

Reedy Fork Baptist Church

Wednesday, January 21, 2026

BIBLE STUDY

Theme: “God Can Use You”

SCRIPTURE IN RESPONSE: Matthew 9:36 – 10:7

³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

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

³⁸ Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

¹ Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.

² These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John;

³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;

⁴ Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

⁵ These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans.

⁶ Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel.

⁷ As you go, proclaim this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’

I. Key Words:

- Compassionately
- Enthusiastically
- Prayerfully
- Trustingly
- Joyfully

II. People, Places, & Time:

- Jesus
- Disciples

III. Background:

Matthew 9:36-10:7 describes Jesus' deep compassion for the spiritually lost crowds, seeing them as "sheep without a shepherd," leading Him to instruct His disciples to pray for more workers to enter the plentiful "harvest" of people needing rescue, followed by commissioning the twelve apostles for their first mission to Israel, giving them authority to heal and preach, but warning them of persecution from religious leaders. The passage transitions from recognizing a great need (9:36-38) to the commissioning of laborers (10:1-7).

IV. In Depth:

1. ***Lesson Emphasis #1: God can use you when you see others compassionately.***

Jesus remained consistently compassionate.

From the time he sent his disciples on their first witnessing mission until his death, Jesus was "moved with compassion" (Matt. 9:36).

A. Because of the power of Christian love, God can use you in 2026. There is a reason from within.

1. The compassion of Matthew 9:36 and the love of 1 Corinthians 13:7 are inseparable.
2. 1 Corinthians 13: 7, reminds us that love "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."
3. Christian love enables us to accept and love people who are different from us.
4. It reaches out in compassionate tenderness to people in need.

B. Because of the desperate condition of the lost, God can use you in 2026. This is a reason from without.

1. Some are moved to fear, some to contempt, and others to outright rejection by the desperate needs of people, but Christians should be moved to compassion.
2. Billy Graham arrived at Sir Winston Churchill's residence in 1954 to find the great statesman looking pale and frightened. As the evangelist entered, Churchill looked up and asked, "Young man, do you have any hope?" This is the question asked by every person in the face of desperation.
3. The lost have no purpose in life. Jesus saw them "scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Matt. 9:36). Nothing is as tragic as a soul who has no purpose in life.

2. Lesson Emphasis #2: God can use you when you respond to a challenge enthusiastically (Matt. 9:37).

A. Because of the tremendous job to be done, you must face the challenge enthusiastically (Matt. 9:37).

1. The passage is saying, "There is much to be done, many to be won. This is a real challenge!"
2. Helping people who are trying to escape the boredom of life turn to Christ is a tremendous job indeed.
 - a. Extravagance is always a sign of the desire to escape.
 - b. We are living in an age of decadence and escapism, and as Christians, there lies our challenge.
 - c. The church has the challenge today to lead people to life in Jesus Christ. You must respond to this challenge enthusiastically!

B. Because so few are willing to become involved, you must face the challenge enthusiastically (Matt. 9:36).

1. The church staff, a handful of Sunday school workers, and a few dedicated deacons are not enough in the face of the tremendous harvest of souls for which God holds the church responsible.
2. The fact that so few are willing to get involved should move you to new heights of enthusiasm as you give this task your all.
3. If only a few are willing to respond, there is no time to waste.

3. Lesson Emphasis #3: God can use you when you come to him prayerfully (Matt. 9:38).

- A. In the face of an overwhelming challenge, we are tempted to come to God mournfully, complaining about the heavy burden he has placed on us.
- B. Christ says we should come to God prayerfully.
 - 1. Come to him prayerfully, acknowledging that this is his harvest.
 - 2. Verse 38 reminds us that Jesus is the "Lord" of the harvest—that is, he is the one to whom the harvest belongs.
 - 3. Therefore, God has more at stake and thus more interest in the success of this battle for souls than we do.
 - 4. We are only his reapers, but we must enter the fields if the harvest is to be gathered
 - 5. Come prayerfully, believing that more people will get involved (Matt. 2:36).
 - 6. We must not wait until others get involved before we enter the fields—we must get involved, praying and believing that others will join us.

4. Lesson Emphasis #4: God can use you when you accept his power trustingly (Matt. 10:1).

- A. Because of the source of that power, you can accept it trustingly. "He gave them power" (Matt. 10:1).
 - 1. Now that Christ is physically absent, the Holy Spirit serves as the source of our power.
 - 2. Acts 1:8 assures us, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses" (NIV).
 - 3. We must accept this power trustingly.
 - 4. Jesus did not save us until we recognized him as the Savior and put our trust in him for salvation.
 - 5. The Holy Spirit does not control us in the sense of permeating our will, reason, and emotions until we recognize him as the one who was sent by the Father to sanctify our lives and trust him to perform his ministry in and through us.

5. Lesson Emphasis #5: God can use you when you share the gospel joyfully (Matt. 10:7).

- A.** Wherever the disciples went, there was joy and excitement—the long-awaited Messiah had come, the kingdom of heaven was at hand!
 - 1.** You can share the gospel joyfully because of the power of the gospel.
 - a.** Verse 6 says that these people were "lost," yet the gospel has the power to save them.
 - b.** You can share the gospel with the same joy that Paul did when he said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile" (Rom. 1:16 NIV).
 - c.** Remember that there is never a person whom the gospel cannot change.
 - 2.** You can share the gospel joyfully because of the availability of salvation (Matt. 10:7).
 - a.** You do not have to wait on the kingdom of heaven—it is at hand. You can enter it now!

V. Make It Happen

- How do you see others around you?
- What does it mean to see people compassionately?
- How many of us know someone that has no relationship with the savior or have know purpose in life?
- According to verse 37 how should we approach this challenge?
- How should we come to God in the midst of overwhelming challenges?
- What is the power we need to do this work and how do we access this power?
- What does it mean to accept His power trustingly?

VI. Follow the Spirit:

What will you do as a result of this lesson?
