

Scattering Locally

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[0:00] Good morning. How's everybody doing? Good. Give a pat on the back and the people beside you. Wake them up a little bit. Say hello. Say hello to your neighbor. Get to know them. All right. Very good. We've been going through a three part mini series on missions sort of we had Joe and the team come up and share about their trips to the Philippines and about what Hope International has been doing.

Last week we had David come share about ICC and today we're going to talk about more of what God's plan is to scatter to gather and to scatter. God's plan is to gather and to scatter and John Piper said this mission exists because worship doesn't mission exists because worship doesn't. What does that mean? Mission exists because worship doesn't.

It's because people around the world can't gather like this on a Sunday. There are people in Hong Kong even that don't know about Jesus don't know about God and they don't know that they can worship God.

There are people in this world in remote villages in big cities that don't know about God and that is why mission exists. Mission is to go out and proclaim who God is and what his plan is.

We're going to read together Matthew chapter 9. Let's stand together for the word of God. We're going to read together. Let's read together. One, two, three.

[1:42] Jesus went through all the towns. Thank you.

You may be seated. So this passage in Matthew 9 is about Jesus. He's on the road. He's doing ministry.

And where is he doing ministry? He's doing ministry in remote towns and villages. The first thing we see is the first thing. The first part of God's plan is we see God's ministry through Jesus Christ. What is his method? His method is that he went out. The first verb here is that Jesus went. Okay. He just didn't stay in the four seasons at Jerusalem and say, hey, come visit me when you're free. He didn't, you know, go into a big stadium and be like, come here and you'll come and see me. No, Jesus went. Jesus went out. He took initiative.

[3:06] Just like Gabe read in Matthew chapter 28. It says, therefore, go and make disciples of all nations. The first verb is go. Jesus went. And where did he go?

His mission field was everywhere. He went to small towns and he went to villages. Jesus, every place needs the gospel.

Everyone needs the gospel. One of the funniest things I've heard since being in Hong Kong here from Hong Kong Islanders. Who lives on the Hong Kong Island?

Yeah. I had a conversation and some people were like, oh, I don't go to Kowloon. Like, yeah, that's that's not my place.

You know, I don't go there. Have any of you met people like this? I mean, Kowloon's not that bad. Actually, there's some really beautiful places. I mean, we can almost see lions rock from here.

[4:08] It's a beautiful hike. Like you can ask Pastor James about his recent trip to the slums in the Dominican. There are a lot worse places in the world than to be in Kowloon in Hong Kong.

And one of the great things that we're doing in the gathering here is that we're doing prison ministry. People need the Lord everywhere.

Amen. Especially in the prisons. And we've been doing a prison ministry. They do a worship session with the prisoners and they worship together.

They share the gospel. They encourage the people in the prisons. They do prison ministry. And so Jesus method was he went.

His mission field was everywhere. His main work was what? His main work was to teach in the synagogues. Preach and heal.

[5:10] Teaching, preaching, and healing. Jesus respected the worship places of that time.

The synagogues. They were Jewish. They were Jewish. And so they went to the Jewish synagogue on a regular basis to worship. And Jesus would teach there. Teaching is informing people of knowledge so that they can grow.

Preaching is trying to influence people to emphasize that there is a God that loves them. You're trying to convince them that God loves them.

That is what preaching is. And so Jesus was not just teaching in the religious places of that time. He was preaching. He was telling people the kingdom of heaven is near.

He was urging people the message that God loves them and for them to come near to him. And he spent time with the people in healing and connecting with them.

[6:16] So his main work was teaching, preaching, healing. And his message was that the kingdom of heaven was near. Joe and the team went to the Philippines to connect with some of the schools and the teachers and the staff of Hope International.

Instead of going to Singapore F1, you know, on the same weekend, they chose to go to Manila. They chose to go to that place to share the love of Jesus.

To encourage the workers that are already there. To be praying for the people. To be praying for the students and the little children on the streets. That are struggling to survive.

Struggling to survive. The explorers in the last couple of years, we've been going to a school in Wangjokhang area.

It's called Tan Ba Sa. And we, two years ago or before COVID, we taught English to 50 students from Tan Ba Sa every week.

[7:28] This is me teaching on Joseph. The story of Joseph. A lot of these students are from mainland China. They've never heard about Jesus before.

And they're not very good academically. So we want to help to teach them. Agnes was there.

Winnie was there. Some of these deacons that were devoted to helping teaching students.

Not only about English, but also preaching to them about the love of Jesus Christ. So the question I ask today, the first question I ask is, where would Jesus go if he was in Hong Kong today?

Where would Jesus go if he was in Hong Kong today? Yeah, he would spend some time in Admiralty and some of the biggest churches in Hong Kong.

But I think he would spend time in some of the poorest, most needy places in Hong Kong.

[8:34] Jesus spent time with the prostitutes. He ate with the sinners and the tax collectors. Where would Jesus go if he was in Hong Kong today? He would go to the poor and the needy.

Those who are desperate. So the first thing we see is God's ministry. Let's continue to read verse 36 again. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd.

You can imagine Jesus is going from town and town, village and village. And he's starting to heal people. And so when you hear of, wow, there's Jesus, there's this potential Messiah.

We got to see him. We got to bring our friends who are sick, who are needy. We got to bring Sarah who has a knee problem. We got to bring James who's still recovering from Achilles. Let's bring him.

Bring these people to go and see Jesus. And when Jesus is there, he sees the crowd. Imagine multitudes of people. Some stats believe that there were around 3 million people in the world at that time when Jesus was alive.

[9:48] In Israel, we don't know exactly how many people, but he saw the multitudes. He saw the crowd. And he had compassion upon them.

This word compassion. It's being moved in your innermost being. Have you been moved in your innermost being?

Moved inwardly. This gut feeling. Emotional feeling of love, compassion. Love, care for people who are in need.

Last week, David came and he shared about how he went to China. And he saw children being abandoned. Because of their disability, mental disability, disability.

And he had compassion upon them. He was like, God, what can I do? He saw children being abandoned. He looked down and he held the baby in his arms.

[11:04] And he said, I want to do something for these people, for these children. And they're celebrating 30 years of compassion.

30 plus years of compassion. Of helping children that are in need and are abandoned. Jesus had compassion on them.

Because they were sheep without a shepherd. Anybody have any sheep that they own? Yeah?

Anybody in the new territories have a farm? Hank, maybe?

No? No sheep yet? Just some dogs. I remember I was in, I don't know, New Zealand or Iceland. I don't know. One of these countries. And I saw a sheep farm.

And I was like, whoa, that's cool. You know, Jesus always talks about sheep. Let's go visit some sheep. And so I went to the sheep. And as I approached the fence, guess what happened to the sheep?

[12:00] They scattered. They were just running away. They were like, who is this? Random stranger. Sheep usually are very docile.

Timid. They're easily influenced. They're lacking protection. They lack protection. They're easily prey for those who are after them.

They need a shepherd. They need somebody to lead them. Jesus says, these people are like sheep without a shepherd.

Israel has been taken over time and time again. The Assyrians came in.

The Babylonians exiled them. The Persians came in. And then the Romans are governing over them. Time and time again, these people have been like sheep without a shepherd.

[13:07] Some of the translations use these words. NIV uses harassed and helpless. King James uses fainted and scattered abroad.

Distressed and downcast. Troubled and abandoned. Imagine people going through the same harassment over and over again.

Assyrians, Babylonians, Romans, always being governed, never being free. They feel helpless, hopeless.

This word is downcast, thrown down. People, they felt thrown down, hopeless. Do we know people like that?

Are they our friends, our family? People that are going through the same cycle in Hong Kong?

Struggling to find hope. Struggling to find hope.

[14:15] True purpose. True meaning. We had Restore yesterday. And we were talking about a lot of people that are struggling through depression.

Through depression. Through suicide. Through mental illnesses. I work with students. I work with students.

I work with students. And they go through a lot of different struggles. Whether it be relationships.

Friendships. Friendships.

Struggling in school. The pressures of school. To meet the expectations of their parents. Of society.

Who are the hopeless.

And the helpless. That are around us. Who are the people that Jesus would have compassion on today?

[15:15] Who would Jesus have compassion on today? So we see three things. God's ministry.

God's compassion. And lastly, we see God's vision. God's vision. Let's read verse 37. Let's read it together one more time.

Ready? One, two, three. Then he said to his disciples. Jesus saw these people.

The multitudes. The crowds. Some of them needed healing. Some of them were broken. And what did he see? He saw the harvest.

What is the harvest? The harvest is yielding the crop. For farmers, the harvest is the time to make money. Right? This is where you reap all your corn or your wheat or your apples and you sell it and you can get money.

[16:23] You can get something from it. It's your first fruits. It's like your first paycheck. And yet Jesus saw the harvest. And yet Jesus saw the harvest.

He saw the people. They weren't the cream of the crop. But he saw the harvest. I'm living with a friend in Kowloon or the New Territories.

And one day I saw there was a fruit. It was red. And I was like, what is that? It was a dragon fruit.

It was a dragon fruit. I was like, no way. In Hong Kong they can grow dragon fruit? I was like, oh my. We're so like used to buying things from the grocery store.

And so I saw this dragon fruit. And I was like, can we eat it? You know, is it edible? And my friend's like, yeah, go eat it. And I cut it open.

[17:23] And I ate it. And I was like, wow. It's so amazing. Like I didn't pay for it. I felt like, wow, God, you just gave me a dragon fruit. I feel so special.

This is what Adam must have felt like, right? It's like every day. He didn't do anything. And he was like, wow, I just got a star dragon fruit. And it tasted so good. And I was like, wow, the harvest would be so amazing, right?

You don't do anything. God shines on it. You know, God waters it. And then it just grows. And then there's dragon fruit. And I get to enjoy it. You know, the Garden of Eden, Eden must have been so amazing.

So amazing. Jesus looked at the broken people, the crowds. And yet he saw the harvest. He saw the harvest.

Why is that? Why did he see the harvest? When we go play basketball, you know, in Victoria Park or Southern, the first thing we see when we look, right, Pastor James, when we look, is we look at the competition.

[18:30] We're like, who's good? Who's not good? You know, is Bronny James there? Oh, we're not playing there. You know, you don't know who Bronny James is.

It's okay. Wrong crowd. Sorry. You're supposed to laugh. But if you see really good players, you scout, right?

You scout. Whoa, those guys are really good. Let's go play there. It'll be good competition. It'll be good competition. Let's go play there. But Jesus wasn't with the cream of the crop.

He wasn't with the people who was most knowledgeable, who was most gifted. He's with towns and villages, normal people, people that were being brought to him for healing.

And he said, the harvest is plentiful. Jesus saw the potential in them. The need in them.

[19:34] They needed to be spiritually harvested. They needed to be spiritually harvested. Jesus understood that these people were hopeless and he was hope.

Jesus saw these people. They needed, they were restless. And he was peace. Jesus saw that they needed salvation.

It didn't come from doing and trying to fulfill the law. It came truly through him. And that is why he said the harvest is plentiful.

There's lots of people that need to be harvested. Lots of people that don't know about Jesus. That need true peace. True hope.

True salvation. And Jesus also talks about the harvest in another parable. That one day on earth. That one day on earth.

[20:47] The harvest. Of the good. Of the godly people will grow with the harvest. Of the worldly people. And one day at the end of the harvest.

The angels will come. And the wheat. And the wheat. Of the world will be burned. And the wheat of God.

Will go to heaven. Jesus not only sees. Their current need. Jesus sees. Their eternal need.

One day. The final harvest. The final judgment. Will come. And we need laborers. To collect. The harvest. What happens when you.

Don't collect the harvest. What happens. What happens when you don't collect the harvest. The food.

[21:50] Will rot. The fruit. Will rot. The fruit. Will rot. And Jesus saying. The harvest. Is now. We need.

Laborers. We need. Laborers. We've been talking about Cambodia. Anybody been to Cambodia? Even. Even in Cambodia.

If you were wearing. Who's wearing glasses today? If you were wearing glasses. During the genocide. You would be executed. Because they wanted to eliminate.

Any threat. Of intelligence. You wearing glasses. Was a sign that you had some sort of money. You could afford. Anybody. You just took off your glasses. JP.

Just like. I'm Superman. Superman. If you wore glasses. It was a sign that you had some sort of money. Or you had some sort of.

[22:52] Sign of education. And you were a threat. To that organization. It's so sad. It's so sad.

And yet. We've been going. To Cambodia. For three years now. We go to the schools. We don't know the language. But we have an interpreter. We go to some of the schools. And we share Bible stories. We share about Jesus. Jesus. And we ask some of the students. Do you want to ask Jesus. To be your friend. Jesus loves you. Jesus wants to connect with you. Jesus loves you so much. He died for you. Would you like to be. A friend. Of Jesus. Jesus. And as we went from school. To school. We had. We saw students. Raise their hand. Some. 10. [23:49] 12. 16. Year olds. Students. Raise their hand. And pray the prayer. To ask Jesus. Into their life.

For a nation. That has cut off. A generation. Of teachers. And educated people. These people. Are hungry. Desperate. For true hope. True salvation. We saw hundreds of students. Come to know Jesus. We saw hundreds of students. Come to the church. And ask. Jesus. To be. Their friend. Do we. See the harvest. Do we see the harvest. Do we see the needs. Of the people. Around us. Jesus said. [24:48] That the problem. Is the harvest is great. And he gives us. Two solutions. The first solution. Is this. Pray earnestly. To the Lord of the harvest.

What does it mean? Pray earnestly. Pray earnestly. Has anybody tried. Praying earnestly. Before? Maybe you're praying. Earnestly. For that new. Boyfriend. Or that girlfriend. Or that wife. For that new job. Right? You pray earnestly. I re. God really. Please. Give me. That interview. That new job. What is praying earnestly? Pray earnestly. Praying earnestly. Is surrendering. To the Lord. In desperation. And saying. God. We believe in you. Help us. In this. The first thing. He calls us to do. [25:41] Is to pray. Earnestly. Are we earnestly. Praying. For the harvest. The people around us. Are we praying.

For our family. Our brothers. Our sisters. Our aunts. Our uncles. Our parents. Who have not. Understood. The true. Hope. Of Jesus Christ. Are we earnestly. Praying. For some of the. Coworkers. That we work with. The students. That we are. Going to school with. Are we praying. Earnestly. And another thing. It points out here. Is that. We are praying. To who. We are praying. To the Lord. Of the harvest. The Lord. Of the harvest. Who's in control. [26:42] Who is sovereign. It's not us. Jesus. Jesus invites us. To be a part. Of his ministry. His ministry. His plan.

It's amazing. Because ultimately. The work. Is the Lord's. Apart. From him. We can do nothing. Apart. From Jesus. We can do nothing. He is the Lord. Of the harvest. We need to. Surrender. To the Lord. Of the harvest. The first. Solution. Is to pray. Pray. Earnestly. Trusting that God. Is in control. He is the Lord. Of the harvest. That he will. Move in his time. And in his way. The second thing is. To go. As laborers. To go. As laborers. Just like Gabe. Said this morning. We. Need to go. [27:37] Make disciples. Of all nations. Just like. He went to Cambodia. To do. To help. Build up. The ministry. There. And we see.

In chapter. 10. The next chapter. Actually. Jesus. After saying this. To the disciples. That the harvest. Is plentiful. We need to go. And pray. To the Lord. For the harvest. In chapter 10. He says this. He called the 12. 12 disciples. To him. And gave them. Authority. To drive out. Impure spirits. And heal every disease. These. 12. Were given the instructions. Go. Rather to the lost. Sheep of Israel. And as you go. Proclaim the message. The kingdom of heaven. Has come near. Just. Immediately. After. He talks about the harvest. He. Sends out. The 12. Disciples. He sends out. The 12. [28:35] Disciples. Where is God calling us. To go. Where is God calling us. To go. Who is God. Calling us. To pray to. Who is God's. Calling us. To pray to. This was God's plan. He went.

To the villages. To the towns. He felt. Compassion. He felt. Compassion. He understood. Their situation.

They were hopeless. Like sheep. Without a shepherd. He saw. The harvest. He saw. Their potential. He saw. Their need. And he prayed. For them.

He prayed. For them. God's. Calling us. Today. Are we. Willing to go. Are we. Willing to go.

[29:34] Maybe God. Has called you. He's laid. In your heart. For specific. People group. To go. And share. The gospel. With. Or maybe.

God is calling. You today. Is it your. Co-workers. Is it your. Students. Is it your. Family. God. Is calling.

You. To go. And share. The good news. Of Jesus. To them. Show them. The love of God. Do we. Feel. Compassion. Upon the people. Around us. Do we feel. Compassion. Do we. See their need. Do we. See their need. And are we.

Willing. To pray. As. As we. Finish. I just want to. I want us. To reflect on. The last slide. There. Where.

[30:31] Where is our. Mission field. Where has God. Called us. Who are the people. In our lives. That God has placed.

That need. Jesus Christ. Are we. Willing. First of all. To start. Praying for them. Are we. Willing to start. Praying for them.

Earnestly. Not like. Oh yeah. I'm about to sleep. Yeah. Pray for. My brother. And then. You snooze off. No. Pray earnestly. God. We pray for.

My brother. These are the things. He's struggling with. This. He needs. Jesus Christ. Are we. Willing to pray. Earnestly for. The people.

Around us. That God has placed. Are we willing. Are we willing. To pray. And secondly. Are we willing. To share.

[31:27] To go. Just as Jesus did. Teaching. Preaching. Are we willing. To share. What Jesus has done. In. And through us. In and. Through our lives.

During my time. In Hong Kong. One of the. One of the places. That I feel. God has actually. Called me to. Is to the basketball courts. And through the basketball courts. I've seen many students. Actually come to know Jesus. And then actually. Many young adults. Come to know Jesus. And sometimes.

I'm not even. Looking to. To meet anybody. Sometimes. I'm really just there. To play basketball. And. And I meet some people. And we become friends. And I invite them to church.

And. And sometimes. They come to know Jesus. And that's because. I'm willing. To be used by the Lord.

[32:25] To go and share. What Jesus has done. I'm willing. To try. And say. Hey. I go to church. Do you want to check it out sometime?

And sometimes. And sometimes. They check it out. And sometimes. They don't just check it out. They stay. And I've shared. Many stories. Of students.

That have come to know Jesus. Where is. Your mission field? Are you willing to pray? And are you willing. To share.

Let's take a moment. Let's take a moment. As the band comes up. To just reflect. Maybe just take this time right now. To pray earnestly. Who are the.

Let's just say two or three people. That God has placed in your heart. That are desperate. For everything in the world. And the one thing.

[33:20] That they need. Is Jesus. Who are the two or three people. That God has placed in your heart. Right now. Let's bow down our heads.

Let's pray earnestly. For them. Let's beg. For the Lord. To be working. In his way. And in his time. In that person's life. Let's take some time.

To pray. Jesus. You are the Lord of the harvest.

You are the one in control of everything. And you draw us close to you. So would you give us your courage.

Would you give us your love. As the lyrics of the song go.

[34:30] Would you break our hearts. For what breaks yours. Would you allow us to see. As you see. Holy Spirit.

Would you guide us. To those in need. To those who are harassed and helpless. Sheep without a shepherd. Lead us Lord.

We follow. Thank you. In your name we pray.

Amen. Please take a seat. Thank you worship team. Thank you Johnny. This ends our mini series on mission.

But the truth is. We will keep coming back to this. You know there's a huge danger. Of calling a church the gathering. The danger is. You end up thinking that this is all there is.

[35 : 37] And that you get so comfortable. Being here. There's a prayer that I've always had. A vision I've always had. Is that this church would be a family. Really expecting guests. That we would be a family.

We would love spending time together. But we would never lose sight of the fact. That we're also expecting guests. We're inviting guests. And one thing I'll tell you about Joe. About Johnny. They may go to the Philippines.

They may go to Cambodia. Or everywhere in the world. That Johnny goes to. But they're doing this work here. In Hong Kong. In Admiralty.

In Wanchai. It doesn't stop for them. And that's the heart that I want us to remember. That you don't turn your mission on. You don't turn your Jesus on.

To go do something. The prayer is that that's just always in us. The reflection that I have is. Well why don't we? We've gone through three weeks of talking about mission.

[36 : 35] And you know this. And I know this. That we should do this. The question is. Why don't you? Why don't we? And if I was just to kind of sum up these three weeks.

All in one go. I would say it's because. Most of the time. We're not really filled with compassion for people. We're more obsessed with our own comfort. Not really.

Is it? That we're not filled with compassion for those outside. We look at the world outside. And we kind of laugh and snigger. But we don't really. We're not really moved to the heart. With compassion as Christ was.

And I think the reason why. Is because we are just so comfortable. We are just so comfortable.

Johnny mentioned that I've just come back from the Dominican. And man. It was tough.

Just FYI. I'm someone who doesn't even like going camping or glamping. I need everything to be comfortable. And so sharing a room. Sleeping on the floor with five guys and cockroaches crawling around.

[37 : 35] With no running water. That led to food poisoning for about five days. Was not comfortable. And I was asking. Lord why? Why?

Where are you Lord? Because I've been so. Gone so comfortable with my comfort. And then the Lord reminded me. What you're going through now.

Descending from the comforts and the heights of Hong Kong Island. Down to the slums of Dominican Republic. That's still nothing compared to the journey that I took.

As Prince of Heaven. Coming down and taking the form of a man. Subject to the discomforts that you all face.

To identify with you. To save you. I think we don't do mission because we forget that. We forget that the Prince of Heaven sacrificed his life to come down for us.

[38 : 33] You see. Because if you remember that. If you remember the journey that Christ took. From heaven. Down to earth. And he did it for you.

And he did it for me. I think that fills you with compassion. For other people. I think that inspires us. Compels us to do as he did. That is the gospel.

And started us off with Philippians 2. Which is that passage. Who though Christ though was in the form of God. Didn't count equality with God a thing to be grasped. But emptied himself.

Taking the form of his servant. Being born in the likeness of man. And he humbled himself by becoming obedient. To the point of death. Even death on the cross. Can I ask you to carry that message of the cross?

What he did. That discomfort that he subjected himself to. And don't then just guilt trip yourself into doing mission. Be filled with joy. Man, Jesus did that for me.

[39 : 36] People need to know about it. People need to know about it. Can we be that family expecting guests? Can we be that family inviting guests? And Johnny led us in this prayer.

Just who are the two, three people? That's all it takes. Can you do that? The whole point is being uncomfortable. Uncomfortable. So the next time we're faced with an option. When we're talking to that colleague that we really hate. Or to that family member that just really annoys us. Can we go, you know. Today, I'm going to go out of my way. I'm going to be uncomfortable. And share the good news with you. Because that's what Christ did for me. Can we do that? Can I get a nod from you? If that's something that you resonate with. And we'll figure out how we can fit more people in here. And that's a different problem that we'll sort out another time. But for now. That's the heart that we carry. Can I invite you just to open up your hands.

[40 : 34] And as I finish with a final prayer. Thank you. So Lord, as we leave this gathering here.

We pray that we would carry that spirit. That the early apostles did. Where they scattered. But not out of fear. But out of this deep desire.

To share the good news. Because there is hope. That those outside who fear death. Don't need to fear anymore.

So be with every single person here as we leave. Let us not compartmentalize our faith. Let us not compartmentalize just our gathering. But may we truly.

Truly embody your spirit. That you came. And you came and preached to every town. Every person. This message of repentance. This message of hope. Thank you Lord.

[41 : 42] In your name we pray. Amen. So this does end our time in. Missions for now. But next week we'll carry on with 1 Thessalonians. I think we're on chapter 4. So look forward to seeing you there.

And have a good week scattering. See you next time.