**Matthew Sermon VIII**

**Have Great Faith: The Harvest is Plentiful**

Matt 7:1-5 Seek first the kingdom. Have incredible kingdom standards ever before you, but do not judge—do not **pass judgment** on those who are still working on it.

Matthew 7:6 Do not judge, but do make wise judgments. (also v. 15-20 you can tell a tree by its fruit)

Matthew 7:12 The Golden Rule. This serves as the summary of Jesus statements about Kingdom ethics. Treat others as you would want to be treated.

Matthew 7:13-27 How to get into the kingdom.

7:13-14 Small is the gate, narrow the road, and only a few find it. Wide is the gate and easy is the road to hell. This seems pretty judgmental. It seems narrow-minded. But it is true.

Why will so few make it to heaven? v. 21 Because only a very few are willing to do the will of God.

Build your house on the rock which is Jesus Christ by doing what he says.

This morning: Have Great Faith: The Harvest is Plentiful.

Matt 8:1-9:34 Jesus’ ministry of teaching, preaching and healing.

Matt 8:1-4 Jesus heals a leper/unclean.

Matt 8:5-13 Then he heals the servant of a Gentile.

Matt 8:14-15 Then he heals a woman.

Matt 8:5-13 A Centurion’s faith. parallel Luke 7:1-8

A centurion is a Roman officer of about 100. Roman soldiers not friends of Jews.

v. 8 “only say the word.”

Jesus honors great faith. A personal visit is not necessary. You do not need some sort of sign like Gideon. We do not need a sign from God to believe he will do what he says he will do.

v. 10 Do you want to impress Jesus? Have great faith!

Q: What have you done lately that required a lot of faith?

Committed to be on a mission team, to take the one year challenge, to share your faith with someone intimidating, to believe that your relative or friend will become a Christian? Quit a job which interfered with your church schedule. Put behind a boyfriend or girlfriend who was not helping you to stay close to God.

v. 12 Many Jews will be excluded from the kingdom. Why? They lack faith. Faith not nationality matters…. Many who think they are Christians…

v. 12 sons of the kingdom = Jews. Where will they be? In outer darkness! Why? Lack of faith.

v. 13 Jesus says to you: “Let it be done just as you believed it would.” This applies to us.

Remember this from the lesson: **“Let it be done just as you have believed it would.”**

Some of us have not seen God doing great things in our lives for a while. Maybe it is because you do not believe he will do great things.

Illustration: Share story about the woman in the airport in San Diego going through SLC to Kansas City.

What about getting this place to meet for $50/month.

We came here to Merced on faith, and faith is belief in things unseen.

Matt 8:1-9:34 Jesus mission of teaching, preaching and healing.

In fact… Matt 4:23 Jesus went through Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness among the people

Which is what Jesus did

Matt 8:1-4 heals a leper

Matt 8:5-13 Jesus heals the Centurion’s servant

Matt 8:14-17 Jesus heals many: Peter’s mother-in-law, drives out demons.

Matt 8:28-34 Jesus heals Legion and his friend

Matt 9:1-8 Jesus heals a paralyzed man

Matt 9:18-25 Jesus raises Jarius’ daughter and heals a bleeding woman

Matt 9:27-34 Jesus heals both a blind man and a mute

Matt 9:35-38 Jesus is making his ministry our ministry.

Matt 4:23 teaching, preaching and healing = Matthew 9:35 For us Matthew 10:7-8.

Matt 9:35 – 10:42 Parallel mission of the disciples.

Jesus’ ministry became their ministry and it is our ministry.

9:38 Are you a worker? A ministry of compassion. People are lost, without direction.

Are you frustrated with people or compassionate toward then?

This is an evangelism passage, our method is showing compassion to people.

Matthew 10:-1-4 The twelve are very diverse tax-collector (right wing, working for Rome) a zealot (left wing, hates Rome). We need all kinds too.

Matthew 10:5-42 Jesus give us our marching orders.

10:5-8 Not only is Jesus’ ministry our ministry, also Jesus’ message is our message.

Our message: Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand (Matthew 4:17)

10:9-10 first things first. Always better to rely on God, not self. Paul to Timothy: 2 Tim 2:4 Do not get entangled in civilian affairs.

V 11-15 OK to focus on the open. We are not judging but we are using wise judgment. Who is really open?

16-20 Be wise, but maintain pure motives. preach boldly. Not likely you will be arrested, but… God will be with you.

21-23, It might get rough!

vs 22 Answer: we will be hated (but we will not hate, we will love!)

v 23 If you get fired because of your faith, or if they give you hours that do not work with the kingdom schedule, get a job somewhere else.

Ex: called before a college president.

Also called before my dean for web site content.

Accused by students of being too Christian.

Cops called on at CSUB.

v. 25 They called Jesus Satan… Will you do a better job?

Matt 10:26-31

v. 26 do not fear them. The truth will come out. What is the worst they could do to you? Get you fired? Wouldn’t that be cool? Have to find a new place to live?

v. 28 kidnapped or killed?

v. 29-31 God has your back! Don’t be afraid. Do you believe this?

Like the Hebrew writer Heb 13:6 quotes Psalm 118:6-7 “So we say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?

Matt 10:32-33

Our job: Acknowledge God! BTW not acknowledging = denying!

If you acknowledge God, your boss may deny you. The reverse?

Q: Who would you rather have acknowledging you: God or your boss, landlord, professor or neighbor.

v. 34-39. Yes, even family!!!!

Is v. 34-36 a contradiction of Jesus being the prince of peace? (we read Isaiah 9:5-7 earlier)

Peace that passes understanding does not equal lack of conflict.

No peace = restored relationship w/God.

v. 34 conflict is a result, not a goal.

v. 37 clear loyalties

v. 37 correctly interprets Luke 14:26 hyperbole “Hate” = Love less.

Wives have been divorced, children have been disowned.

Illustration: Rhys Kiaaina Hawaiian “pagan” Wife Japanese. Buddhist.

Wife threatened, bribed with money, car. She became a Christian. Married 1991 – 2018 Rhys not allowed to enter home. Didn’t come to wedding, birth of kids will not even let him in the house or speak to him. Finally 2018 let him into their house.

Q: Where does your loyalty lie? God will send open people our way!!

10:40-42 Encouragement (we need it) You will not lose your reward.

Our “mantra” for the week?

Let it be done, just as you have believed.

Jesus has given us a ministry of teaching, preaching and healing, but it is always a ministry of compassion to harassed and helpless people.

They may not appreciate what we say. It might even get rough. Even friends and family may turn against you. But we look for those open to the message of Jesus.

But Jesus tells us if we acknowledge him before people, God will acknowledge us before God. We will certainly not lose our reward.