

ἀποστέλλω

Joseph Carty / General

A deacon whose faith had been revitalized during a Sunday night evangelistic service came to the minister to tell him he was now ready to live for Jesus and available for service. The minister prayer with him, thanked him, and assured him that he would be called upon. Later that same night a widowed mother in the church called the minister and said she was desperate for a ride for her young son to the hospital the next day for a long-scheduled appointment with a specialist doctor. The hospital was 50 miles away in the city, and her ride had fallen through. Smiling to himself at the seemingly providential provision of God, the minister called the deacon and asked him to take this task. At first, the deacon protested that he would have to take a half-day off of work, but relented under the minister's gentle reminder that he had said he was available for service.

So the deacon arranged the time off work and went to the woman's house the next morning. The mother was unable to go because of her other children, so he carried the little boy (who was unable to walk on his own) out to his pickup and set him down beside him in the seat. When they had driven awhile, the boy said, "You're God, aren't you?" The deacon said, "No, of course not. Why would you say that?" The boy said, "Last night I heard my mother crying and praying to God to send someone to take me to the hospital. I thought you must be God." The boy was quiet for a minute, and then he said, "If you're not God, you work for him, don't you?"

The deacon paused and with tears in his eyes and a thrill in his heart, said, "Now more than ever, son. Now more than ever."

- Working for God
- sacrifices
- great joys.

- Title of sermon
- apostle
 - “one who is sent”.
- Adapted from
 - booklet by
 - Derek Morris

Plentiful Harvest

Luke 10:2 ESV

And he said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.

- Plentiful harvest

- What is harvest?

Matthew 13:39 (ESV)

... The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels.

- Harvest is at
- 2nd coming

Revelation 14:15 (ESV)

And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe."

- Harvest is ripe
- at second coming.
- For both
- righteous

- unrighteous
- Harvest could be
 - end of world.
 - final harvest.
- Could also mean
 - current mission work:

Luke 10:2 ESV

And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.

- Speaking of present harvest
 - harvest of that day.

Luke 10:1 ESV

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself

was about to go.

- Specific strategic plans
 - for current mission work.

- What does it mean?
 - Harvest is great?

- Talking about
 - here and now
 - not at 2nd coming!

- People today
 - need good news
 - waiting for friend
 - share truth.

- Pentecost

Acts 2:41 ESV

So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

- Easy to say
 - on that day...
 - "Harvest is great!!!"
- Some don't feel
 - that way about
 - their circumstance
 - time
 - place
 - great or not???
- Bumper Crop?
 - or Crop failure?

Woman at the Well

- At first glance
- harvest is not great!

John 4:4–7 (ESV)

And he had to pass through Samaria. So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey,

--

was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.

A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."

- Single woman
- doesn't seem promising
- truly "spiritual?"
- Disciples think

- let's pack bags
- move on.
- Jesus sees somethings else.

John 4:35 ESV

Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest.

- Amazing story
- woman goes to city
- tells story of Jesus
 - Stay 2 more days.

John 4:39 ESV

Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me all that I ever did."

- Harvest looked bleak...

- turned out opposite.
- For our community
 - we need to see
 - with Jesus' eyes.
- Like servant of Elisha
 - pray to open eyes.
- Believe in
 - plentiful harvest.

The Half Full Glass

- They say
 - it's in the way
 - we look at it.

- Glass half full
 - or half empty.
- It becomes what
 - you believe it
 - to be!
- If we believe
 - harvest is great.
- It becomes a
 - self-fulfilling prophecy.

Current Harvest

- How to count?

Starfish on beach

after hurricane

millions

Can't make difference.

Made a difference to that one!

- How do we view
 - harvest?
- If we don't believe
 - people are seeking
 - we don't try
 - to share anything!
- One day

- great preacher
- Stephen.
- Having an
- evangelistic sermon.
- large crowd listening
 - “harvest great”?
- Lets see response

Acts 7:57–59 ESV

But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”

- Big crowd
- instead of accepting
- they killed him!

- Failure?

- That sermon kept
 - ringing in mind
 - young man...
 - Saul.

- The harvest came
 - a bit later.

Acts 9:6 (NKJV)

So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" ...

- That sermon
 - finally bore fruit...

- First impression
 - not good sermon
 - not good fruit
 - not good place
 - not good ethnicity
 - not good spirituality
 - not receptive.
- Paul went on
 - to convert thousands
 - to truth.
- That is God's math.
- What we realize is:

The Harvest is Always Plentiful

- Even when
 - doesn't look that way
 - at first.

What is the Real Problem?

- So then,
 - - what is really
 - the problem?

Luke 10:2 ESV

And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.

- Harvest is great!

- Problem?
- Not enough workers!
- Jesus gave command
- Great Commission

Matthew 28:19–20 ESV

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

- Called the Great Commission
- command from God
- final words
 - of this book.
- “Great Commission”
- some have said:

- “Great Omission”.
- What was this for?
 - 11 disciples?
- No!
 - spoke this to all
 - every Christian!
- Jesus said:
 - “laborers are few”
- Are they really few?
 - Lots of Christians!
- Few laboring laborers!

"The harvest truly is great, but the laboring laborers are few."

Distracted Laborers

- Where is our mind?
- Where are our priorities?

The Parable of the Two Sons

Matthew 21:28–30 ESV

"What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' And he answered, 'I will not,' but afterward he changed his mind and went. And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, 'I go, sir,' but did not go.

- I wonder.
- Why did second,
 - not work?

- Why?
- liar?
- hates father?
- secret plans?
 - nooooo.....
- Just... got busy?

Parable of Banquet

- Guests invited
 - why didn't they show?
- Excuses:
 1. First Excuse

Luke 14:18 ESV

But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. Please have me excused.'

2. Second Excuse

Luke 14:19 ESV

And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them. Please have me excused.'

3. Third Excuse

Luke 14:20 ESV

And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.'

- What are the reasons
 - they didn't go?
- Distractions:
 - properties
 - transportation

- relationships
- Problem?
- Priorities!
- What can be done?
 - non-laboring laborers
 - distracted
 - discouraged
- What can be done?
 - Conversion!

Conversion of Peter

Luke 22:31–32 ESV

“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”

- Last supper
 - still unconverted
 - betrayed his Lord

- After crucifixion
 - Jesus forgave him...

- After resurrection
 - Peter so sorry
 - truly repentant
 - truly converted

John 21:17 ESV

He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep.

- Truly converted

- truly ready
 - to become a laborer!
-
- Why not enough
 - laboring laborers?
 - heart issue
 - lack of conversion
 - lack of Spirit.

Some years ago another young man named Simon entered pastor's office. He had spent his teenage years in East Los Angeles. The Lord Jesus Christ rescued this young man from a life of violence and crime and called him to be a laborer in the Lord's harvest. Simon had already seen God work in his life in marvelous ways, but he had become distracted and discouraged— not by the present, but by the past. Some nights he sat on his bed looking at his gang tattoos, wondering, Can God really use me, after all I've done? He was a classic example of a modern distracted and discouraged laborer.

As Simon sat in the pastor's office, tears filled his eyes and rolled down his cheeks like liquid prayers. As pastor listened to his heart cry, God gave him a word of hope for him. "We don't have to stay where we are," I explained. "Nor are we bound by what we used to be." Simon embraced the good news of God's Word. Divine grace renewed him, and the Spirit of God empowered him. Just a few weeks later, as Simon was sharing the good news about Jesus with others, God impressed him to tell his life story. Until then he had been too ashamed to tell it in public. But not anymore! At the end of his testimony Simon gave a

simple invitation, and 15 people received Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord.

A few days later Simon received a call from a Christian mission organization asking him to serve on a mission team in South America. He worked in the city of Salvador, in northeast Brazil, visiting people in parts of the city to which not only the locals were afraid to go but even the police refused to enter. God even used Simon's old gang tattoos to earn him a little respect among the local gang members. As a result of those meetings, 5,000 people chose to become fully dedicated followers of Jesus.

- God only needs
 - consecrated
 - converted
 - surrendered
 - workers
- He can do the rest!

Praying the Radical Prayer

- Radical Prayers
 - Elijah and rain
 - Elijah Widow's Son
- Today God has
 - challenged us
 - pray radical prayers...

Luke 10:2 ESV

And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.

- May not sound radical
 - but it is.
- Is Jesus asking us to
 - make a request?
 - to express a desire?

- No!
- more intense than that.

- The Greek verb:

- deomai means
 - "to beseech,"
 - "to plead earnestly,"
 - "to beg."

- Do you sense
 - the intensity
 - of that word?

- It is so much stronger
 - than simply
 - "to pray."

Earnest Prayer

- Other uses:

Luke 5:12 ESV

While he was in one of the cities, there came a man full of leprosy. And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged him, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean."

- leper begging for cleansing

Luke 8:38 ESV

The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying,

- man just freed
- from legion of demons.

Luke 9:38 ESV

And behold, a man from the crowd cried out, "Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child.

- Father of
 - demon possessed son!
- Do these examples
 - seem like
 - calm request?
- Other example

Luke 22:31–32 ESV

"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."

- Satan seeking
 - eternal damnation
 - of Peter!

- Jesus prayed!
- for him.
- his eternal life!
- The prayer is
- earnest prayer.

Jesus' Command

- Something else
- the verb is
- imperative.

Luke 10:2 (ESV)

... Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.

- Not a request
- Not a
 - “if you have time”
- Not a
 - “if you feel like it”
- This is a
 - command from God!

Fire, get out!

- Even more

Currently Praying

- The verb is aorist imperative.

- Present Imperative

- vs.

- Aorist Imperative

- Present Imperative

- Keep on praying!

- Aorist Imperative

- start praying!

- You haven't started

- praying yet?

- Why haven't we?

- have not sensed

- the urgency.

Question!

- Why pray
 - for laborers?
- God already knows need.
- God already wants workers.
- God already trying to convict.
- Why pray about it?

Throwing Out Laborers

Luke 10:2 (ESV)

... Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.

- “Send out Laborers”
- Not best translation.
- Send out

ἀποστέλλω

- sent out ones
 - apostles
- Apostles are
 - sent out ones.
- Broad sense
 - all Christians
 - sent out
 - all apostles...

- But this is not
 - word used in verse.

- this word
 - ἐκβάλλω
 - much stronger word.

- Means
 - cast out
 - throw out.

- Not
 - “sent out”

- But
 - “thrown out”

- Apostle John employs
 - ἐκβάλλω when
 - the disciples cast their nets out of the ship (John 21:6),
 - when the enemies of Jesus picked up rocks to hurl at Him (John 8:59),
 - when Herod had John the Baptist thrown into prison (John 3:24).
 - Jesus cast demons out of people!
- Cast out,
 - very strong word.
- These are not
 - weak prayers.
 - weak answers.

Personal Prayer

- Before praying
- for others
- we must
 - pray for ourselves.

- Before we ask God
- throw out others
- into harvest.

- Must pray for self
- Me to be
- thrown into harvest.

Fear and Inexperience

- Very next verse:

Luke 10:3 (ESV)

Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs...

- Sheep not
 - powerful
 - intelligent
 - strong
 - wise.
- Worse
 - Jesus says
 - "I am sending you out as lambs..."
- Sometimes we feel
 - we just can't
 - we don't have

- experience
 - knowledge
 - ability
- It seems clear,
 - that's exactly who
 - He wants!
- Lambs are not
 - wise
 - powerful
 - elegant
- But they are
 - humble
 - submissive
- These are the traits

- Jesus is looking for
- in His missionaries!

Wilbur was just a lamb when he gave the Lord of the harvest permission to use him. He had been a Christian all his life, but he was immature and inexperienced as a worker in the Lord's harvest. In March 2002 he received an invitation to preach a series of sermons in Kenya, Africa. His reply was terse and to the point: "You know I don't preach! He could just as well have said, "I'm just a lamb! Choose a mature sheep like Billy Graham!"

Surely God would select someone more experienced, more spiritually mature, than him. But Wilbur decided to ask God for a sign. After all, Gideon had asked for one to know whether it was indeed the Lord who was directing him to lead the army of Israel. So Wilbur knelt in prayer and said, "God, I have never asked for a sign before, but I need to know that this is what You want me to do." Immediately these words came to his mind: What are you requesting a sign? I have asked you to go into all the world, and I will be with you! The answer was so clear. All this 70-plus-year-old "lamb" could say was "Thank You, Lord."

A few weeks later Wilbur e-mailed the local coordinator in Kenya and asked, "How many do you think will be attending the meetings?" The response shocked him.

They expected approximately 5,000 people during the week and more than 10,000 on the weekends. When Wilbur read those numbers, he again confronted the painful realization that he was just a "lamb." He said to his wife, "There is no way that I could face that many people and preach those sermons."

Wilbur wanted to serve God. He was willing to pray the radical prayer, giving the Lord of the harvest permission to throw him out into His harvest. But he was struggling with the radical internal challenge of being an immature and inexperienced lamb. Many of us can relate to his sense of inadequacy.

- It is our job
 - to listen
 - to go
 - to serve
 - God will take care
 - of the rest.

>

> End Sermon Here???

>

The Dangers of Laborers

- After radical prayer
- Jesus sends out
 - those who he
 - just prayed with.
- I didn't read
- the entire verse:

Luke 10:3 ESV

Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.

- Just warns them
- there is danger in
 - following Him.
- Lambs among wolves!

- This work
 - won't always be easy.

- Lambs are defenseless
 - against wolves.

- Fear
 - biggest reason
 - why Christians don't
 - serve for Jesus.

- Fear of
 - rejection.
 - lack of knowledge.
 - lack of abilities
 - bad results

- Ask yourself
 - what are the odds
 - of lambs among wolves?
- We must stop
 - thinking about
 - our abilities
 - our strenghts
 - our powers.
- In this work
 - those are useless.
- This is job
 - complete dependance.

- In this work,
- Jesus is calling all!
 - Men
 - Women
 - boys
 - girl
 - old
 - young
 - serve as sheep!

That's a lesson Christopher learned when he was a young teenager. One Sabbath afternoon he decided to go downtown with some friends to sing Christian songs and talk to people about Jesus. Without any experience with street witnessing, they were just lambs.

But their hearts were willing, and God blessed their labors. Partway through the afternoon Christopher needed to use the men's room. While he was washing his hands, an older teenager came in and began to attack him verbally. 'You're stupid! I think it's stupid to love Jesus!' Although Christopher felt intimidated, he replied, 'I love Jesus!'

Suddenly the door of one of the stalls opened, and a very large man emerged. More than six feet tall, he must have weighed at least 300 pounds. Walking up behind the older teenager, he said, "I love Jesus!"

Startled, the aggressive teenager left—like a wolf with his tail between his legs! Christopher had never met the stranger before, and he has never seen him since. But I have no doubt that God used that man to remind Christopher that even though you're just a lamb among wolves, you don't need to be afraid. Jesus will never leave you or forsake you!

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Appeal

- Today
 - I exhort you.
- Pray this
 - earnest prayer
 - for yourself.

"Lord of the harvest, I earnestly beg You to throw out laborers into your harvest, and you have my permission to begin with me."

- Let's allow Christ
- to throw us out.
- Go where he leads.

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