



ALL IN

Week 1 | The Challenge

| KEY THOUGHTS

- **The closer you get to people, the more you really see them;** statistics you read about, become people you care about, who are facing real battles you knew nothing about.
- When we're troubled, we don't need truth bombs lobbed at us from afar; we need someone to take the risk and get close.
- Jesus was present with people — **right there with them, holding hands with the afflicted.**
- **That's who he is:** the Almighty God stepped down from glory into our world, choosing to live among us.
- **Jesus's gut-level compassion was stoked by seeing the people's harassed and hopeless state,** like sheep without a shepherd.
- They were without a shepherd because the religious leaders who were supposed to be shepherding them were absent.
- **The word "Pharisee" means "separated ones" — rather than having compassion, they stiff-armed anyone who didn't meet their standards,** ie., the ill, disabled, poor, anyone classified as a sinner, anyone who didn't bow to their authority.
- Seeing the enormity of the need, Jesus told his disciples to pray that God would send His workers into His fields.
- The Greek word translated "send" means to **thrust out forcefully.**
- When the shepherds are absent/when the workers aren't in the field, the Lord will thrust the disciples into the field to be present with the lost sheep.
- **Jesus drew so close to our sin that He took on our identity as sinners and gave us His identity as the favored Son.**

| SCRIPTURE

³⁵ And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. ³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; ³⁸ therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

Matthew 9:35-38 (ESV)

So pray to the Lord of the harvest to force out and thrust laborers into His harvest.

Matthew 9:38 (AMPC)

And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

Acts 8:1 (ESV)

| PRACTICAL

- Because Jesus has drawn close to us, we can draw close to Him, to each other, and to the world. And when we're close...
 - People become people, not problems
 - We become inviters, not condemners
 - God opens doors for us to share the gospel.
- What might happen if we pray for God to send laborers into the fields of our school? Our workplace? Our neighborhood? The paths of our family members? Wouldn't God move in the hearts of disciples to be present and ready to share the gospel with them?
- Might God not also move in the hearts of the disciples who are praying for this?
- Look for opportunities to be present for others, especially those who are different from us, and especially when it gets messy.

| REFLECT

- When I look at people with problems, it's tempting to blame their situation on their own wrong actions or foolish decisions; it's tempting to forget that without Jesus, I would be right there with them, even leading the way.
- But when I'm with Jesus, I can be right there with them, leading the way to Him.
- Jesus chose His disciples as the way He would share the gospel with the lost sheep of the world.
- Do I resist getting close to others? If so, why?

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