

# HARVESTERS

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## THE LESSON: MATTHEW 9-10

*To send forth labourers into thy harvest; to prosper their work by thy Holy Spirit;  
to make thy saving health known unto all nations... We beseech thee, good Lord.*

The Church has a mission; that is, we have a job to do. Our “work” is to bring glory to God through our lives and our worship, to build one another up in the faith, to show Christian love to those we encounter, and... *to tell others about Jesus.*

Some of the last recorded words of Christ to his disciples were about this evangelistic mandate: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:19-20). And, “you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

Sharing the good news of Jesus Christ can be something that makes us uncomfortable, but it is a mission that all believers are called to. It can be helpful to keep in mind that Jesus has promised his presence and the empowering of the Holy Spirit as we go about this work. Moreover, it is *his* work and we have the honour of participating in it, so we should never feel that the task is solely dependent upon our efforts. As the psalmist wrote, “Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain” (Psalm 127:1).

## AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Each morning and evening, follow your own rule of prayer.

(IF YOU DON'T HAVE ONE, TRY SAYING THE MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FROM THE “FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES”, WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 728 OF THE BCP. IF YOU DON'T HAVE A COPY, YOU CAN LOOK IT UP HERE: [HTTP://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER.](http://prayerbook.ca/resources/bcponline/family-prayer))

A few times this week (and every day if you can manage it), go for a walk around your neighbourhood and pray specifically for God to visit the community and the lives of the people who live and work there, drawing them to himself. Pray for the households you know something about as well as those you don't. Listen for the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

- AND/OR -

Take some time to pray through this collect.

*Almighty God, who by thy Son Jesus Christ didst give commandment to the Apostles that they should go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature: Grant to us whom thou hast called into thy Church, a ready will to obey thy Word; and fill us with a hearty desire to make thy way known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.* (PRAYER FOR THE EXTENSION OF THE CHURCH, BCP PAGE 41)

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## MATTHEW 9-10: **HARVEST AND HARVESTERS**

**9**<sup>35</sup>And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. <sup>36</sup>When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. <sup>37</sup>Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; <sup>38</sup>therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest”...

**10**<sup>5</sup>These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them... <sup>14</sup>“And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town...

<sup>16</sup>“Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. <sup>17</sup>Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, <sup>18</sup>and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles. <sup>19</sup>When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. <sup>20</sup>For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you...

<sup>26</sup>“So have no fear of them, for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. <sup>27</sup>What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops. <sup>28</sup>And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. <sup>29</sup>Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. <sup>30</sup>But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. <sup>31</sup>Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.