

Hello, my name is Seamus Herriman, and this is my reflection on the reading Matthew 9:35-10:23. In this reading the verses that stood out to me most were 9:37-38, and 10:16-23.

9:37-9:38 states

37 Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. 38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

10:16-23 states

¹⁶ "I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. ¹⁷ Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues. ¹⁸ On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹ But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, ²⁰ for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. ²¹ "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. ²² You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. ²³ When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. Truly I tell you, you will not finish going through the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

These words resonated for me with respect to the current struggles that America is facing with regard to race.

In 9:37-9:38, we identify that the work of justice and reconciliation is immense and long-running. Communities of color have been actively involved in this fight for generations. Now is an important time to seriously consider what the Church, the White Church in particular, can do to better support our brothers and sisters of color in bringing about justice and true peace for communities of color. How can we use our privilege to expedite God's kingdom? How can we add workers to the harvest?

In 10:16-23, we get a picture of the costs that this work incurs. Especially for those of us with racist friends and family, pursuing God's vision for a reconciled kingdom of justice will require us to open up conversations that our friends and family may find to be uncomfortable and therefore push back against. It is on us to live out God's spirit of perseverance and love to hold these people to us, as children of God themselves, to support them in the hard work of turning their hearts and awakening God's love within them. Only through this discomfort and pain can we experience true peace.

With that said, I pray for us to have God's wisdom to speak words that awaken our loved one's spirits, God's patience to walk with these people when our words do not immediately bring the effect we desire, and God's courage to initiate such dialogue and keep it through any resistance we receive. Thanks be to God, and may we have the privilege to serve in the building of his Kingdom, one heart at a time. Amen