

CALL and COMMITMENT 2025

on your knees
and pray for
harvest hands

MATTHEW
9:38



Sermon Outline – Cadet Josh Edwards

The Harvest is Now!

A Call & Commitment Month Sermon by Cadet Josh Edwards

Introduction (Illustrative Thought):

The Art of Tim Schmalz

Tim Schmalz is a Canadian Sculptor from the St. Jacobs, ON area. His “Works of Mercy” series based on the text from Matthew 25 have been installed in many cities and churches around the world. His art pieces depict a very specific aspect of Jesus ministries.

“When I was naked”	“When I was sick”	“When I was hungry” (A replica of this statue is found at the entrance of THQ)
		

The Artist intention behind these pieces of art is that we would see Jesus in every person we meet. On the placard that is placed next to the replica at Territorial Headquarters it says that it has been placed here “as a reminder of our mission”.

What do these sculptures bring to your mind about your calling and your mission?

Transition (Introducing the Text & Main Idea):

The early chapters in the book of Matthew give us a lot of perspective on Jesus’ “mission” during his earthly ministry. Matthew 5-7 highlights Jesus teaching ministry; Matthew 8-9 portrays him as an enactor of the Kingdom of God through his healing miracles and ministry to the poor.

Matthew 9:35-38 then shifts the focus to the call to ministry for the disciples (and in turn, as the present-day disciples/followers of Jesus”.

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Main Idea: This text reveals that **we are called to be Jesus to the world, and the time to respond is now!**

Point #1: We are called to be Jesus to the world

Then Jesus made a circuit of all the towns and villages. He taught in their meeting places, reported kingdom news, and healed their diseased bodies, healed their bruised and hurt lives. When he looked out over the crowds, his heart broke. (Matthew 9:35-36 MSG)

Matthew gives a synopsis of Jesus' ministry in the first sentence: teaching, kingdom building, healing, and restoration are central aspects of Jesus' ministry.

Breaking down the Ministry of Jesus

- Where did he go? He didn't stay in one place!
- What did he do? He brought hope- in the form of his message/teaching, in the form of healing.
- How did he feel? The brokenness of the world broke his heart! NIV Translation: "he had compassion on them" (Matt. 9:36)

If we are called to be Jesus to the world, what does that look like?

- We go to where Jesus is needed! – give examples of where this may be
- We bring a message of hope! – give examples of what this looks like in our Salvation Army context. Think "Giving Hope Today"
- Our hearts break for the world's brokenness —we need to see it the way Jesus sees it!
- A ministry of compassion- Merriam-Webster definition of compassion: "consciousness of other's distress together with a desire to alleviate it."

Reflective Question: What does it mean for you to be Jesus to the world around you? What does your ministry look like, both in an "organized" sense (as part of the Salvation Army) and in a personal sense (how you interact with the world daily)?

Point #2: The time to respond is now!

So confused and aimless they were, like sheep with no shepherd. "What a huge harvest!" he said to his disciples. "How few workers! On your knees and pray for harvest hands!" (Matthew 9:36-38 MSG)

Jesus continues his assessment of the situation. He is remarking on the crowds of people he encounters throughout his travels through the towns and villages. He refers to these crowds as "confused and aimless" (Message paraphrase) or "harassed and helpless" (NIV). Greek text more likely means "troubled or bothered," which in the context of the preceding section likely are generalized descriptions of the types of afflictions Jesus addresses throughout the earlier part of Matthew. So, while this may be written in the past tense, due to its connection with the recent events described in the adjoining verses, we can infer that Jesus is speaking of present circumstances.

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Therefore, the need is present, so he calls for an immediate response.

- 1) He calls for the immediate response of the disciples- to pray!
We ask God to provide and equip the mission with people!
- 2) The disciples are the workers too! -In the next chapter, Matthew 10, Jesus gives them the ability to heal and cast out demons (Matthew 10:1). Acts 5:12-16 provides an account of the disciples continuing ministry, modelled after Jesus' own ministry, after Jesus' death. As modern-day disciples, we can bring his message of hope and restoration to the world around us as workers! We aren't waiting for the workers to come; we are the workers the Lord of the harvest has delivered!

Reflective Question: Where do you see a present need, an opportunity to be Jesus right now? What are you feeling called to do about it?

Invitation and Appeal

As we consider Call & Commitment month and we look to this text, there are two things we are exploring:

First, we are all called to something! As disciples, we have come to this moment with a purpose: to model Jesus' ministry in the world around us!

Second, for some of us, that is the call to full-time ministry in the Salvation Army. How could God use ministry in the Salvation Army as a way for you to engage in the ministry of Jesus in the world?

Consider all the ways the world needs a ministry of hope and restoration (list a few that are relevant to your context). What is the best way for you to be actively engaged in the harvest?

As part of the response time, it is recommended to use the Call and Commitment response cards as part of an appeal to the mercy seat. Encourage everyone to take a card, to pray (now- just as Jesus instructed the disciples) and consider the call on their life to engage in the harvest!

Possible response songs:

SASB #944 Just Where He Needs Me

SASB #1002 I, the Lord of Sea and Sky

Elevation Worship's "Available"

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