

## HOW TO REACH PEOPLE Matthew 9:35-38

Int: The best way to learn to reach people for the Lord is to watch and listen to Jesus! He who would reach people must

### SEE AS JESUS SAW

Whether a person reaches people depends on how he sees them! The Pharisees saw the masses only as fuel for the fires of hell. The disciples saw them only as nuisances who “bothered” Jesus. However, the Lord himself saw them as harassed, bruised and beaten down by the harsh circumstances of life. He saw them as helpless, exhausted by their struggles. And he saw them as sheep with no shepherd. The shepherd is the integrating center of the flock, its protector and provider. Jesus saw people had nothing to hold their lives together, no one to direct and defend, to guard and guide, to protect and provide. Nothing!

Everything begins by seeing people as Jesus saw them. Look past the plastic smiles, the superficial self-confidence, the material prosperity and shallow relationships. All around people are bruised and hurting, beaten down and wandering lost, filled with private pain and living fear to fear.

A Christian who has stopped reaching people has stopped seeing them as Jesus did.

### FEEL AS JESUS FELT

The strongest word in the Greek language for “compassion,” *splanchnistheis* describes the pity that touches a man way down deep inside. When Jesus saw the desperate needs of the people around, it hit him right in the pit of his stomach!

He who reaches people must feel for them as Jesus did.

How does a person get compassion like this? No one can just pray it down. Anyone who wants it must find it the same way Jesus did. His concern for people grew out of his contact with people. He had just been out preaching, teaching and healing in the 204 walled cities and numerous towns and villages in Galilee. As he moved among the people, he was moved by the people in their need. Jesus’ compassion grew out of seeing needy people.

Exposure to need develops compassion. Many have no feeling for others because they have isolated themselves from people with needs.

A Christian who has stopped reaching people has stopped feeling for them as Jesus did.

### PRAY AS JESUS SAID

At the very moment Jesus complained about a lack of workers in the fields there were so many priests they had to work in weekly shifts so all of them had a chance to serve in the temple. While these men polished brass, went to meetings and led services in God’s “house,” the harvest of souls rotted in empty fields.

No one will ever go to the fields to harvest just because someone tells them they should. They will go only because the “Lord of the harvest” sends them! Pray that he will “thrust forth” laborers into the ripe fields!

A Christian who has stopped reaching people has stopped praying as Jesus said.