

Deane Church + Lostock Church
w/b Sunday 15th October 2017
Matthew 9:35-10:15 *Harvest workers needed*

1. Take time to share in your group some of the things that have encouraged you in the life of Deane Church and/or Lostock Church in recent weeks.

Read Matthew 9:35-10:15

In this passage, we read of Jesus sending 'the 12' specifically to the Jews. The time of proclaiming the Kingdom to the gentiles (non-Jews) is coming (Matt 28:19) but Jesus' priority here is to give the Jews a chance to be restored to a proper relationship with God.

Read Ezekiel 34:1-6

God, through Ezekiel, speaks of the failings of Israel's leaders with respect to caring for God's people in the 6th century BC. This led to the whole nation turning from God, and to judgement and exile in Babylon. Jesus now uses the same 'sheep without a shepherd' language (Matt 9:36 & 10:6) speaking of the Jews in 30AD. He also goes on to speak of judgement and ongoing separation from God for those who do not repent (Matt 10:15).

2. What does Jesus' perseverance with the Jews tell us about God?
3. In what ways are non-Christians today like 'sheep without a shepherd'?
4. In what ways may some church-goers today be like 'sheep without a shepherd'?
5. What should be motivating us to work in the harvest fields today?

Christian jargon de-mystified...

Christian '**mission**', in the widest sense of the word, means the work of Christ-followers in the world and includes looking after the planet (of which we are stewards), social action, outreach and evangelism. It is frequently used in a narrower sense, however, to refer to outreach and evangelism. '**Outreach**', essentially, is building bridges with non-Christian individuals and communities to provide opportunities for evangelism. '**Evangelism**' is the word ministry of sharing the good news of the Kingdom: "...*faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ*" (Rom 10:17). '**Witnessing**' is communicating God's love through our words and holy living.

6. What were the marks of the 12's outreach and evangelism ministry (Matt 10:1 & 7-10)?
7. Should we expect to see any of these characteristics repeated in our outreach and evangelism ministry today... and if so, why and how?

In your private or your group prayer time this week you may like to pray specifically and evangelistically for non-Christian friends.

Please be praying about who you could invite to a Christmas service in December.

And, even though it seems a long way off, please be praying as we begin to make plans for a 4 churches mission week next July.