

5. What is the significance of the term "harvest" in this passage, and what does it represent?

6. How can we learn to counter feelings of anger or hopelessness toward people in our mission field and learn to see them as Jesus sees them?

7. Write down the name of someone you are seeking to B.L.E.S.S. What next action you would like to prayerfully take to bless them in the coming week (e.g., go out for coffee and listen well, help them with something they're working on, etc.). As a small group, form groups of 2 or 3 and pray for this person and the next action you would like to take with or for that person.

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## SERMON APPLICATION GUIDE

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### **The Mission**

"Growing in Compassion"

Matthew 9:35-38

Our mission is to declare with words and demonstrate with works the good news of God's grace in Christ in our everyday lives.

### **The Missing Ingredient**

We often resemble the Pharisees, who were focused on God's Word and on living holy lives, but didn't care at all about \_\_\_\_\_ who were far from God.

\_\_\_\_\_ is one of the missing ingredients leading to our disengagement from our mission.

"[Jesus's] response is described by the strongly emotional Greek verb **splanchnizomai**, which speaks of a warm, compassionate response to need. No single English term does justice to it...but "his heart went out" perhaps represents more fully the emotional force.... It is a verb which describes the Jesus of the gospel stories in a nutshell." (R.T. France)

In direct contrast to the religious folks, Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ about the people they dismiss and ignore.

Jesus had compassion on the crowds filled with the poor and powerless as well as the rich and powerful. And the crowds even included some Pharisees. They all needed spiritual leadership. From his perspective, they were \_\_\_\_\_ and vulnerable.

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Where is God leading you with your BLESS list this week?



## Growing our Compassion

1. \_\_\_\_\_ them.

Remember Jesus saying that our hearts \_\_\_\_\_ our investments. When we invest time and energy serving others, our hearts follow.

“Jesus is not just in the observation deck of a university class on anthropology. No, he is in the world. He is the incarnate Son of God. ...Jesus’s loving compassion expresses itself in action.” (Erik Raymond)

2. \_\_\_\_\_ them.

Jesus sees people who are harassed and helpless, and he’s doing something about it. He’s offering a message that \_\_\_\_\_ the chaos, the message of GOD’S rule and reign. And he’s healing people, even enemies of his people. And he’s teaching them the way of the kingdom.

Jesus also sees that so many people are \_\_\_\_\_ to his message and the kingdom.

Crazy times like they were living in and crazy times like what we live in produce a \_\_\_\_\_ for something better, a readiness of the message of grace and the kingdom and the good king.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ for them.

Set a prayer \_\_\_\_\_.

## Jesus, Judo Master

It’s like Jesus is getting us to lean into the lives of people far from God by getting us to pray for them, and as we lean in, he \_\_\_\_\_ us into ministry in their lives.

## Personal Reflection & Small Group Questions

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking back over your notes from this week’s sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. If someone offered you a farm, and you knew you could make a good living at it, would you be willing to become a farmer? Why or why not?
3. Read Matthew 9:35-38. Now read Ezekiel 34:1-16. As you read, note the parallels between the two passages. What do these parallels tell us about the heart of God and the ministry of Jesus?
4. What does “harassed and helpless” look like in your context?