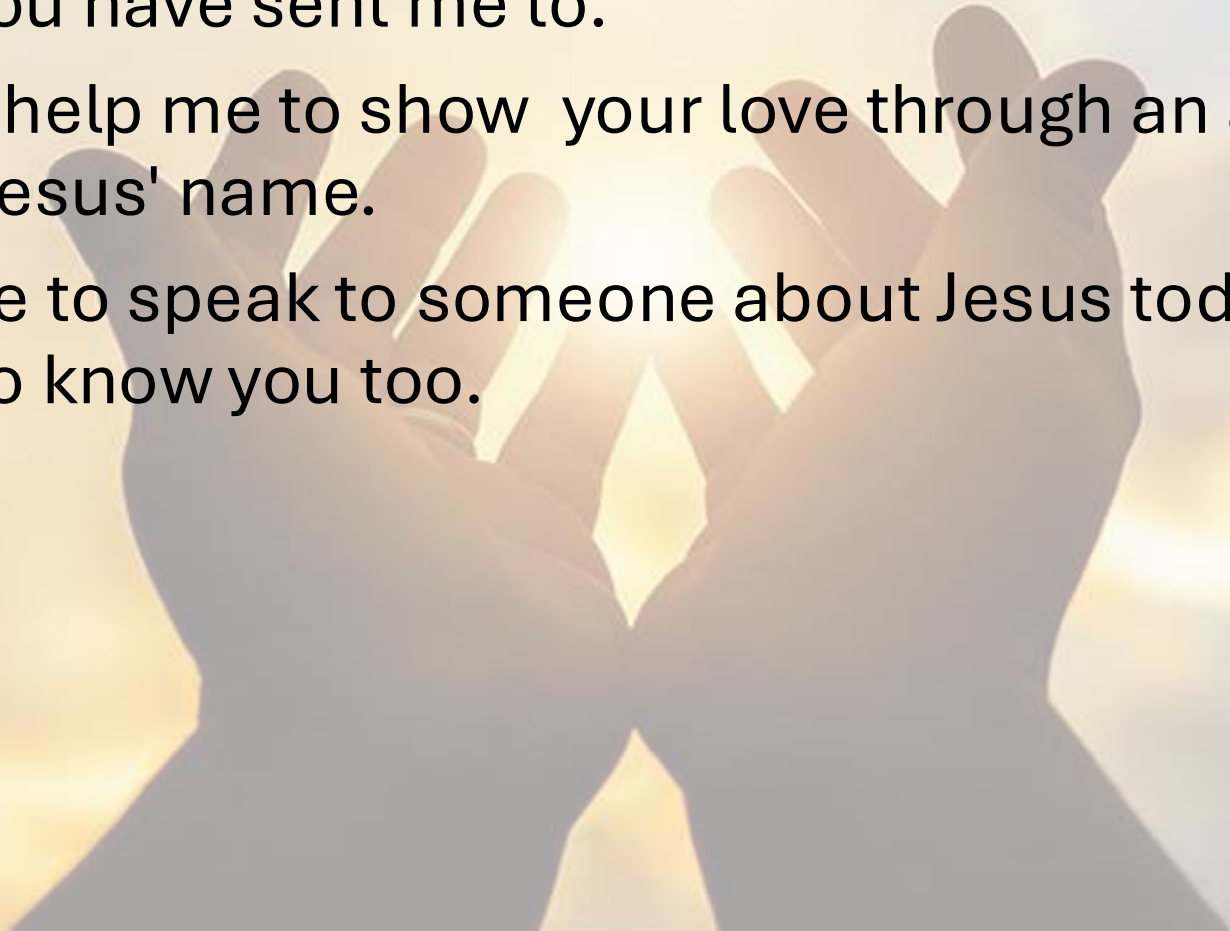
- **Human beings or, more accurately, precious souls are not the same as grains of wheat and should not be treated in the same way.**
 - **We are not going to stretch the metaphor of the harvest and talk about selecting and cutting, threshing and separating or storage and pesticides**
- **Jesus saw people like sheep without a shepherd. Shepherds know their individual sheep. I believe Jesus talked about a harvest because he wanted his followers to think big.**
 - **Not a giant flock but a glorious harvest that cannot be numbered.**

So how do we pray?

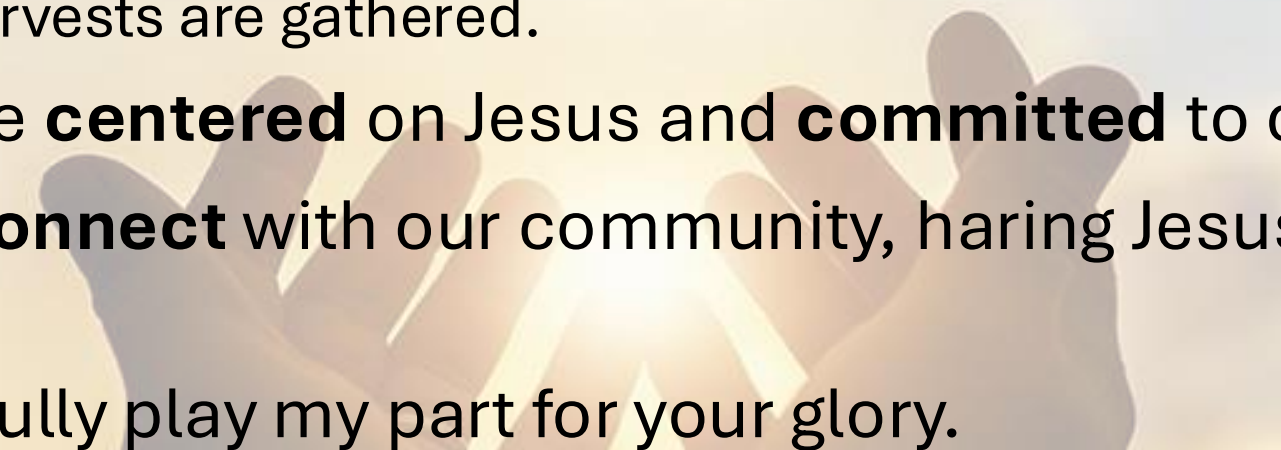
- **Start by thanking God for preparing the harvest.**
- **Pray that you can see what God sees.**
- **Pray that others will recognise the work of God.**
- **Pray that all of us will be willing to go to work.**
- **Pray that God will grant the special skills to all who he sends.**
- **Pray that those God selects will hear his instructions even if that is me.**
- **Pray that we will all be ready to welcome the harvest home.**

Know that you have already started to pray.

- Thank you, Lord, that I am sent today by you. Show me today those that you have sent me to.
- Lord, today, help me to show your love through an act of kindness and love in Jesus' name.
- Lord help me to speak to someone about Jesus today, so that they may come to know you too.



Know that you are already in the barn.

- Lord, may I be a disciple who loves to **Gather** with your church.
 - Just like harvests are gathered.
 - Help us to be **centered** on Jesus and **committed** to one another.
 - Help us to **connect** with our community, having Jesus with those around us.
 - Help me to fully play my part for your glory.
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- A background image showing two hands clasped together in a prayerful gesture, set against a bright, hazy sky with soft clouds. The hands are positioned centrally, with fingers interlaced, and the lighting is warm and ethereal.

Expand your horizons through prayer.

- Pray for the faith to see and believe that there is an abundant harvest of people needing and wanting salvation.
- Pray for the vision to know that God has workers skilled and available to go.
- Pray for a willingness to be one of those who goes.
- Believe and pray that God will provide all the energy and skill that you will need if he sends you.
- Mark 9:23 Jesus said to him, "As far as possibilities go everything is possible for the person who believes."

What do we know?

- God chooses to give us a role in rescuing those who need a saviour.
- We are told to PRAY
- Workers **will be sent** out to bring the harvest home.

