

Family Worship Guide – Week 7

MEMORIZE

Matthew 9:37-38 – Then he said to his disciples, “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.”

READ

Read Matthew 9:18-38.

Notice that not only does Jesus possess divine authority over death and disease, but he also possesses divine compassion for the lost and hurting. In turn, he calls his followers to pray that the Father would send out workers with such compassion into the harvest field to proclaim the good news of the kingdom. As followers of Christ, we go into a hurting world with his authority and compelled by his compassion.

Jesus stands in powerful opposition to all that opposes his kingdom. To the sick, he is healing. To the dead, he brings new life. To the unclean, he brings cleansing. He is a light in the darkness and a Savior to a lost and dying world.

One of the most powerful statements in Jesus’ ministry is in chapter 9: “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.” Jesus sends those who follow him into the world to take the gospel of God and to bring in God’s harvest of people for himself. In this passage, we see that Jesus didn’t just come to save us, but to send us.

Questions:

Apart from Jesus, we have nothing to offer this world. Yet if we are truly his followers, we will follow him into the world to make disciples. We will not only following him to his cross where forgiveness of our sins is available to us, but we will then follow him into the world with his gospel. Have you been following Jesus?

What sticks out to you in this passage? What is your favorite part? What is your least favorite part? What part of Jesus’ work brings the most joy to you?

Bottom Line: Empowered with his authority and compelled by his compassion, pray, send, and go into the harvest of God.

SING

This week we will sing together ‘How Deep the Father's Love For Us’. This is a modern hymn written by Stuart Townend, an English songwriter and worship leader. Townend tells that the song was written after much meditation on the cross and the fact that God the Father had given up his only Son to die a torturous death on the cross. Townend said that he was contemplating our role in the death of Christ, and God impressed on him the weight of our sin and depravity that required the death of our Savior.

As we sing, let us reflect on the sacrifice of our Savior. Although we live in a fallen and broken world that is filled with many forms of suffering and disease, Christ died to redeem us and make us right before a holy and righteous God. Jesus paid the penalty for sin so that one day we can live with him removed eternally from suffering and disease. The final lyric to this song says, “Why should I gain from his reward? I cannot give an answer, but this I know with all my heart, his wounds have paid my ransom.” Let’s rejoice in that fact as we sing.

Visit our website for a link to this song: http://www.brookhills.org/gathering/this_week.html.

SUGGESTIONS

These suggestions were created by the age-group ministry leaders as a way to help parents better communicate the biblical truths discussed in the Family Worship Guide. These suggestions are intended to help parents facilitate God-centered discussions with their children. Parents should prayerfully use these suggestions, and any other means

necessary, to help their children discover the truths of God’s word and worship him together.

Preschool

- Before you begin find pictures in magazines or on the Internet of a large garden with easily recognized fruits and vegetables. If possible, have a few seeds on hand that match the fruit or vegetables.
- Open your Bible to Matthew 9:37-38. Read the verses and talk about the garden and the meaning of a harvest.
- Look at this garden. It has done very well this season. The plants and vegetables look very healthy, but it has taken a lot of work. The plants have been watered and cared for since they were just a seed. Now it is time to harvest. Do you know what that means? It means to begin picking the vegetables to eat, sell or give away. There are too many vegetables for one person to harvest and too much for one person to eat.
- God tells us to go into his harvest, which is the world, and help others know his love. We need to share the good news about Jesus with others. Jesus had 12 special friends called disciples who shared what he did for them with other people. They helped other people. They told people about Jesus and what he could do for them. We are to work in the world, or garden, God has given us and tell others about his love. He wants everyone to know that Jesus is the Savior of the world.
- Reread the verse and end with prayer.

Children

- Read Matthew 9:18-38. This is a powerful passage in the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew shows us a lot about Jesus’ divinity (God nature) and humanity (man nature) in these verses.
- We see Jesus do several miracles here. What are the 4 miracles Jesus performed? Let’s look at each one and see how they show that Jesus is both fully God and fully man.
 1. Jesus heals a woman with a bleeding disease – Jesus has power over disease, meaning he is God. Jesus can be touched, meaning he is also a man. Jesus cares for the diseased and the outcast.
 2. Jesus restores a ruler’s daughter to life – Jesus has power over death as God. Jesus talks, walks, and lays his hand on the girl as a man. Jesus cares for the wealthy as well as the poor.
 3. Jesus heals two blind men because he is God – Jesus talks with the men and touches them because he is a man. Jesus cares for those that others consider “sinners” or “punished” by God.
 4. Jesus heals a demon-oppressed man – Jesus has authority over demons because he is God.
 - **Parents, you might mention that the first 3 miracles are in direct response to faith.
- Read vv. 35-38 again. After recounting these 4 miracles, Matthew writes that Jesus went throughout the region teaching, proclaiming (preaching) and healing (vs. 35). In each area, as Jesus’ fame grew, the crowds probably grew larger and larger. The next verse tells us so much about Jesus and how he viewed the crowds.
- In verse 36, Jesus had “what” for the crowds? He had compassion for them. What is compassion? It is sympathy or concern for the suffering of others. Why did Jesus have compassion for them? What does Jesus compare the crowds to? He calls them sheep without a shepherd.
- What happens to sheep without a shepherd? They get lost, they get hurt, they starve, and they could die. This is exactly what Jesus knew was going to happen to the crowds but in a spiritual sense. In other words, they would go to hell.
- So what does Jesus tell his disciples to do? See verses 37-38. He instructs them to pray for God to send more workers “into the harvest” or to the crowds of people who don’t know about God’s salvation.
- So what does Jesus do for his 3 years of ministry? He pours himself into 12 men and disciples them. Jesus could have spent 3 years only preaching to thousands of people. Wouldn’t that have been better than just teaching 12 men?
- Here’s a quick question. Which of these would you choose – a penny doubled each day for 30 days (1¢, 2¢, 4¢, 8¢, 16¢, 32¢, 64¢, etc.) or \$1,000 today? If you pick the penny, on the 30th day, I would end up giving you \$2,684,354.56 plus everything from all the other days! Parents, you might have to draw this out for your kids to believe you.
- This is called the power of multiplication, and Jesus knew about this, too. It is also the power of discipleship. Jesus knew that if he taught 12 men who went out and each taught a few more, and those people then went out and taught a few more, etc., then this would be much more effective than what Jesus could do alone. Even more importantly, in his relationship with the disciples, Jesus provided an example for us to follow so his church could continue to grow.
- Our part is to pray for God to send out workers to be disciples and disciple makers so that God can be glorified throughout the whole world, and then to go and do the same. Take time to pray as a family for God to use you as disciples and for God to continue to send out more faithful workers into all nations for the sake of his great glory.

Students

- Begin by praying together as a family, then read Matthew 9:18-38 and discuss the “Read” section above.
 - Before discussing the “Questions” above, walk through the following points as a family.
- What is Jesus sending us to do?

- Matthew 28:18-20
- The one with all authority is sending us out.
- As Christ-followers, has he prepared us to do this?
 - Acts 1:8
 - If the Holy Spirit is in us, what does that mean? What are we equipped to do? Is the same Spirit that is in Jesus also in us?
- When we become Christ-followers, do our lives immediately look like Jesus' life?
 - What does Titus 2:11-14 say?
 - The grace of God is continually at work within us for the process of sanctification making us look more like Jesus.
- The process of becoming like Christ is not easy. Our fleshly desires are at war with the Spirit in us.
 - Galatians 5:16-17
 - How does this affect our daily lives?
 - How does this affect the decisions that we make?
- If we are in the process of becoming more like Christ, how are we supposed to be laborers now?
 - Hebrews 4:14-16
 - Through his grace, God works in and through us to reach others. He has given us the gospel to share and he has given himself to dwell in us.
- How can you be a laborer in God's harvest?
 - What field has God put you in right now?
 - Who are the people that you see on a regular basis?
 - Do you think God has placed these people in your life for a reason? Are you called to be the laborer for the gospel in this person's life?
- We all have a decision to make. Are you going to be a laborer in God's harvest or just sit idly by?
- Is God asking you to wait around and not become a laborer until you are older, or does he call you to be a laborer now?
 - All through the New Testament, Jesus calls his followers to immediate obedience no matter their age or circumstance.
 - How will you respond?
- Read Colossians 4:2-6.
 - God has given us the days that we have in hopes that we will not waste them. He gives us opportunities to make him known so that we can make the best use of the time.

