

Small Group Guide SENT BY THE KING

The Church at Brook Hills

Dr. David Platt

February 19, 2012

Matthew 9:35–10:42

This guide is a tool to help you lead your group into spiritual transformation. Use it as a resource to train your group into potential disciple-makers and lead your group in discovering, owning, and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be aspects you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on an aspect of their relationship with God. Your role is to help facilitate this encounter with God in His Word with His Body, not just to complete the guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid group task list.

Relate . . .

Begin your group time by engaging in relational conversations and prayer that may include the following elements:

Welcome—a simple, brief time to greet one another (especially new friends), enjoy refreshments, and make announcements.

Review—a time to review the truths discussed last week and report on how members have had success or frustrations in applying those truths during the week. (The leader will want to provide encouragement and shepherding during this time.) Periodically, the leader will also want to review the gospel and allow members to share reports about opportunities they've had to share the gospel. Occasionally, the leader will want to review the vision for the group and discuss ways to accomplish that vision better.

Prayer—a time of general prayer with the whole group praying for struggles regarding the application of truths, for those with whom the group is sharing the gospel, and for understanding of today's truths.

Reflect . . .

Use the following summary and questions to review this week's message and reflect on its implications for our lives. (As a training tool, leaders might want to have various members summarize the teachings in their own words each week sharing how they think the Scripture applied to the original hearers and how the principles apply to us today.)

SENT BY THE KING Matthew 9:35-10:42

The Condition of the Lost...

- See their size.
- Feel their suffering.
- Realize their separation.

The Commission of Christ...

- Jesus beckons us to pray.
- Jesus summons us to go.
 - Go to great need.
 - Go to the diseased.
 - Go to the dying.
 - Go to the despised.

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- Go to the dirty.
- As we go to the needy, we will learn to trust His provision.
- Go to great danger.
 - Be as foolish as sheep.
 - Be as smart as snakes.
 - Be as pure as doves.
 - As we go into danger, we will learn to depend on His presence.
- We will be betrayed.
- We will be hated.
- We will be persecuted.
 - The reality we must face...
 - The danger of our lives increases in proportion to the depth of our relationship with Christ.
 - The question we must ask...
 - Do we really want to be like Christ?
- Fear will tempt us.
 - See with an eternal perspective.
 - Speak with a holy boldness.
 - Sacrifice with reckless abandonment.
- The Father will take care of us.
 - He rules us sovereignly.
 - He knows us completely.
 - He loves us deeply.
- Confess Him publicly.
- Love Him supremely.
- Take the ultimate risk.
- Find the ultimate reward.

The Prayer of the Church...

- God, give us supernatural awareness of the condition of the lost.
- God, give us sacrificial obedience to the commission of Christ.

Message Summary

We must see and understand the desperate condition of the lost. The good news is not only for us, but for all peoples. We are called not just to celebrate the gospel, but to spread the gospel.

Jesus beckons us to pray, asking that He will send out workers into the harvest. He then summons us to go to great need and great danger.

As we go and confess Him publicly, we will experience persecution and suffering. We will be tempted to fear, but the Father will be with us, will provide for us, and take care of us. We can love Him above all things and all relationships, even our own lives. Our reward is life with Him now and for all eternity. Let us choose obedience to the commission of Christ for the sake of His glory.

Group Discussion

Use the following questions to help review the application of God's Word to our Head (What does God want me to know?), to our Heart (What does God want me to desire/value?), and to our Hands (What does God want me to do?).

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- There are around 7 billion people on earth today. At least 4.5 billion of them, and likely many more, do not know Christ as Lord and Savior. How are the lost described in Matthew 9:36? What was Jesus' attitude toward them? What are some of our attitudes toward the lost and those otherwise in great need? Who can change our attitudes? How?
- Ultimately, why should we be concerned for the lost? How does concern for the lost relate to God's kingdom and God's glory?
- What does Jesus tell His followers to do in Matthew 9:37–38? Why is prayer so important to fulfilling Christ's commands? Why is prayer the critical first step in understanding our role in Christ's commission? How can we put ourselves in a good position to hear from God?
- Read Matthew 10:5–8. Do you believe God will show you where to go? To whom did Jesus tell His disciples to go? How could we describe these people today? Why do you think He wants us to go to these types of people? Are there others to whom He wants us to go?
- How and where do you come into contact with the lost? At work? At school? In your neighborhood? Sports events? While shopping? Children's activities? Rock the Block? Missions trips? How can you maximize these opportunities for the gospel?
- Read Matthew 10:9–23. Is Jesus sending us into danger? Why? How does He tell us to behave in dangerous circumstances? In your life now, what will it mean to be as foolish as a sheep, as smart as a snake, and as pure as a dove?
- Should we seek out danger, persecution, and suffering? Why or why not?
- How will our obedience to Christ's call (our going) increase our trust in His provision? How will it increase our dependence on His presence? Can we experience these deeper blessings without going through suffering, danger, and/or persecution? Why or why not? Why can we rejoice in our sufferings for His sake?
- We learn from Matthew 10:24–25 that when we identify ourselves with Christ, we will experience the same kind of hardships He faced. Dr. Platt said, "The danger of our lives increases in proportion to the depth of our relationship with Christ." How do these truths challenge our values and desires? How do they drive us to the reality of the gospel? What is the reward in being like Christ?
- Read Matthew 10:26–33. According to Jesus, who and what should we fear? How is an eternal perspective an antidote to fear? Do you think that when our fear of God increases then our fear of man decreases? How can we learn to fear God?
- How are God's love and God's sovereignty encouragements to live fearlessly? What does fearless living for Christ look like?
- Who and what do you fear? How can we resist the temptation to fear? How will this passage of Scripture challenge and encourage you this week?
- Read Matthew 10:34–42. Jesus Christ is worthy of our supreme love. Why do verses 39–42 (especially verse 39) make all the suffering and difficulty described in this chapter worthwhile? How can verse 39 change our perspective on sacrifice, danger, suffering, and risk for Christ's kingdom?
- Is obedience to Christ's commission optional for His disciples? What is holding you back from living as a witness to Christ? How can you begin to surrender those things to Christ? Is there anything more valuable than taking hold of eternal life in Christ?

Respond . . .

Encourage your group to break out into smaller, same-gender groups where they will respond to the truths of today's study. These groups will share with one another based on the following questions and then close in prayer:

- What are some of the main truths that God wants you to know from this study?
- How do your thoughts need to adjust to align with these truths?
- According to the truths from this study, what does God want you to desire/value?
- How do your values need to change to align with His values?
- What actions does God want you to take according to the truths of this study?

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- What is an action that you can start to implement today or tomorrow?
- What is going to be the most difficult aspect of this study to personally apply?

Close this time by praying for each other, specifically for strength to apply these truths, for personal needs, for the lost people with whom you are seeking to share the gospel, and for our weekly prayer focus as a church.

Weekly Prayer Focus ...

- **Lives and Church:** *This week we are studying Jesus' second large teaching passage that Matthew records in his Gospel. In Matthew 10 Jesus is directly addressing His disciples, and His words apply to all of His disciples today. Pray that we would obediently go where Jesus sends us and carry the gospel to all those who need to hear. Ask God for His strength to face persecution and trials. Pray that we would rely on the Father's love and the Spirit's presences in our lives so that we can live without fear. Pray for disciples, both old and new, to deny their own desires and live instead completely abandoned to Christ's will.*
- **Local:** *This week we are praying for 23rd Baptist Church South, P.B. Hatcherson, pastor. We are also praying for the ministry of Vestavia Sav-A-Life as they seek to reach out to pregnant women with the gospel, life skills counseling, and pro-life counseling.*
- **Global:** *This week we are praying for our short-term teams serving in South Asia. We are also praying for Brook Hills' church planters Josh and Traci Stahley in New York City. With a population of more than 22 million people, 500 distinct people groups, and 800 different languages spoken in NYC, the city offers significant opportunities to share the gospel with the world.*