**EE Practicum – Session # 6**

**Multiplication of Laborers**

**Matthew 9:35-38**

1. **Introduction: The Need for Workers**
* The reaching of a lost world is a mammoth task and one which only God is able to accomplish. The cry of the harvest is for more workers. In this passage Jesus shows His heart for a lost world and then instructs His followers to **“beg the Lord of the Harvest to send out workers into His harvest.”** So how do we go about multiplying laborers?
* This little one page diagram will be the foundation of our teaching for the next four weeks. It comes from a book entitled “The Lost Art of Disciplemaking” and was written by Leroy Eims.
* I want those of you taking this EE practicum to purchase a copy for yourself and those of you in the certificate program can visit the online version where you can actually see the author teaching these concepts.
* I have used this little diagram to help people in my churches understand what the goal of my teaching would be in raising up laborers.
* The four circles represent four particular calls that believers need to listen for and respond to in order for there to be a multiplication of laborers for the harvest raised up out of God’s people known as the church.
* As we begin this session we will start with **the process** we call evangelism. Evangelism is the proclamation of the message of salvation. Exactly how does someone far from Christ actually begin and make progress on his or her faith journey. In Mark 4:3-8, Jesus presents a parable of four soils to his followers. Listen as I read this passage of scripture in which Jesus describes how the gospel truth is received.
* Jesus explains the parable to His disciples in Mark 4:13-20 by showing the soil to be the human heart and the seed is the Word of God. Only the good soil is ultimately receptive of the seed and bears fruit in varying degrees.
* So in Evangelism Explosion we start by building a **friendship bridge** that will be strong enough to carry the weighty message of the gospel across. Once the friendship has been built and there appears to be an interest in spiritual things we will proceed by asking the two diagnostic questions.
* Then on the basis of how we sense the Holy Spirit is working in the person’s life we will share the good news of the gospel explaining grace, man, God, Christ and faith. Now we are well aware of the fact that **“no one can come to Christ unless the Father actually draws him.”**

(John 6:44,65).

1. **Five New Testament Conversions**
2. **Zaccheus** – Luke 19:1-10 – Now here was a man who was far from

God. Not only was he a disgrace to his Jewish people by being

a rip-off artist but he was the chief tax collector and he was very

rich and everyone knew he was a sinner (v. 7). We don’t know

the content of their conversation but the impact of what happens next is quite impressive. Listen to verse 8 where Zaccheus says, **“Behold Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much.”** We can be certain of Zaccheus’s conversion because Jesus testified on his behalf with these words, **“Today, salvation has come to this house…for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost”** (vv. 9,10). He is a trophy of God’s grace!

1. **Nicodemus** – John 3:1-16 – Now Nicodemus is a Pharisee, a ruler of

the Jews who approaches Jesus and says some pretty

cool things about Him. He addresses Christ as Rabbi and

says, **“we know that you have come from God as a teacher;**

**for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is**

**with Him.”** Then Jesus relates how a person must have a spiritual rebirth by placing his faith in the Son of Man and then says, **“whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.”** (v.15). There is no indication in this text that Nicodemus actually believes and becomes a Christ follower. The next time we meet Nicodemus in the Bible is in John 7:50-52 where he was actually speaking out at the condemnation of Christ without giving Him a hearing. The last time Nicodemus is mentioned is in John 19:40 where he is said to have brought a very expensive gift of spices with which to anoint the body of Christ. Nothing more is known about him beyond these three accounts.

1. **The Woman at the Well** – John 4:7-26 – This Samaritan woman is

 quite taken with Jesus and His “living water” message and ends

 up going back to her village confessing that Jesus truly was her

Messiah and verse 39 indicates **“that many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of her testimony.”** Their personal testimony was **“we know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world.”** This account shows just how impactful a personal testimony can be. No one can dispute the testimony of a changed life!

1. **Saul of Tarsus** – Acts 9:1-9 – The miraculous conversion of Saul on

the road to Damascus. The Risen Christ shows Himself to Saul

in all of His glory and Saul cries out, **“Who are you Lord?** (v.5). Christ calls testifies to Ananias, **“he is a chosen instrument of Mine to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the Sons of Israel”** (v. 15) and verse 20 of this same chapter says that Saul **“immediately began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues saying, ‘He is the Son of God’”** Later, when now the Apostle Paul was writing to young Timothy he said, **“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief.”** Like Paul anyone who truly recognizes the extent of his or her own sinfulness is ultimately wrecked by God’s amazing grace. As the hymn writer declares, “Amazing love, how can it be that thou My God should die for me.”

1. **Cornelius** – In Acts 10:1 Dr. Luke records, **“Now there was a man at**

**Caesarea named Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian cohort, a devout man and one who feared God with all his household and gave alms to the Jewish people and prayed to God continually.”** From that description one would believe him to already be a Christ follower. However, the whole account makes it clear that Peter was chosen to share the Gospel message with Cornelius and his family. Peter explained how it was God’s plan and that **“He ordered us to preach to the people and solemnly testify that Christ is the One who was appointed to Judge the living and the dead.”** While Peter was speaking verse 45 records that **“the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Gentiles.”** And verse 48 says that Peter **“ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.”**

* In all of these cases except the last one, Jesus was the faithful witness. In Acts 1:8 Jesus says to His disciples, **“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and even to the remotest part of the earth.”**
* Jesus has given us the privilege and responsibility for carrying the Good News to a lost and dying world. Those who have gone before us have been faithful witnesses or we would not be believers today.
* In order for a person to become a **convert** of Christ’s they need to hear and respond to the gospel.
* It is important for each of us to be the best possible witness we can be so that laborers can be raised up for the world to be reached. I want to share ten vital qualities for being an effective witness for Christ.

**C. Ten Characteristics of an Effective Witness**

1. **C**onsistent Prayer for the Lost – To witness without prayer is sheer

presumption because no one can come to Christ unless the Father draws him. The principle is that we should always talk to the Lord about people before we try to talk to people about God.

Example: Me an my family prayed for my father in law for 17 years.

1. **H**oly Lifestyle – Lost people need to see the difference Christ has made

in our lives before they are interested in a change in theirs. Jesus reminds us in Matthew 5:16 to **“let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”** How much light are they seeing in us.

3. **R**eady to Share – The Apostle Peter reminds us in I Peter 3:15 to **“always**

**be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect”** (NIV).

1. **I**nstant in Season – Paul says to young Timothy, **“Preach the Word; be**

 **instant in season and out of season”** (II Timothy 4:2). Listen for the

 promptings of God’s Holy Spirit to respond to those Divine

 appointments.

1. **S**pirit Filled – Paul’s admonition is to **“keep on being filled with the**

**Spirit”** (Ephesians 5:18). Walking in the Spirit is a moment by moment existence where our steps are **“ordered by the Lord”**

(Psalm 37:23). **Example:** On a recent flight home from Asheville, NC I was able to share the gospel with a young marketing director who was open and ready to receive the good news of the gospel. She said, “It is no accident that you were sitting by me today for I desperately needed this message.” I definitely felt my steps were ordered.

1. **T**rustworthy – The Gospel is given to us to share. We must be

trustworthy so that we don’t squander or miss opportunities because we fail to listen to the whispers of God. **Example:** In December I was having my hair cut and I listened to God’s whisper to share the good news with Barb one more time and she was ready to open her heart to Christ. Several weeks ago I found out that Barb has pancreatic cancer and is not expected to live very long.

1. **L**oving – In John 13:35 Christ said, **“By this shall all men know that**

**you are my disciples if you have love one to another.”** In II Corinthians 5:14 Paul reminds us that **“Christ’s love compels us”** (NIV).

1. **I**nitiatory – Jesus invited Himself to have dinner with Zaccheus at his

house. Jesus initiated the conversation with the woman at the well or she would never have talked with Him. We need to be the one to walk across the room to connect with those who are far from God.

1. **K**ind – Paul reminds us that **“God’s kindness is intended to lead you to**

 **repentance”** (NIV). The lyrics of Leslie Phillips’ song goes, “It’s your

kindness that leads us to repentance, oh Lord, knowing that you love

 us, no matter what we do, makes us want to love you too.

10. **E**xcited – When I sense the Lord is leading me to share the good news of

the gospel with a person, I move forward to the edge of my chair expecting the miraculous to take place right before my eyes.

* Notice that all 10 of these characteristics of an effective witness start with the letters CHRISTLIKE. May we endeavor to be like Christ as we share the good news of the gospel with a hurting world.

**D. The Gospel** – Proclamation of Good News

* The Apostle Paul said it best when he proclaimed in Romans 1:16, **“For I am not ashamed of the gospel for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes.”** God has given us the privilege of sharing good news and that is what makes Evangelism Explosion so powerful is that we declare it and people are made new.
* II Corinthians 5:17 says **“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things have passed away and all things have become new.** We have been given a new nature. We are no longer bound by the chains of the past. We have a new beginning and as Paul says in Romans 8:1,2 **“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death.”**
* Eternal life is now a reality. I no longer have to fear death but am assured of life with the Lord Jesus Christ forever. I am no longer bound by the limitations of the flesh but I have been infused with God’s Holy Spirit.
* Paul says in Galatians 2:20, **“I have been crucified with Christ and it is no longer I who live but Christ lives in me and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”**
* The new believer in Christ has a **“hope which is laid up for him in heaven”** (Colossians 1:5). He has an inheritance because **“if childen then heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ”** (Romans 8:17)
* The greatest thing we can do for a person who is far from God is to pray that the Lord would open the eyes of his understanding. Paul says in Ephesians 1:18, 19 that **“the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.”**
* May God help us lead people to Christ knowing that this new **convert** is truly a part of God’s forever family and is now ready to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

**Two Books to Reference:**

1. “The Lost Art of Disciplemaking” by Leroy Eims. ISBN 0-310-37281-X
2. “Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God” by J. I. Packer.

 ISBN 978-0-8308-3412-9