

# Christ-Like Evangelism

Matthew 9:35-38

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## Introduction:

The four verses in front of us greatly capture Christ's compassion and care for the lost. These verses illustrate clearly what He proclaimed about Himself in Luke 19:10—"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." This was not empty, idle talk—no, He lived this verse. His life was spent seeking sinners. The Great Commission was not simply Christ's last request—it was His first concern and ministry priority. He was seeking the lost all the time throughout His earthly ministry:

He sought out Nicodemus at night as he came to Him for answers (John 3—did you know that John 3:16 was first spoken to the Pharisee? This evening encounter stretches from verse 1 to verse 21)

He sought out the woman of Samaria at noon by the well of Jacob (John 4—when no one else was willing to associate with her, Christ—in His thirst—offers her Living water)

He sought Zacchaeus out in the crowd (This short tax collector had to climb a sycamore tree to see Christ. Luke 19:10 is spoken by Christ right after salvation came to this man's house.)

He sought out the maniac of Gadara—a man possessed by a Legion of demons—a mad man who lived naked in a cemetery, cut himself with stones and could not be bound with chains.

## Look at verse 35 again:

*35 ¶ And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.*

That's what He did! He was consumed with the needs of others. He taught, He preached, He healed. His life was poured out for others

selflessly and His blood was poured out for all men of all time sacrificially.

We need to understand that we need to be Christ-like in every area of our Christian lives. We need Christ-like Evangelism! Do you realize that we "stand in Christ's stead?"

Listen to what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:18—20

*18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;*

*19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*

*20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

We have been given the ministry of reconciliation—it has been committed unto us!! Christ has entrusted the spreading of the Gospel to us—He has passed the torch of evangelism to us. This message will focus on how we should be like Christ in the work of personal evangelism.

PRAYER

## **1. Serve the Needs of the Lost with the Mind of Christ** v. 35

*35 ¶ And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.*

What is the Mind of Christ?

*5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:*

*6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:*

*7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:*

*8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

*Philippians 2:5-8*

Illustration of the Biltmore Estate/George Washington Vanderbilt III

60 employees all focused on the needs of 3 people (Mr. & Mrs. Vanderbilt and their daughter Cornelia)

If this aristocrat would have left his mansion and lived in one of the cottages he built for his staff, and then had these families move into his mansion and then cared for all their needs—you would have a small glimpse of the servanthood of Jesus Christ

**Christ served in humility and He sacrificed for humanity.** If we are going to be Christ-like in Evangelism, we must have His mind and learn to serve others. Note in verse 35 that Christ addressed 3 needs of those He served: their intellectual, spiritual and physical needs.

Medical missions (Tom Farrell's trip to Mexico in the summer of 2004 with a team of doctors and nurses and folks from Tri-City Baptist Church in Kansas City—several hundred saved because they met their needs.)

The Lord Jesus Christ, the Sinless Sovereign was the Servant to sinners.

**1. Serve the Needs of the Lost with the Mind of**

## **2. See the Vastness of the Harvest with the Eyes of Christ** vv.36-37

*36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.*

*37 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few;*

Do we grasp the sheer numbers of people in this world? Sometimes figures are meaningless to us. You have to go out and be among the throngs of people in this world to get a burden for the multitudes. Jesus saw the multitudes and He told His disciples that the harvest truly is plenteous!

When preparing this message I searched the web under "world population." An interesting website popped up (World Population Clock). Let me quote the description: "This world population clock is an applet that uses a logarithmic equation obtained through a statistical analysis of data from U.S. Bureau of the Census. The clock takes into account both births and deaths world-wide." It showed a moment by moment world population (when I looked at the website on Wednesday, January 19, 2005, it read 6,491,592,971—but, then it kept clicking off an increase every second!!).

Dr. David Cummins of Baptist World Missions gives the following statistics:

Universal Flood until 1830 to reach 1 billion

102 years later in 1932 the world reached 2 billion

Now, listen to this accelerated growth—1960 we reached 3 billion;

By 1976—4 billion; by 1987—we reached 5 billion and in 1994 we reached 6 billion.

Dr. Cummins said there were approximately ½ billion alive at the time of Christ. If Christ was moved with compassion in His time on earth 2,000 years ago, just think how much more His heart goes out to the 6 ½ billion here in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

How this world's population is swelling! The recent tsunami swept over 150,000 souls out into eternity. Our hearts were broken at this South East Asian tragedy, but do we see the billions more who are unreached all over the world that are about to be swept away into eternal condemnation without Christ forever?

Illustration of Times Square in the summer of 2004—the 5 NYSET team members, myself, 3 girls from BJU who joined us from Long Island, and a student from Maranatha working in a church came down from Connecticut—the 10 of us met at 9 p.m. and began giving out tracts, singing and street preaching. We had 6 backpacks stuffed with Gospel tracts and by 12:30 they were gone. Every Christian needs to experience giving out Gospel tracts in Times Square on a Friday night!!

*John 4:35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. Ask to see the billions in the fields of the world through the eyes of Christ!*

Mary Lynn VanGelderren has written a beautiful song with gripping lyrics entitled, "Help me Win the Lost."

"When I look into the faces of people everywhere,

Help me see lost souls in danger and headed to despair.

Help me see the flame approaching around their fleeting days.

Those who die without the Savior are lost to hell-fire's blaze!

Help me win the lost and see them in their need.

Help me win the lost, salvation's cause to plead.

Help me win the lost.

Oh, Spirit, please empower!

Help me win the lost.

Help me win the lost now, this hour. (Oh, use me now this hour!)

As I gaze into the future and see the lost man's doom,

Help me always to remember there is an empty tomb!

Jesus died for every sinner; He won the victory.

Jesus lives! He is the Savior.

Salvation's offered free!"

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**2. See the Vastness of the Harvest with the Eyes of Christ vv. 36-37**

**3. Sense the Plight of the World with the Heart of Christ v. 36**

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*36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.*

Moved with compassion! Christ experienced an emotional convulsion. His heart was stirred. Have you ever had that experience?! Tell of writing my first song—Weeping for Souls—in January 1972 there in Manhattan in the basement of First Baptist Church, Manhattan. QUOTE Psalm 126:5 & 6 To sow we must first go, but to reap we must first weep!!

Dr. Doug McLachlan's (Fourth Baptist Church, Plymouth, Minnesota) Outline of Luke 4:18

He saw them bankrupt—"to the poor"—spiritually destitute

He saw them broken—"to the brokenhearted"—emotionally shattered

He saw them bound—"to preach deliverance to the captives"—morally conquered

He saw them blind—"recovering of sight to the blind"—intellectually groping

He saw them bruised—"to set at liberty them that are bruised"—mortally wounded

Paul struck out on his own when he left Berea in Acts 17 and headed for Athens. He did not go there with the intent to evangelize—it was more of a place to meet up with the rest of his missionary team. But, when he arrived in this city of multiple gods, that historians say had three times more idols and altars than people, he was stirred when he saw the whole city given to idolatry. (Acts 17:16) He couldn't keep quiet—he wasn't in Athens to go sightseeing—he went right to Mars Hill and preached Christ to them. His heart was burning within him.

We could use a little stirring today! We sit in our strong Bible-centered churches and we soak in, soak in, and soak in—and too often, we sour. What will it take to stir us with the needs of the bankrupt, broken, bound, blind and bruised all around us in this area—and around the world?!

Do we have a burden for the people of the 21st century?

Moses had a great burden for the people he was called to lead:

*And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. Exodus 32:31 & 32*

Jeremiah had a heavy heart for the Jews of a soon-to-be-judged Israel:

*Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! Jeremiah 9:1*

Christ, the Man of Sorrows, wept over Jerusalem:

*And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it. Luke 19:41*

Paul, talking to the elders of Ephesus, spoke of his burden for that City:

*19 Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews:*

*20 And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house,*

*21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. Acts 20*

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September 11th, 2001 was a horrible day in American history. The death toll exceeded that of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7th, 1941. America's heroes emerged that day as hundreds of firefighters converged on the World Trade Center from several fire houses. As everyone was running out of these flaming towers, men from the NY Fire Department rushed in.

344 members of the NYFD died that day trying to save people from physical fire. (By the way, going back 100 years from 9/11/01—700 firefighters have died in fires all across Manhattan, Staten Island, Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx. 344 died in one day!) I'm reminded of that great missionary song—"Rescue the perishing, care for the dying. Snatch them in pity from sin and the grave. Weep o'er the erring one, lift up the fallen. Tell them of Jesus, the mighty to save."

Do we see men perishing and going to a place of eternal fire?!

My experience of riding a fire truck there in Queens and what I told the men.

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**2. See the Vastness of the Harvest with the Eyes of Christ vv. 36-37**

**3. Sense the Plight of the World with the Heart of Christ v. 36**

**4. Seek the Lord of the Harvest for the Cause of Christ v. 38**

*38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.* One of our biggest, most urgent requests that we should be bringing to the throne of grace is verse 38.

The cause of Christ is the evangelism of the world. We know from 2 Peter 3:9 that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. No, everyone will not get saved, but we should treat all as candidates and share the Gospel with them. There are countless causes out there today—animal activists, environmental activists—we need more lost souls activists!!! Like David cried out to the cowering armies of Saul in the valley of Elah, "Is there not a cause?" We need Pastors, Evangelists and Missionaries to be stirred about the greatest cause in all the world—and impart that burden to the slumbering church. "Is there not a cause?!"

Today, the cause of many Christians is to stockpile money and to accumulate expensive toys. The description of the last days that most aptly fits the 21st century church is—"lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."

We are in the days of the mega-church and the seeker-friendly, market-driven church. Worship centers led by worship teams are swelling—but, the number of missionaries on the foreign field is shrinking.

Our priorities are all out of whack! We are living in a perverted nation in perilous times, and yet we are prayerless and lack the power of God and the passion of Christ for lost souls. Terrorism has the world in constant fear. Abortion, pornography, same-sex marriages, illegal drugs, rape, murder, drunkenness and many other national blights are a reproach to this once God-fearing, Christ-honoring nation. The answer to these woes is not the White House, the Supreme Court, the Congress, Wall Street, CBS, NBC, ABC, Fox, or CNN. The solution to the cultural cancers infesting our land is EVANGELISM—Compassionate, fervent, loving, Christ-like evangelism.

We must seek God's face!! The Lord of the Harvest will thrust laborers into His harvest as we pray and beseech Him to open the eyes of blinded saints, and stir the hearts of calloused saints, and burn in the hearts of cold saints. When you ask God to send forth laborers, be ready—He just might send you!!

INVITATION:

Won't you—

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**2. See the Vastness of the Harvest with the Eyes of Christ** vv. 36-

### **3. Sense the Plight of the World with the Heart of Christ v. 36**

### **4. Seek the Lord of the Harvest for the Cause of Christ v. 38**

*I close with an illustration from The Titanic's Last Hero by Moody Adams. This is a biography of the Scottish Pastor, John Harper, (his last pastorate was in London) who died sharing Christ on board the Titanic and in the icy waters of the Atlantic. One of the most compassionate, Christ-like soulwinners I've ever read about!*

*Chilling Facts: This Scotsman's selfless heroism is accentuated by the contrasting conduct of many fellow passengers on this death voyage. While Harper gave up his life jacket, an American banker managed to get a pet dog into a lifeboat, leaving 1,522 humans unaided. There was little of the "go-down-with-the-ship" spirit. Of the 712 saved, 189 were, in fact, men of the crew. First class passengers on the first lifeboat to be lowered refused to turn back to pick up people who were drowning, though there was space for many others to have been saved. (He cried, "Christians, let the unsaved get in the lifeboats! REPEAT")*

*Two hours and forty minutes after the Titanic struck the iceberg, she sank beneath the icy waters. Hundreds huddled in lifeboats and rafts, and others clutched pieces of wood hoping to survive until help came. For fifty terrifying minutes the cries for help filled the night. Eva Hart said, "The sound of people drowning is something I cannot describe to you. And neither can anyone else. It is the most dreadful sound. And there is a dreadful silence that follows it." Survivor Colonel Archibald Gracie called this, "The most pathetic and horrible scene of all. The piteous cries of those around us still ring in my ears, and I will remember them to my dying day."*

*During those 50 minutes a man clinging to a board drifted near John Harper. Harper, who was struggling in the water, cried, "Are you saved?" The answer returned, "No." Harper shouted words from the Bible: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Before responding, the man drifted into the darkness. Later, the current brought them back in sight of each other. Once more the dying Harper shouted the question, "Are you saved?" Once again he received the answer, "No." Harper repeated the words of Acts 16:31, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." The drowning Harper released his hold in the icy waters, and slipped into his watery grave. The man he sought to win put his faith in*

*Jesus Christ. Later he was rescued by the S.S. Carpathia's lifeboats. In Hamilton, Ontario, this survivor testified that he was John Harper's "last convert."*

*Thousands around you are sinking deep in sin—and they are far from the peaceful shore! Won't you hear their cries. Won't you rescue the perishing and care for the dying and practice Christ-like evangelism?!*