

1. The Key Role of Prayer

Main message: Let's ask God to recalibrate our hearts so they align with His.

Opening question:

As a church we are focusing on "Recalibrating to a Great Commission mindset". What kinds of objects need to be recalibrated? Do you have any example of using an object that was not calibrated correctly?

For example, a compass giving a false reading near to metal objects; weighing scales.

Scripture: Read **John 16:7-8** together.

Question: Starting with this passage, what will it look like for us to be recalibrated to a Great Commission mindset?

We will be more in step with what the Spirit is doing in the world. God sent his Spirit primarily to empower us for mission (see Dave Holden's preach at King's on 4th September: <https://www.kingschurchedinburgh.org/sermons/the-holy-spirit-sends-us-preaching-kings-church-edinburgh/>). Let's ask and expect the Holy Spirit to bring us into line with His priorities.

Scripture: Read **Matthew 9:35-38** together.

Question: Jesus lived perfectly calibrated to do the Father's will. What stands out to you about his work in this passage? What aspects are involved?

- *Jesus was sent by the Father and moves from place to place and person to person – He speaks to a **lot** of people about the Good News of the Kingdom!*
- *He proclaims the Good News in word and deed: teaching and healing.*
- *Jesus is motivated by compassion.*
- *Although he takes the lead in this work, He sees the need for more workers.*
- *He told His followers that it is necessary to earnestly pray to God to send out more workers. [**Send out** = "Throw out" in the Greek, a strong word normally used for casting out demons; think of a young child throwing a teddy out of a cot; it may be a little uncomfortable for the teddy (and for us). Yet, God will guard our hearts and be powerfully with us in mission.]*

Question: If you could choose to grow in one of those aspects, which would you like to ask God for?

Encourage as many as possible to name one aspect they want to pray about in the coming week.

Note that in Matthew 10:1,5-7, the disciples became the answer to their prayer as Jesus sent them. We believe God will change us through specific prayer.

During this series, we will see the Bible using agricultural terms such as ploughing, sowing, and reaping to teach about mission. Let's start briefly with the image of ploughing land before sowing seed.

Scripture: Read **Hosea 10:12** together.

Question: Hosea was calling Israel back to alignment with God. How do you feel at the prospect of breaking up fallow ground in your life in preparation for mission?

There's encouragement in this verse for us! Ploughing is potentially uncomfortable, but it is necessary for new life to emerge and grow.

Question: Are there things in your life that you feel hold you back from speaking more about Jesus to those around you?

Some common examples would be fear of what people will think of you; not knowing what to say or how to start; fear that you will be asked a question you can't answer; expectation of opposition, etc.

Over the coming weeks, as we chat and pray, we can expect that God will help us overcome these obstacles by giving us more of His power, as well as greater clarity and confidence in the Gospel. The priority in growing a Great Commission mindset is to bring our hearts into line with the heart of God. The great news is that God wants to do that work in each of us! Each week we will be praying to ask God to mould us into a Great Commission people.

Prayer in small group: Spend some time praying for one another that God would align our hearts with His. Confidently ask Him for the characteristics you identified in Jesus' heart when he was on mission (Matthew 9:35-38). You might want to break into groups of 3 or 4.

Great Commission challenge: Let's all be praying about our heart attitude to mission and then we can hear over the coming weeks what God has done in each one of us.

Leader, you may want to remind the group of the activity during the week!