

Empire Church of the Brethren

Sunday Service Sermons

24 August 2025

Your Role in Proclamation

Text: "Pray you therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." *Matt. 9:38*

The gospel message may be indelibly inscribed on your mind.

You may have a keen awareness of the needs that surround you and know well the New Testament plan for proclamation.

But until you become involved in personal proclamation, all your knowledge is of no avail.

You stand beneath the stern judgment of God, knowing the truth but not sharing it.

Eight out of ten experiences of our Lord, as recorded by John, are experiences with individuals.

One by one he witnessed, made plain the way of salvation, and urged people to follow him.

The modern church has tended to emphasize mass evangelism to the neglect of this simple and personal New Testament approach.

Time has now forced the church either to return to the dominant New Testament method of proclamation or to abandon any serious hopes of winning numbers of people to Christ.

Your role in proclamation calls for compassion.

"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".

Matt. 9:36.

Because of distress, your role calls for compassion.

Those whom Jesus saw were distressed, harassed, and worried.

The normal reaction when one sees a multitude is wonder and awe, but not so with Christ.

His was one of pity and compassion.

He saw the wolf as well as the sheep.

Satan as well as humans.

Sin gives birth to distress.

Cain was distressed because of sin.

The rich young ruler went away "sorrowfully" because of sin.

Distress develops mental agony.

"And the king was much moved and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for you, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

2 Samuel 18:33.

Distress, if unchecked by the grace and power of Christ, ends in frustration.

Many who have not known the healing power of the Lord have succumbed to the cynical philosophy of life expressed in *Ecclesiastes 12:8*: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

Because of instability, your role calls for compassion.

` The multitudes today are as "scattered" as they were when Christ looked upon them.

This word means "Thrown or tossed about."

False teachings encourage much of the instability that plagues people.

The Jews heard every kind of doctrine.

They did not know which way to turn, and this brought compassion to the heart of Christ, and so it should to us.

Spiritual and emotional instability expresses itself in endless pursuits.

Sometimes it is the pursuit of physical pleasure.

"Wherefore do you spend money for that which is not bread! And your labor for that which satisfies not?" *Isa. 55:2*.

Others pursue intellectual satisfaction, "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth".

2 Tim. 3:7.

A statesman told of his youthful ambition to become a U. S. senator.

After years of hard work and waiting, his state sent him to Congress.

He entered with fear and trembling, so awesome was his responsibility.

He soon began to wonder how many of the others had been elected.

They seemed to care so little for their people and even less for their place of service.

He had attained his goal, but now it seemed dull and commonplace.

Your role in proclamation urges immediate action.

"Then he said to his disciples, The harvest truly is plenty, but the laborers are few." *Matt. 9:37*.

Christ is saying, "There is much to be done but few to do it. Whatever we are to do, we must do it now!"

Your role in proclamation urges immediate action because of the scarcity of laborers, "the laborers are few."

The scarcity of laborers is accentuated by the multitudes to be won.

A pastor asked twenty-nine adults, on the street in a town in Missouri, how a person is saved, and only seven could answer.

The scarcity of laborers can be solved by prayer.

"Pray you therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest."

Such prayer will not only call others forth, but it will thrust you forth into the fields as well.

Your role in proclamation urges immediate action because of the urgency of the hour.

In John's account Christ says, "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

Just as a crop must be harvested when ripe and ready so it is with souls.

The urgency of the hour is seen in the brevity of our lives.

"For what is your life! It is even a vapor, that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away." *James 4:14*.

The urgency of the hour is heightened by the imminence of Christ's return.

Your role in proclamation urges immediate action because of the tragedy of a lost soul.

"The rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torment."

The tragedy of a lost soul is the hopelessness of his condition.

Between the saved and the lost, between heaven and hell, there is a great gulf fixed.

Your role in proclamation requires an empowering.

"And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits".

Because of the futility of human effort, your role in proclamation requires an empowering.

This truth is dramatically illustrated in the powerless disciples at the foot of the mountain on which Christ was transfigured.

In the face of human need they had no power to meet that need because, as Christ pointed out, they had neglected their own spiritual lives." *Mark 9:28-29*.

Human effort is not a match for Satan's powers, "for we wrestle not against flesh and blood." *Eph. 6:12*.

The futility of human effort is transformed when divinely empowered.

The same men who were powerless at the Mount of Transfiguration became men of great spiritual power and healed "all manner of disease."

Why? Because of the transforming power of God.

The futility of our human effort keeps us mindful of our dependence on Christ.

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

Because of the magnitude of the task, your role demands an empowering.

Matthew 9:37 reminds us that “the harvest is plenteous.”

Only a supernatural empowering can prepare us for such an overwhelming task.

There is a magnitude of the souls to be won.

There is the magnitude of the time to be spent.

“Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate.” *Isa. 6:11*

There is the magnitude of the effort to be expended.

Christ tells us to “go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.” *Luke 14:23*.

Because of the miraculousness of salvation, you need an empowering.

The disciples in *Matthew 10* were sent out to perform miraculous deeds and thus needed a miraculous empowering.

Only you can fill your role in proclamation, not your pastor and not your Christian friends.

You play the major role in the eternal welfare of certain souls.

By the grace of God, in the power of God, and for the sake of God, play your role as a real child of God.

Bring God among!

You just might be the only one who can!