

As Jesus gave the disciples His authority, He also gave them someone to partner with. We were not meant to do life in isolation.

Ecclesiastes 4:12 explains the basic principle that we are better together. Have you witnessed or experienced a circumstance where one alone would have failed but with the support of another was successful? Is there someone who supports you spiritually or partners with you in ministry?

3. Faithful in the Harvest

The harvest is still great, and workers are needed. Jesus has given us the authority we need to do the work of the harvest, but many of us have not responded to His call.

What are some reasons people give not to do the work of the harvesters and how would you counter those objections? Is there anything holding you back from God's call to ministry?

WRAP-UP

The harvest God seeks is based on what God does, not what we accomplish. Jesus modeled harvesting when He proclaimed the Kingdom of Heaven, healed the sick, raised the dead and drove out evil spirits. He sent out His disciples together to continue that work. There is still a great harvest for His followers to gather. We are called to continue God's work because we have been given His authority and we can bring the presence of God's Holy Spirit into a hurting world.

MEMORY VERSE

7 Go and announce to them that the Kingdom of Heaven is near. 8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cure those with leprosy, and cast out demons. Give as freely as you have received! - Matthew 10:7-8 NLT

Challenge- Be aware of opportunities this week to do the work of the harvesters for God's Kingdom.

Faithful in The Harvest

Flourish Week 11

INTRODUCTION

As we conclude our sermon series on flourishing, we've reached the time of harvest. The harvest was a time of joy and celebration in the culture of Jesus' day. This weekend we enjoyed a time of celebration of baptisms, new church members and children being dedicated to God. As we read in Matthew's gospel, Jesus told His disciples the harvest was great, but the workers were few. What do we see when we evaluate the harvest in our own lives? Do we measure our harvest by our success, wealth and status? By our relationships and popularity? Do we measure it by the things we can achieve? Or do we see ourselves as workers for God's kingdom? Harvesting what only God can produce?

Ice Breaker

Have you ever grown your own fruits and vegetables? If so, what was the most productive thing you've grown?

Key Passage

36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 37 He said to his disciples, "The harvest is great, but the workers are few. 38 So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields." - Matthew 9:36-38 NLT

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Kingdom of Heaven is Near

Go and announce to them that the Kingdom of Heaven is near. - Matthew 10:7 NLT

A Kingdom is found wherever the King reigns and has authority. During Christ's ministry on this earth, He traveled to the towns and villages and performed many signs and wonders.

Open your Bible to Matthew chapter 8. Quickly scan this chapter and see how many instances of miracles you find.

Jesus brought the power and authority of the kingdom of heaven to earth.

Over what did He demonstrate His authority in the verses below?

6 So I will prove to you that the Son of Man has the authority on earth to forgive sins." Then Jesus turned to the paralyzed man and said, "Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home!" ... 24 "Get out!" he told them. "The girl isn't dead; she's only asleep." But the crowd laughed at him. 25 After the crowd was put outside, however, Jesus went in and took the girl by the hand, and she stood up! ... 29 Then he touched their eyes and said, "Because of your faith, it will happen." 30 Then their eyes were opened, and they could see! Jesus sternly warned them, "Don't tell anyone about this." - Matthew 9:6, 24-25, 29-30 NLT

In our key verses Matthew 9:36-38, as Jesus scanned the helpless and confused crowds, He told His disciples to pray because there was much work to be done but few who could do it.

37 He said to his disciples, "The harvest is great, but the workers are few. 38 So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields." - Matthew 9:37-38 NLT

Heal the sick, raise the dead, cure those with leprosy, and cast out demons. Give as freely as you have received!
- Matthew 10:8 NLT

What do you think is the relationship between the work Jesus was doing in chapters 8 and 9 and His statement that the harvest was great? What do you think Jesus meant when he said the harvest is great?

A disciple is an apprentice, or follower. These men had observed their teacher doing the very works He was now charging them to do. (Matt 10:8) Do you think they had anticipated doing the works they had seen Jesus do? If you are a follower of Jesus, then you are also His apprentice. How do you see yourself doing the work Jesus modeled during His ministry on earth?

17 From then on Jesus began to preach, "Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near."

- Matthew 4:17 NLT

7 Go and announce to them that the Kingdom of Heaven is near.

- Matthew 10: 7-8 NLT

40 "Anyone who receives you receives me, and anyone who receives me receives the Father who sent me.

- Matthew 10:40 NLT

In Matthew 10:7 Jesus first told his followers to announce that the kingdom of heaven was near. When Jesus began his ministry, even before He had called His first disciples, He traveled to various towns and villages, and preached that the Kingdom of Heaven was near. Jesus brought the Kingdom with Him wherever He went. But when he sent out the disciples, Jesus was not traveling with them.

How does Matthew 10:40 explain how the disciples were able to bring the Kingdom of Heaven with them as they traveled?

We are the representatives of Jesus on earth and wherever we go we bring the Kingdom of Heaven.

2. Together Not Alone

And he called his twelve disciples together and began sending them out two by two, giving them authority to cast out evil spirits.
- Mark 6:7 NLT

12 A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken. - Ecclesiastes 4:12 NLT