

Sovereign Grace Church
“Compassion: Motive for Ministry” outline
May 12, 2019

Matthew 9: 35-38

Motivation is significant. It may be the difference between success and failure or even acting at all.

Hunger is a strong motivation to eat.....so is taste. Fear of failure is what moves many people to come close to perfection.....but at quite a cost....usually of their life! Most of the important things we do in life depend upon an adequate motivation....not only to get done what needs to be done but also to do so in such a way that issues in greater goodness, truth and beauty.

Jesus came to save us from our sins and to invite us to share in His eternal kind of life. Jesus was motivated in His work by love.....love for His Father...and love for those He came to save. In today's passage Jesus is beginning to prepare His disciples to join Him in this work. He talks about the intense compassion which moved Him to reach out to a lost and wandering people. The Pharisee's motive in reaching out to people was in order to enslave them to the same life-sucking legal bondage that they had spent so much time and energy perfecting. They were not so much compassionate for the people as they were threatened by them. They impeded their quest for purity and legal perfection.

Jesus' motive in His ministry was His compassion for all those people who had been so affected by the Pharisees false teaching and a general lack of spiritual guidance. What is your motivation in seeking to be of service in Christ's Kingdom?

1. Jesus' Ministry v. 35

- His Gospel Ac. 16:31
- His Teaching, Preaching and Acting
- His Authority

2. Jesus' Motive: Compassion v. 36

- “moved with compassion”
- “weary & scattered”
Jn 4: 23; Mk 2: 16-17
- “sheep w/o a shepherd”
I Kgs 22: 17; Zech 10: 2-3

3. Jesus' Prescription vv. 37-38

- **The Situation: a plentiful harvest**

- **The Solution: prayer**

4. Closing Questions

- **What is your mission?**

- **What is your motive?**

Questions for Conversation and Reflection

- 1. Do you have a sense of “mission” in your life? Do you have a sense of “calling?” How does this mission fit in with our common mission to “make disciples?” What motivates you to pursue this mission? Is there a difference between being motivated by duty vs. love? How would these different motives have different effects in our work? Was Jesus more motivated by duty or love? Can one be motivated by both? Does it make a difference as to which is primary?**
- 2. Do you know people that you would like to see more motivated to pursue good works? Why is our effort to persuade them no match for the convicting power of the Holy Spirit? Why do our efforts often issue in the opposite of what we are burdened to see? Why is prayer the more effective recourse in these matters?**
- 3. Do you have compassion for people during the course of your normal day? What impedes your sense of compassion for people? How can a sense of “hurriedness” impede compassion for people? Can you “make” yourself be compassionate? How can one become compassionate if they are not? Where does God's grace play into this? What is our part?**