



## SMALL GROUP CURRICULUM

Sermon: **“Pray for Shepherds” (Matthew 9:35-38)**

Date: **September 22, 2019**

Jesus has been travelling around Galilee teaching and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and performing miracles. On several occasions through Jesus’ ministry thus far, Matthew has referenced the crowds that have gathered and have seemed to be following him from place to place. In this week’s study, we get some insight into Jesus’ heart toward these crowds. He has compassion on them. Why? Because they lack a true shepherd. Their religious leaders have not shepherded them properly and so they are now left harassed and helpless. The religious leaders of their day have not properly taught the sheep, cared for them, or protected them. In response to this, Jesus commands us in this text to pray that the Lord of the harvest would send more labourers into his harvest fields. We must pray for God to raise up more faithful shepherds to be able to adequately care for God’s people.

What you need for this study: Bible, Notebook, Pen

### Individual Bible Study

1. Please read Matthew 9:35-38 and ensure that you’ve listened to Sunday’s sermon.
  - a. According to verse 35, why was Christ able to give an accurate assessment of the crowds? Why did he have a good vantage point from which to make a judgment about them?
  - b. What does the word “compassion” mean in verse 36?
  - c. What is Jesus’ compassion rooted in? Why does he have compassion for the crowds in verse 36?
  - d. Read Numbers 27:16-17, 1 Kings 22:18, and Zechariah 10:2. What do these verses tell us about what happens when sheep have no shepherd to care for them?
  - e. What sort of image is left in your mind when you think about a sheep that is “harassed” and “helpless,” (v. 36)?
  - f. What does verse 36 teach us about the need for godly leadership in the church? Why is it so vital to the health of a church?



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- g. What does Jesus mean when he says “the harvest is plentiful,” in verse 37? Although the harvest is plentiful, what is there a shortage of?
- h. What solution does Jesus give his disciples in verse 38 to this problem?
- i. What is the primary means that God uses to raise up pastors and shepherds? Why?

### Group Discussion Questions

1. How did the Holy Spirit speak to you through the sermon and the Bible study this week?
2. When Jesus saw the helpless and harassed crowds, he had compassion on them. Why? When you see helpless and harassed crowds of people, do you feel compassion toward them? How can we too have a compassionate disposition towards people when we see them?
3. What can happen when a church has bad leadership and poor shepherding? What happens to the sheep? What implications does this have for the type of church we choose to attend?
4. Jesus assures his disciples that “the harvest is plentiful” in verse 37. Why should this truth motivate us to pray to the Lord of the harvest for more laborers?
5. How should verse 38 affect our prayer lives? Do you pray regularly for more laborers and more pastors to be sent out into the harvest? How can you grow in this?
6. Jesus is the Good Shepherd. In what ways does his life and ministry exemplify this and provide us with an example of true shepherd-like leadership?