

Week 5 Day 1

Readings: Matthew 9:32-38; Acts 10:17-33; Psalm 26; Proverbs 7:6-12; Exodus 5-6.

Focus Verse: "Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few.'" (Matthew 9:37)

Key Concept: Laborers to the Harvest (Matthew 9:36-38). Note several points here:

- (1) Multitudes needed the gospel
- (2) Jesus had compassion
- (3) He saw a plentiful harvest
- (4) He recognized the lack of laborers
- (5) He urged prayer for more workers
- (6) He sent out those who were available (Matthew 10:1-5).

Today, we need to see the multitudes and be stirred with compassion. If we do, we will also pray and act, using the opportunities we have to bring the harvest of souls to the Lord.

Action: Consider, with compassion, the lost around us. Pray (Matthew 9:38). Go (Matthew 10:5). Will you share the gospel today?

Week 5 Day 2

Readings: Matthew 10:1-15; Acts 10:34-48; Psalm 27; Proverbs 7:13-20; Exodus 7-8.

Focus Verse: "But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him." (Acts 10:35)

Key Concept: Getting Our Feet Dirty (Matthew 10:1-15). As Jesus sent His apostles to preach to the lost sheep of Israel, he instructed them to shake the dust of their feet in places where their message was rejected. Too often, we fail by giving up and "shaking off the dust" before we ever get our feet dirty. We cannot assume that others will reject the gospel--we must give them opportunity to answer for themselves.

Action: "Go . . . to the lost . . ." (Matthew 10:6). "Freely you have received, freely give" (Matthew 10:8).

Week 5 Day 3

Readings: Matthew 10:16-26; Acts 11:1-18; Psalm 28; Proverbs 7:21-27; Exodus 9-11.

Focus Verse: "And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved." (Matthew 10:22)

Key Concept: Sheep Among Wolves (Matthew 10:16-26). Those who follow Christ cannot expect to avoid the kind of suffering He endured. Families and friends will oppose Christians, even with violence. Hardship, sacrifice and persecution are to be expected consequences of living for Jesus. We must not allow such difficulties to distract us from the heavenly goal!

Action: As you face adversity in serving Christ, remember that Jesus loved you enough to die for you (Galatians 2:20).

Week 5 Day 4

Readings: Matthew 10:27-33; Acts 11:19-30; Psalm 29; Proverbs 8:1-5; Exodus 12.

Focus Verse: "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 10:32)

Key Concept: Confession Despite Danger (Matthew 10:27-33). Confession is often thought of as merely acknowledging faith in Jesus in the presence of believers. Jesus shows that the confession He requires is much more demanding--much more dangerous. His disciples must be willing to confess Him in the presence of those who oppose Him. The cost may be high--lives may be lost. Those who are unwilling to risk all for Him will lose even more--their souls.

Action: Tell others of Jesus. Speak with courage.

Week 5 Day 5

Readings: Matthew 10:34-42; Acts 12:1-11; Psalm 30; Proverbs 8:6-11; Exodus 13-14.

Focus Verse: "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me." (Matthew 10:38)

Key Concept: Taking Our Crosses (Matthew 10:34-39). The demands of discipleship are often difficult and divisive. If our love for anything--including family and our own lives--exceeds our devotion to the Lord, we are not worthy to be called His people. We must carefully weigh our priorities and affections, and determine that nothing--and nobody--will come between us and the Lord.

Action: Evaluate your loyalties. Make sure that Jesus comes first, regardless of the cost in this life.

Week 5 Day 6

Readings: Matthew 11:1-15; Acts 12:12-25; Psalm 31:1-13; Proverbs 8:12-21; Exodus 15-16.

Focus Verse: "In You, O Lord, I put my trust; Let me never be ashamed; Deliver me in Your righteousness."
(Psalm 31:1)

Key Concept: How Soon We Forget (Exodus 15). God had delivered the Israelites from centuries of bondage, and they praised His might in the beautiful song that opens this chapter. After a mere three day journey into the wilderness, their praise turned to murmuring and complaining, as they forgot the power and love of their mighty Redeemer. How sad that we so easily imitate their ingratitude!

Action: Remember that the same God who redeemed us has strength to lead us home (Exodus 15:13).

Week 5 Day 7

Readings: Matthew 11:16-24; Acts 13:1-12; Psalm 31:14-31; Proverbs 8:22-26; Exodus 17-18.

Focus Verse: "And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do." (Exodus 18:20)

Key Concept: The Role of a Great Leader (Exodus 18:20). This chapter tells of Jethro's advice to make the work of Moses more efficient and more effective. For today, however, focus on the words of the verse above. Moses was a great leader because he directed the people to follow God. He did not seek personal power. Instead, he continually encouraged others to turn to God's will. Those who would be great leaders today must do the same thing!

Action: By word and example, lead others in God's way.