

*We the Church  
Serving Others*

Good morning and welcome to City Hope. Thank you for being with us today. Our teams work really hard to make this church feel like your church.

If you're new, your presence matters. It's a really big deal to us that you are here. We believe in the power of great community, and we would love to have you as apart of this one.

2 quick points of emphasis...Small groups and The Loop

We are finishing up our series that we have been in called, **We the Church**.

We've been taking a look at some basics about Gods plan for the world...His Church.

Week 1 – Vision for the future (turn in pledge card)

Week 2 – The Church is made up of disciple-makers

Week 3 – Generosity

As we finish out today, I want to look at a topic that even Jesus says is going to be a tough one.

Before we get there let me give some Biblical context...At the very beginning of the NT, Matthew tells us of the birth of Jesus.

It gives some details of his upbringing, but we quickly find ourselves with Jesus as a man. He's being tempted by Satan and then his ministry starts.

He calls His disciples and then goes to work.

In Matthew 5 he gives a beautiful sermon...might be the longest sermon ever recorded.

*(Joke: A good sermon has a good beginning and good ending, and they are as close together as possible)*

He touches on a lot of topics. How to be blessed, a believers calling to be salt and light, murder, adultery, divorce, loving your enemies, giving, praying, fasting, judging others, cure for anxiety, entering heaven, firm foundation for life.

This was a sermon-sermon!

At the end of chapter 7...The crowds were astonished at His teachings.

These new chosen disciples are there watching and listening to all of this.

Jesus and the apostles start moving again...healing, doing miracles, driving out demons, forgiving sins.

All eyes were turning to Jesus. The wicked and the religious.

This is where we are going to sit for a minute today...

Stand with me in honor of the reading of God's Word

**Matthew 9.35-38** I Jesus continued going around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness. <sup>36</sup> When he saw the crowds, he felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd.

(Here is the part that Jesus tells is going to get tough.)

**<sup>37</sup> Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. <sup>38</sup> Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest."**

Pray

Jesus himself says...There is a lot to do. There are a lot of people to love...The harvest is abundant and only a few people to do it.

Why is that? Here is a part of this that is somewhat hard to swallow. According to Wikipedia, as of 2020, there are approximately **2.38 billion Christians worldwide**.

If there is all this work to be done and people say, I follow Christ, shouldn't the work get finished?

*Illustration: 10 people come up....3 are believers and 7 need to be reached. If the 3 Christian's each serve 2 people and one of them serves 3...all are served.*

If all Christians lived as Christ told us to...

**Matthew 20.25.28** I Jesus called them over and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those in high positions act as tyrants over them. <sup>26</sup> It must not be like that among you. On the contrary, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, <sup>27</sup> and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave; <sup>28</sup> just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

It's a pretty straightforward command from Jesus...**Serve people.**

Why are the laborers few?

I think there are several factors involved here but overall... Serving is the opposite of our natural inclination.

**Most of the time we're more interested in "serve us" than service.**

This is one of the reasons why one of our core values is **Impactful Service**. It's a really big deal in your growth and maturation of being a Christ follower. We believe growth comes when you move from serve us to service.

When we say, Impactful service...there are two sides of this that we want you to experience.

**We want you to feel served.** We work really hard to make this environment feel ready for you. We plan and practice. We use resources to help you grow. We put people in leadership positions that are gifted and passionate to help you. We have events and small groups and kids and students.

We do this to serve you and your family.

**We want you to serve others.** As we mature in Christ, the focus of our lives should increasingly shift to living a life of service.

The mature follower of Jesus stops asking, "Who's going to meet my needs?" and starts asking, "Whose needs can I meet?"

We have ministries and programs and options for you to get involved. We strive to create spaces for service, inside the church and outside the church.

Think about it like this...Have you ever wondered why God doesn't just immediately take us to Heaven the moment we accept his grace? Why does he leave us in a fallen world?

**He leaves us here to fulfil his purposes.** Once you are saved, God intends to use you for his goals. God has a ministry for you in his Church and a mission for you in the world.

God calls you to a service far beyond anything you could ever imagine. You were put on Earth to make a contribution.

You weren't created just to consume resources — to eat, breathe, and take up space. God designed you to make a difference with your life.

You were created to add to life on earth, not just take from it. God wants you to give something back.

**Ephesians 2.10 | For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.**

Those good works are your service to the Lord and His creation.

In the Bible, the words “servant” and “minister” are synonyms, as are “service” and “ministry.”

If you are a Christian, you are a minister, and when you’re serving, you’re ministering.

Here is where churches get in trouble...we start producing consumers instead of contributors.

If you go to a church only looking what it can do for you, you will never be satisfied. You’re looking for something from the church that it never promised to do.

Jesus, not Bobby, not CHC...has called you to be a minister. A servant.

We wholeheartedly want to help you live in this space.

You have something in you that God placed in there...in order for you to make a difference in the world. (Romans 12)

If you’re stale or life in Christ just seems broken or mundane....it could be that you are not living in the purpose that God created you for.

Maybe you need to take that focus off of you and begin to place it on the people around you.

That might be challenging and strange for you to hear but that’s who God has called His people to be and that’s what we believe here at City Hope.

I don’t want to build an audience. I want to build an Army.

Warriors for Christ who are ready to go be Hope dealers, truth tellers, prayer warriors, servant leaders, disciple makers, generous givers.

People who love God and are not afraid to go into the world and treat people like Jesus treated people.

People who let their relationship with Christ lead them in all decisions they make.

*Conclusion:*

In closing, I love how Jesus gives some simple instructions after he issues this tough message.

There is a lot to do and only a few are there to do it, so....

**Matthew 10.38** | **Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest."**

I want us to take the next few moments and do exactly that.

3 prayer prompts:

**1. Prayer for Willingness to Serve**

*"Lord, help me to shift my focus from being served to serving others. Teach me to live with a heart like Jesus, who came not to be served but to serve and give His life for others. Reveal the gifts You've placed within me, and show me how to use them to make an impact in my church and community."*

**2. Prayer for More Workers in the Harvest**

*"Heavenly Father, the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Stir the hearts of Your people to step into their purpose as servants and ministers of Your kingdom. Empower us to meet the needs of others and bring hope, healing, and love to a hurting world. Raise up leaders, volunteers, and disciples to expand Your work in and through Your Church."*

**3. Prayer for Compassion and Action**

*"Jesus, give me Your eyes to see those who are distressed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd. Fill my heart with compassion and move me to action. Let me not grow weary of doing good, but strengthen me to serve selflessly, trusting that my efforts will glorify You and bring others closer to Your love."*

'When you were born, you cried and the world around you rejoiced. May you so live your life for God that when you die, the world around you will cry and you will rejoice.'