

THE AUTHORITY OF THE KING 10:
Jesus' Authority over His Followers, pt. 2
Matthew 9:35—10:15

Introduction: Unreached People Groups

- If you were able to travel any place in the world for the expressed purpose of furthering the mission of Jesus, where would you go? I have had the opportunity to travel many places around the world and hope to continue to do so as an extension of our ministry here at CBC. The mission of reaching the world is far from complete.
- How many people in the world do you think have yet to be reached with the gospel? Write down your answer. Of the just over 7 billion people in the world today, how many would still be considered unreached?¹
- Would it surprise you to hear that there are still about 2.88 billion people in the world (just over 40% of the world's population) that have not heard the message of the gospel of Jesus. They have not heard the hope of salvation. There is no one in their language or nationality that can tell them Jesus died on the cross for the sins of people.

Now, I say all this to help us think about how Jesus intended to reach the world. His mission is the same today as it was when He was walking the earth with His disciples. His mission is what we began talking about last week: **THE MISSION OF JESUS IS TO REACH THE WORLD THROUGH ORDINARY MEN WHO ARE COMPASSIONATE, PRAYERFUL, AND OBEDIENT!**

In Matthew 9:35—10:15, we see Jesus identifying the great need of reaching people and then commissioning men to reach the world for Him. Last week, we looked at the men Jesus called and commissioned. These twelve men were ordinary, common men from all walks of life. We ended by saying that if God can use them, He can use any of us. He is looking, not for the extraordinary individual, but the average person who will be willing to submit to Him in all things. Or as we said in our main thought, people who are compassionate, prayerful, and obedient. Let's unpack that . . .

1. JESUS USES COMPASSIONATE PEOPLE.

Vs. 35–36 → At first, Matthew gives us a summary of the life of Jesus. His continual pattern was to teach, preach, and heal people. His mission was to spread His name among the people. And so, as He traveled around, He taught in the Synagogues of the Jews. He would explain, instruct, and proclaim to them how He fulfilled the prophecies concerning the Messiah. He was the

¹ www.joshuaproject.net - An unreached or least-reached people is a people group among which there is no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers and resources to evangelize this people group.

good news that they had been waiting for from the O.T. He had come to save them from their sins.

And then He would heal their sick. As we read the gospels, we see that there are two reasons why Jesus continually healed people. For one, He desired to alleviate their problems. He felt for them and so He took care of the leprosy and bleeding problems. He raised the dead and cast out the demons. He performed miracles to help people in their desperate condition.

But there was another . . . even greater reason for the healings. He healed people to authenticate the message that He was preaching was from God. The people were awed by His power, but the authority that He displayed before them was to show them that He ultimately had the authority and message of God. The healings of their physical condition always pointed toward a greater type of healing that He was offering—to be healed of their sin.

And as Jesus is on His mission, He sees the crowds and feels for them. I understand that some of you don't like crowds. I have talked to many of you recently that have told me how you do not like being around people. That's hard for me to imagine, for you see, for most of the time, I love crowds. I love being around lots of people. I love going to a golf tournament and sitting somewhere and watching the flocks of people walk down the course. I used to really like going to a mall and to sit, watching people.

When I am in places like this, I often think of what we are told about Jesus when He saw the crowds. He had compassion of them. He felt for them in His gut. When it says that Jesus was compassionate toward them, it is not talking about a type of human pity. He had a divine compassion for troubled people, because He saw them as people who were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

This term, "*harassed*" has to do with being bullied. Put yourself on the playground. If you have any heart at all, you understand what it means to feel for the kid that is being pushed down and run over. But the bullying that moved Jesus to compassion was not physical, but spiritual. Jesus is talking about the people being harassed by the religious people of the day. They were bullied by being told of Laws and rules that were not from God. There were overburdened because of the rules and traditions that were not biblical. Later on, Jesus will describe this harassment tying up heaving burdens hard to bear and laying them on people's shoulders.

The picture of a harassed and helpless sheep is one that has been attacked or hurt and left abandoned to die. Sheep are defenseless animals and without a shepherd, they are in serious trouble. This was the ways of the Jewish person. They did not have a shepherd to feed them the truth of God. Do yourself a favor and go home and read Ezekiel 34, where God calls out the religious leaders of Israel for not feeding the sheep of Israel. They failed to teach the

people of God the truth of God, but instead, they heaped up rules and regulations of spirituality that God didn't say.

In contrast to them, Jesus shows up and says that He is the Good Shepherd (John 10). That's why He teaches. That's why He feeds them the truth of God. He wants to help those who have been bullied. Jesus' mission was not motivated because He was disgusted with the sinful ways of the people of Israel. It was motivated by a deep heart and compassion for hurting people who had been taught wrongly about the things of God.

And note this: The people that Jesus uses in His mission are men and women who have a heart of compassion like Jesus had. Does your heart break when you see people in desperate situations? More specifically, do you feel it in your gut when you see people under the burden of religious rules instead of the truth of God? Does your heart break when you see millions of people caught up in false religions? Are you moved to compassion when your neighbor claims to be Christian but wants nothing to do with Jesus or His church?

I know I've shared this with you in the past. But this is what keeps me up at night. There are certain things that break my heart and move me to compassion. One of them is some of you that I have been praying for because you have become caught up playing the game of church. You think you are okay when in fact you are far from God. I can't let that happen on my watch, at least, not without telling you. I cannot respond to you being a jerk; you cannot respond to those who are blind sheep with a firm hand, but we have to respond to them somehow!

The way Jesus reaches the world is through men and women becoming burdened with the masses of people that need to hear the truth of God instead of the lie of Satan. But there's a second type of person God uses on mission.

2. JESUS USES PRAYERFUL PEOPLE.

Vs. 37–38 → As He is with his disciples (probably a reference to all His followers, not just the 12), Jesus informs them that there is a great harvest waiting to be harvested. He changes from a shepherd/sheep illustration to a farmer illustration. I sort of get the farmer illustration.

Illustration: Our Garden

- We have not done a good job of gardening in the past. My wife will attest that we both have black thumbs. I always tend to think that we only cast the seed on hard ground, but I think it has something to do with our gardening expertise. But we are trying it again this year.
- What's the best part of gardening? It wasn't digging or tilling the soil. It wasn't planting the plants or seeds. It certainly isn't weeding or watering the garden. What's the best part? Reaping the harvest. It is when my wife

takes that first tomato off the plant and eats it. That's when it will be a success. (BTW – we will be gone for about 10 days in July, probably about the time it is time to harvest the tomatoes, peppers, and cucumbers).

When Jesus says that the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few, He means that there is lots of fruit needing to be harvested, but not many people to reap the rewards of harvesting the fruit. Or to put it in spiritual terms: there are many in the crowds of people that are ripe for salvation, but not many people willing to go on mission to share the truth with them to see them come to faith in Jesus.

And what is the response to there being few workers with lots of work to be accomplished on the mission? I'll tell you what my natural reaction is? Let's go. Let's be busy working for the kingdom. Let's enlist more and more people to go out into the field and start harvesting. And at some level, all of those things are needed. They are important and should be done. But that's not what Jesus tells us to do at first. His *"therefore"* of what needs to be done because of the great need and few followers . . . is to pray!

Jesus doesn't say that the harvest is huge and workers are few, so go! He says the harvest is plentiful and workers are needed, so pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out the laborers into His harvest. This is amazing to me, considering He is talking to those who have decided to follow Him. Jesus says that He is even Lord over the harvest. He is the authority over reaping the salvation of others. Did you notice that He says it is "His harvest?" We should pray because He wants to send out His men and women to reap what is already His.

And so, we need to pray. We need to spend more time begging God to impress upon the hearts of His people what they should be doing to participate in His mission for His harvest. What can we do as a church?

- ☐ Pray for Canada Trip Team – In the bulletin this week is a list of prayer requests for the team that will be leaving later today. Commit to pray for them the next week.
- ☐ VBS Prayer sheets – In just under a week, we will engage in the largest thing we do for our children each year. Are you praying for them? Are you praying for the workers? We passed out a calendar to help you pray. In addition, I believe the plan is to email out each day of VBS a short update and prayer requests. Will you read them?
- ☐ Pray for Missionaries – front of your directories is a list of the missionaries we support along with email addresses. Contact them and ask them how you can pray for them.
- ☐ Pray for your leaders at CBC.
- ☐ July 27th, we will have a booth at Summerfest in Middlefield. We are looking for people that will be able to help with that.
- ☐ Pray for your neighbors & others in our community.

Why prayer? Two reasons. God blesses the prayers of the righteous and God changes the hearts of those that pray. I wonder what would happen if you really spent serious time crying out to the Lord each day for the salvation of those in our community and around the world? My guess is that if you cried out to the Lord of the Harvest to send out laborers into His harvest, you might just find God moving in your heart to be the answer to your own prayers.

Before we move on, one real deep question I want you to wrestle with this afternoon. “Do you really believe that the harvest is plentiful?” The way you answer that question will / should change the way you view your relationship with other people.

3. JESUS USES OBEDIENT PEOPLE.

I want you to sense the flow of this passage. We are told that Jesus’ *modus operendi* is to teach and take care of the physical needs of people. And then He looks out at the crowds, tells His followers that there is much work to do, but little workers. Then He calls twelve of them out for a special task . . . to do exactly what He did: teach the people the message of the Kingdom and take care of their physical needs.

Now, as we read this, there are certainly some aspects of this commissioning that is only for these twelve men, maybe even only for this short-term mission trip, and not for everyone in the life of the church. For instance, they are told at the beginning to only go to the house of Israel and not to the Gentiles (we’ll talk about that in a minute). I don’t know anyone who would say this is for us today. There were aspects of Jesus’ command to them that might not directly apply to us today.

The difficult part is trying to determine which parts do and which parts do not directly apply to our situation today. One way is to dig in deep into the context of the passage. If you notice, there seems to be a gap between those things that were to happen on this immediate short-term mission trip in vs. 5–15 and what takes place after that in vs. 16–42. We will see more of it next week, but one illustration is that Jesus tells them not to go to the Gentiles right then, but then in vs. 18 He says that they will stand trial before the Gentiles.

Obviously, He is giving information at first for an immediate trip and then the later information is what will happen later in life or further into history of the lives of the followers of Jesus. In addition, much of what we learn in vs. 16–42 is confirmed with other portions of Scripture. That helps us apply it to our case more directly.

But this does not mean that vs. 5–15 are not impactful to our life today. While we might not have been called exactly the way these twelve were for that short-term trip, there are principles that we can learn as we seek to be

obedient to His call upon our life. There are actually five principles I want to point out to you briefly this morning.

[First, Avoid Being A Loner \(vs. 1–4\).](#) If we could go back just a second to our passage from last week. I mentioned it briefly, but I can't help but emphasize it again. Mark 6:7 tells us Jesus sent them out in pairs. The OT makes it clear that when someone was giving testimony against someone else, it should never be taken as truth unless more than one person confirmed it (Deut. 19:15). In addition, King Solomon tells us . . .

📖 *Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 → “⁹Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. ¹⁰For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! ¹¹Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? ¹²And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken.”*

This is good and it teaches us that teamwork is very important. That is why when we get to the NT and the church, we are told of the body of Christ. We are members together of the body. We need each other. Even further than that, we see that the church is to be structured with a plurality of godly men. It is not that one man should be in charge. It is not good for him or for the church. It is to be a group—teamwork is important.

And in response to all of this, I don't know if it is just an American mindset or something, but we struggle admitting that we need each other. There are many who would rather live the Christian life alone. We don't want people getting their nose into our business. And maybe that is why we have failed so much when it comes to the mission that Jesus has for us: we have become so individualized in our life.

Listen: if we are going to take the mission seriously, we have to acknowledge that we need help. Will you? Will you go to someone this week and acknowledge that you need help in your Christian walk and in your calling of obedience to the mission that Jesus has for you? Could it be that what you need to reach your neighbor is help from someone in the body of Christ? Maybe even accountability?

[Second, Be Ready To Preach The Gospel \(vs. 5–6\).](#) It sounds strange that we need to say this, but we need to be ready today to share the gospel whenever opportunities arise. Jesus sends these men out on a quick-hitting, short-term mission endeavor. In doing so, He tells them to not go to the Gentiles or Samaritans, but to only go to the household of Israel. As you read that, I'm sure you think: Why this restriction? Several thoughts on that question . . .

For one thing, maybe Jesus thought these guys were not ready to deal with the Gentiles or Samaritans because their prejudices with them had not been dealt

with yet. Even after Jesus leaves, it takes several obvious lessons by God to teach these men that the Samaritans & Gentiles were part of the Kingdom.

For another thing, maybe Jesus is telling them to not waste time on the journey. Remember, they are in Capernaum, near the Sea of Galilee. When Jesus says do not go to the Gentiles, it is like He is saying, *“Don’t head north or east.”* And when He says to not go to the Samaritans, it is like He is saying, *“Don’t go south.”* His point? Stay in the Galilee region. This is a very short-term trip so get to it. It is so easy to travel across national borders to share the gospel with others. But it takes lots of time and energy.

Illustration: Monique & I Street Evangelism

- One time, Monique and I went downtown Wichita, KS with a group of people to share the gospel. Street witnessing is really hard. I remember walking with her and we were like, *“let’s go over there.”* And then when we were there, we would say, *“I bet around that street corner is a better location.”* And then around the next corner. We were stalling.

That’s what Jesus wanted them to avoid. Get to it. Get busy preaching and taking care of people. The time for the world will come, but get to it now at home. I wonder if it tells us another thing, can you really do a good job of global missions if you do not do it locally? That is one question I would ask of missionaries who want to go overseas. Are you doing it here? Yes, there are 2.88 billion unreached people in the world. But if you are not willing to share the gospel with your friends here, how do I know you will do it there?

But I wonder if there is one more reason as to why Jesus gave them this restriction to go to the Jews only. Maybe it was theological. God’s means to reach the world was through the lineage of a group of people. When God called Abraham in Genesis 12, it was that through the lineage of the Jews, the Messiah would come. *They were and are God’s people.* I think it is very reasonable that Jesus, the King of the Jews, did not want to needlessly offend the people of Israel by showing them the global impact of their Messiah quite yet. It will come and it will be difficult for the Jews to swallow.

When Jesus ascends, what does He tell them to do? They are to be witnesses in Jerusalem, then Judea, then Samaria, then to the world (Acts 1:8). The message was first to transform the Jewish people and then spread outward. We see this as Paul’s pattern as a church planter. When he entered a city to plant a church, he almost always first went to a Jewish synagogue before he went to the Gentiles.

That’s why he said in Romans 1:16 that the *“gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”* Also, don’t forget that the lost sheep of Israel are the crowds that moved Jesus to compassion in 9:36. He wants His men to approach them.

The principle that hits home for me is this: Get to it! Quit making excuses. Quit saying you would do better around the next block. Quit making excuses that you are not quite good enough friends to share the truth of God with others. My calling as a Christian is to preach the gospel and so is yours. *“Every Christian has the same job description: Be witnesses for Jesus, anywhere and everywhere.”*² How are you doing with that? Let’s throw away the excuses and get busy doing what we have been called to do.

Third, Preach and Serve (vs. 7–8). The twelve Apostles were called to preach the gospel. Jesus tells them as they go throughout the cities & villages to proclaim that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. In Matthew 3:2, the message of John the Baptist was to repent for the kingdom of heaven was at hand. The message of Jesus in Matthew 4:17 was to repent for the kingdom of heaven was at hand. And now, the Apostles are sent out with the same message (certainly the repentance is implied here).

The message of the Kingdom was at hand because Jesus was in their midst. The purpose of His coming was about ready to be accomplished. A few years after this, it was realized (death and resurrection). And today, we teach that the Kingdom is not near, but it is here and now. It isn’t what it will be someday, but it is alive and active, as Jesus rules the hearts of people.

But the message wasn’t the only thing they were to do. They were to heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, and cast out demons. They were to take care of the physical needs like Jesus was taking care of physical needs. The miraculous powers were given to authenticate the message of God they preached. What’s interesting is that in the gospels we have very few examples of them actually doing this (we are told they do it, but we are not given accounts of it happening). After the ascension, we have a few examples of these men doing a few of these items.

This is important and some might struggle with this. But these miraculous dealings seem to always take a significant backseat to the teaching and preaching of God’s truth. I find that interesting, considering it seems as though people today compromise on the message of the gospel and Biblical truth in search of the awe of these or other type of experiences. The message has always taken a priority over anything mysterious or miraculous. Because, honestly, the greatest miracle is when God comes in and changes the heart of a sinful, dead man to make him alive unto salvation.

And so we preach the gospel and we take care of the physical needs of others, expecting God to do the miraculous through our service.

Fourth, Depend Upon God for Provisions (vs. 9–10). Many of you are going on vacation at some point this summer, maybe even in the next few weeks. My guess is that very few of you would ever go on vacation without planning

² [www.twitter.com. @PastorMark](https://twitter.com/PastorMark). June 6, 2013, 10:25 am.

for the trip. What will you need? What should you take? What situation will you possibly run into? Then you plan accordingly.

But the Apostles of Jesus on this short-term mission endeavor were told to not plan for the trip. They were not to acquire gold or silver or copper for their belts (think fanny pack). This is the equivalent of Jesus saying don't go to the bank and take out lots of cash to take with you. Don't take your credit cards or debit cards. You need to learn to depend on God.

In addition, don't pack a suitcase (no bag for your journey). And there is no need to take two tunics (this was an undergarment that was worn next to the body). And, hold on ladies, they were not to take two sandals or staffs. Yep, Jesus said that. Some of you can't go on a trip without five or more pairs of shoes. Jesus tells these guys to not take an extra pair.

Illustration: My philosophy on trips – “If I forget it, I’ll just buy it.”

I am very dependent upon myself. And so are you. But they couldn't be and Jesus wanted to teach them a very important lesson. The reason for this is that Jesus says the laborer deserves his food. What he is saying is that they are laborers for God and they needed to become dependent upon their employer (God) to supply their needs.

Fifth, Pursue Those Who Will Listen (vs. 11–14). What Jesus says here seems strange to us in our culture today, but it wasn't for them. Hospitality was commonplace for them. It was natural to stay as guests in someone's home. And so, when these men would walk into a town or village, they wouldn't be looking for Motel 8, but someone in town to host them.

It was easy for them to connect the dots. The way God took care of them was through the hospitality of others. As they went into a village, they would look for someone who was worthy, not meant to be someone who was of high moral or religious stature. It was not that they were looking for someone with the nicest home in town. A worthy person was someone who was willing to receive the message of the Kingdom; to accept the message of Jesus.

When they found that home, they were to stay with them. Luke 10:5 says that as they entered the house, they were to proclaim “*peace to this house*”, probably a euphemism for a proper greeting. If that house accepted them, then they would really understand peace as a part of the kingdom. But if they prove to not accept the message, they were not to stay there for any length of time, but to move on.

As they moved on, they were to enact an ancient ritual the Jews had become famous for in how they treated the Gentiles. You see, when the Jews would leave a Gentile land, they would take off their sandals and shake the dust off their robes. Why? Because they didn't want anything of the defiled Gentiles

to come back to their land. To do this after someone rejected the message of the Kingdom, the Apostles were basically saying that they were to be viewed as pagan or outcast as the Gentiles.

There might be some principles that apply to someone who goes on a short-term mission. For instance, if you are in some location for a short period of time, maybe don't continue to spread the seed of the gospel to someone who has rejected it if there are lots of people around you that still have not heard it.

One last thought. At the end of this, Jesus gives a very stern warning. As we go about on our mission for Jesus, there will be people who reject the message of Jesus. And to those people, Jesus says that it will be better for those from Sodom & Gomorrah than for those that reject the direct revelation of God.

The tables are now turned from those that are on the mission to those that hear the message of the missionaries. There is great danger in neglecting the offer of the gospel. J. C. Ryle once said . . .

“Men are apt to forget that it does not require great open sins to be sinned in order to ruin a soul for ever. They have only to go on hearing without believing, listening without repenting, going to church without going to Christ, and by and by they will find themselves in hell!”³

We may wonder what happened when Jesus sent them out? Matthew doesn't tell us, but Mark does. He says that they went out and proclaimed that people should repent (vs. 12–13). They got after it. They went and did it. And in the same way, the mission of Jesus should impact us so much that we should get busy. His mission hasn't changed. There may be some aspects of that charge to these twelve that don't completely apply to us today. But His goal of reaching the world through ordinary men and women who are compassionate, prayerful, and obedient is still applicable as it was then.

Conclusion: Team Canada

- This morning, we have the privilege of sending out a group of 13, not 12, who will be leaving to go serve at a camp in Canada. If you are going on the trip, I want you to stand up where you are at this morning as we wrap things up this morning. I have a few words for you based upon what we studied this morning.
- First, You need each other on this trip.
- Second, I hope you are ready to preach the gospel to people on this trip. If this trip is just about painting fences and burning brush, it is good, but not great. I admonish you to take every opportunity you have to speak the truth of God – to campers, to counselors, to people at McDonalds, and so on. Be ready and be bold!

³ Ryle, J. C. *Matthew*. (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 2012), 78.

- Third, Depend on God. You cannot do this with just each other. I pray God does something miraculous through your ministry this week.