

Brandon Phillips / General Adult

The King and His Glory / Salvation; Jesus / Matthew 9:33–35

In Matthew 9:33-35, Jesus's ministry creates a clear dividing line between two distinct camps among humanity

Pre-sermon Comments

Matthew 28:19–20 LSB

¹⁹ “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to keep all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Introduction to Our Text

Matthew 6:10 LSB

¹⁰ “Your kingdom come. Your will be done. On earth as it is in heaven.

Proposition and Outline

In [Matthew 9:35–10:1](#), Matthew moves from Jesus's works to His workers, revealing three marks of faithful ministry that His workers must embody:

- Faithful Ministry is Complete ([Matthew 9:35](#)) [Last Week]
- Faithful Ministry is Compassionate ([Matthew 9:36](#)) [Last Week]
- Faithful Ministry is Crucial ([Matthew 9:37-38](#)) [This Week]
 - There is a colossal need (the harvest is plentiful)
 - There is a clear problem (the workers are few)
 - There is a crucial solution (pray)
 - There is a consequent outcome (you may be the answer to your own prayer!)
- Faithful Ministry is Collaborative ([Matthew 10:1](#)) [This Week]

Sermon Text

Matthew 9:35–10:1 LSB

And Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

And seeing the crowds, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and downcast like sheep without a

shepherd.

Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.

“Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.”

And summoning His twelve disciples, *Jesus* gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

Review

Faithful Ministry is Complete ([Matthew 9:35](#))

Matthew 9:35 LSB

³⁵ And Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

This [type of] ministry is described in verbs, not nouns: Tend, feed, not Be a pastor, hold the office of pastor. And the sheep are Christ’s sheep, not ours. Not, Tend your flock, but Tend my sheep’ ~ **D. A. Carson**

Faithful Ministry is Compassionate ([Matthew 9:36](#))

Matthew 9:36 LSB

³⁶ And seeing the crowds, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and downcast like sheep without a shepherd.

Zeal in the ministry is as proper as fire on the altar. ~ **Thomas Watson**

Discussion Questions

What part of Pastor Brandon’s introduction about prayer stood out most to you, and why?

In your own life, what are some “frivolous prayers” you tend to drift toward? Why do you think that happens?

Jesus traveled, taught, preached, and healed “in all the cities and villages.” What does this reveal about His commitment to the Father and His compassion for people?

How would you define a “complete” ministry in light of Jesus’s example? What elements tend to be missing in our own attempts to minister?

Matthew says the people were “distressed and downcast”—spiritually battered and directionless.

Where do you see similar spiritual need in our world today?

Pastor Brandon said, “Jesus did not simply do ministry—He felt ministry.” What might it look like to genuinely feel compassion for people instead of merely doing tasks?

What prevents you personally from showing Christ-like compassion? (Busyness? Fear? Indifference? Self-focus?)

What specific prayers for ministry or workers do you need to begin praying consistently this week?

Faithful Ministry is Crucial ([Matthew 9:37-38](#))

Matthew 9:37 LSB

³⁷ Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.

There is a colossal need (harvest is plentiful)

Isaiah 9:3 LSB

³ You shall multiply the nation, You shall make great their gladness; They will be glad in Your presence As with the gladness of harvest, As men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

Isaiah 17:10–11 LSB

¹⁰ For you have forgotten the God of your salvation And have not remembered the rock of your strong defense. Therefore you plant delightful plants And set them with vine branches of a strange *god*. ¹¹ In the day that you plant *it* you carefully fence *it* in, And in the morning you cause your seed to flourish; But the harvest will be a heap In a day of sickness and incurable pain.

Joel 3:11–14 LSB

¹¹ Hasten and come, all you surrounding nations, And gather yourselves. There, bring down, O Yahweh, Your mighty ones. ¹² Let the nations be roused up And come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, For there I will sit to judge All the surrounding nations. ¹³ Send in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, tread, for the wine press is full; The vats overflow, for their evil is great. ¹⁴ Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of Yahweh is near in the valley of decision.

Matthew 13:24–29 LSB

²⁴ He presented another parable to them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵ “But while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away. ²⁶ “But when the wheat sprouted and bore grain, then the tares became evident also. ²⁷ “The slaves of the landowner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?’ ²⁸ “And he said to them, ‘An enemy has done this!’ The slaves said to him, ‘Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?’ ²⁹ “But he said, ‘No; for while you are gathering up the tares, you may uproot the wheat with them.

Matthew 13:30 LSB

³⁰ ‘Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, “First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn.” ’ ”

Matthew 13:40–42 LSB

⁴⁰ “So just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ “The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, ⁴² and will throw them into the fiery furnace; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Revelation 14:14–20 LSB

¹⁴ Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud *was* one like a son of man, having a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand. ¹⁵ And another angel came out of the sanctuary, crying out with a loud voice to Him who sits on the cloud, “Put in Your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe.” ¹⁶ Then He who sits on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped. ¹⁷ And another angel came out of the sanctuary which is in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. ¹⁸ Then another angel, the one who has authority over fire, came out from the altar; and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, “Put in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe.” ¹⁹ So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered *the clusters from* the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God. ²⁰ And the wine

press was trodden outside the city, and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of 1,600 stadia.

John 4:28-30 LSB

²⁸ So the woman left her water jar, and went into the city and said to the men, ²⁹ “Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; is this not the Christ?” ³⁰ They went out of the city, and were coming to Him.

John 4:34 LSB

³⁴ Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work.

John 4:35 LSB

³⁵ “Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, and *then* comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest.

1 Thessalonians 1:10 LSB

¹⁰ and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

There is a clear problem (workers are few)

Matthew 9:37 LSB

³⁷ Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.

Judges 7:2 LSB

² And Yahweh said to Gideon, “The people who are with you are too many for Me to give Midian into their hands, lest Israel honor themselves, saying, ‘My own hand has saved me.’

Judges 7:8 LSB

⁸ So the 300 men took the people’s provisions and their trumpets into their hands. And Gideon sent all the *other* men of Israel, each to his tent, but retained the 300 men; and the camp of Midian was below him in the valley.

Judges 8:10 LSB

¹⁰ Now Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor, and their camps with them, about 15,000 men, all who were left of the entire camp of the sons of the east; for the fallen were 120,000 men who drew the sword.

The faithful pastor is an awful weapon in the hands of God. ~ Charles Spurgeon

Isaiah 6:8 LSB

⁸ Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here am I. Send me!”

Romans 10:15 LSB

¹⁵ And how will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, “HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO PROCLAIM GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!”

Who can reach the lost, hell-bound world of sinful, hurting people who need to hear and accept the gospel? Who will tell them of their plight and show them the way of escape? Who will share with them Jesus’ love, compassion, and power? Who will warn them of the false shepherds that lead them deeper and deeper into darkness and hopelessness? ~ John MacArthur

There is a crucial solution (pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest)

Matthew 9:38 LSB

³⁸ “Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.”

Matthew 6:9–13 LSB

⁹ “Pray, then, in this way: ‘Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. ¹⁰ ‘Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹ ‘Give us this day our daily bread. ¹² ‘And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³ ‘And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]’

Matthew 28:19–20 LSB

¹⁹ “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to keep all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

A prayerless ministry is the undertaker for all God’s truth and for God’s church. He may have the most costly casket and the most beautiful flowers, but it is a funeral, notwithstanding the charming array. ~ **Edward McKendree Bounds**

Every preacher who does not make prayer a mighty factor in his own life and ministry is weak as a factor in God’s work and is powerless to project God’s cause in this world. ~ **Edward McKendree Bounds**

Prayer in evangelism is so neglected today. ~ **J. Vernon McGee**

The pillars on which our ministry rests are, under God, the prayers of our people. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

We are to pray for the advance of the word of the Lord

2 Thessalonians 3:1 LSB

¹ Finally, brothers, pray for us that the word of the Lord will spread rapidly and be glorified, just as *it did* also with you;

We are to pray for rescue from perverse and evil men -

2 Thessalonians 3:2 LSB

² and that we will be rescued from perverse and evil men, for not all have faith.

We are to pray in confidence that the Lord is faithful

2 Thessalonians 3:3 LSB

³ But the Lord is faithful, who will strengthen and guard you from the evil one.

Matthew 6:13 LSB

¹³ ‘And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]’

Ephesians 6:13 LSB

¹³ Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

We must remain obedient to the Lord’s commands

2 Thessalonians 3:4 LSB

⁴ And we have confidence in the Lord about you, that you are doing and will *continue to do* what we command.

We must pray that God would direct our hearts

2 Thessalonians 3:5 LSB

⁵ And may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the steadfastness of Christ.

There is a consequent outcome (you may be the answer to your own prayer!)

Faithful Ministry is Collaborative ([Matthew 10:1](#))

Matthew 10:1 LSB

¹ And summoning His twelve disciples, *Jesus* gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

Matthew 4:23 LSB

²³ And *Jesus* was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.

Matthew 9:35 LSB

³⁵ And *Jesus* was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

Matthew 10:7–8 LSB

⁷ “And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ ⁸ “Heal *the* sick, raise *the* dead, cleanse *the* lepers, cast out demons. Freely you received, freely give.

Acts 1:8 LSB

⁸ but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to THE END OF THE EARTH.”

Conclusion:

The Gospel

God

Created and owns everything

[Gen 1:1](#)—*In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth*

[Psalm 24:1](#)—*The earth is the Lord’s, and all it contains, the world and those who dwell in it.*

Is Perfectly Holy

[1 John 1:5](#)—*This is the message we heard from Him and announce to you that God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all.*

[Matt 5:48](#)—*Therefore you are to be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.*

Requires perfect obedience to His Law

[James 2:10](#)—*for whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.*

Man

Has broken God’s law

[Rom 3:10,23](#)—*there is none righteous, not even one...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*

Will pay the eternal penalty for his sin

[Rom. 6:23](#)—*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord*

Cannot save himself by his good works

[Titus 3:5](#)—*He saved us not based on works which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.*

Christ

Came to earth both as God and sinless man

[Col 2:9](#)—*For in Him the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form*

Demonstrated God’s love by dying on the cross to pay sin’s penalty

[Rom 5:8](#)—*But God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*

[2 Cor 5:21](#)—*He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

Rose from the grave and is alive today

[1 Cor 15:4](#)—*And that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures*

Sinners

Must repent of all that dishonors God

[Isa 55:7](#)—*Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.*

[Luke 9:23](#)—*if anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.*

Must believe in Christ as Lord and Savior

[Rom 10:9](#)—*that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.*

Will you repent and believe in Christ?

[Acts 17:30](#)—*therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance God is declaring to men that all everywhere should repent.*

Don't hesitate to contact Pastor Brandon or Pastor Keith if you have any questions about this sermon or if you would like to know how to follow Christ.

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Discussion Questions

Pastor Brandon surveyed several biblical passages where “harvest” refers both to gladness and judgment ([Isa. 9:3](#); [17:10-11](#); [Joel 3](#); [Matt. 13](#); [Rev. 14](#)). How does seeing both sides—salvation and judgment—shape the way we think about evangelism?

Which interpretation of “harvest” in [Matthew 9:37](#) makes the most sense to you based on the biblical evidence? Why?

In [John 4:35](#), Jesus tells the disciples to “lift up your eyes.” What keeps us today from “lifting our eyes” to see spiritually ripe people around us?

Jesus says the harvest is plentiful—not sparse or unreachable. How does this reshape the growing beliefs that “the church is dying” and “nobody wants to hear the gospel anymore”?

Pastor Brandon said, “The shadow of impending judgment provides the urgency of evangelism.” How often does the reality of judgment motivate your prayers or witness?

Jesus identifies a shortage of workers, not a shortage of opportunity. What are the biggest reasons the Church (or our own church) often struggles to produce workers?

Why do you think Jesus—who could save without us—chooses to use ordinary people as His workers?

Pastor Brandon noted that even though 30% of the world professes Christianity, far fewer are true believers, and even fewer evangelize. How should this statistical reality affect your prayer life and priorities?

What parallels do you see between Gideon’s 300 men and the small number of faithful workers today?

How does Gideon’s story encourage you when you feel weak, inadequate, or outnumbered?

Pastor Brandon said, “God delights to work through the few so that His power and glory are unmistakable.” What situation in your life or ministry illustrates this principle?

Jesus commands us to pray before we go. Why do you think prayer, not strategy, is the first step?

What does it mean to pray earnestly? How does earnest prayer differ from casual or routine prayer?

In what ways does earnest prayer confront our self-sufficiency?

Paul’s model in [2 Thessalonians 3](#) includes praying for:

- The advance of the Word
- Protection from evil people
- Confidence in the Lord’s faithfulness
- Obedience
- Hearts directed into God’s love

Which of these do you struggle to pray for regularly—and why?

How might our church change if we consistently prayed the way Paul asks the Thessalonians to pray?

Has God ever answered one of your prayers by calling you to act? Share an example.

What fears or obstacles keep you from saying, “Here am I—send me” ([Isa. 6:8](#))?

If you began praying earnestly for workers this week, what step of obedience might God ask you to take?

Jesus responds to the call for prayer for more workers by forming, empowering, and sending the Twelve. What does this teach us about how God raises up workers today?

Why is ministry designed to be collaborative—never solo?

Which part of the sermon most convicted you—
the urgency of judgment,
the shortage of workers,
the necessity of prayer,
or your own reluctance to be sent?

What specific people, ministries, or neighborhoods can we begin praying for this week as “white fields” ready for harvest?

Quotes

There is more to the ministry than being able to talk. ~ **A. W. Tozer**

What I receive for my ministry is not a tenth of what I could readily earn in an engagement infinitely less laborious and harassing than my present position; although, be it added, I would not leave my ministry for ten thousand worlds. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

I wish that our ministry—and mine especially—might be tied and tethered to the cross. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

All the hope of our ministry lies in the Spirit of God operating on the spirits of men. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

Prayer is one of the necessary wheels of the machinery of providence. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

Every man who is divinely called to the ministry is divinely equipped. ~ **Arthur Walkington Pink**

Without extended, concentrated prayer, the ministry of the Word withers. And when the ministry of the Word declines, faith ([Rom. 10:17](#); [Gal. 3:2, 5](#)) and holiness ([John 17:17](#)) decline. Activity may continue, but life and power and fruitfulness fade away. Therefore, whatever opposes prayer opposes the whole work of ministry. ~ **John Piper**

It has come to be a dreadfully common belief in the Christian Church that the only man who has a “call” is the man who devotes all his time to what is called “the ministry,” whereas all Christian service is ministry, and every Christian has a call to some kind of ministry or another. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

The goal of the ministry is the maturity of the saints. ~ **John F. MacArthur**

We must have the heathen converted; God has myriads of His elect among them, we must go and search for them somehow or other. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

What is significant is that Jesus expands the ministry beyond the Twelve. Ministry is not confined to a select few. ~ **Darrell L. Bock**

A Christian who has lost the joy of the ministry does not have bad circumstances, but bad connections. You do not lose the joy of serving Christ unless your communion with Him breaks down. ~ **John F. MacArthur**

The mission of the church is not to change society—although that is often a beneficial byproduct of faithful ministry and living—but to worship and serve the Lord and to bring others to saving faith in Him. ~ **John F. MacArthur**

There is no such thing as a faithful ministry that is not costly. A painless ministry is a shallow and fruitless ministry. ~ **John F. MacArthur**

I know of nothing which I would choose to have as the subject of my ambition for life than to be kept faithful to my God till death, still to be a soul winner, still to be a true herald of the cross, and testify the name of Jesus to the last hour. It is only such who in the ministry shall be saved. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

We impoverish God's ministry to us the moment we forget he is Almighty; the impoverishment is in us, not in him. ~ **Oswald Chambers (Lecturer and Missionary)**

Timothy is to find his resources for ministry not in his own nature but in Christ's grace. It is not only for salvation that we are dependent on grace (1:9), but for service also. ~ **John Robert Walmsley Stott (English Preacher)**

We will be holding our **GBC Christmas Concert** at the Historic Thomas Center on **Thursday, December 18th, 2025 at 7:00 PM**. Please save the date!

Event: GBC Christmas Concert

Address: 302 NE 6th Ave, Gainesville, FL 32601

Time: 7:00 PM

Cost: Free

Registration is now open for the 6th Annual Winter Retreat held **February 27** through **March 1** in Melrose, FL. Use code **EARLYBIRD** to get \$10 off registration (\$50 per adult instead of \$60). Kids are free. You can learn more and register on our website: <https://www.gracegainesville.org/winter-retreat-2026>