

# The Workers Are Few

## A Children's Sermon

by Andrea H. Moore

text: Matthew 9 and 10

art by Erin Kennedy Mayer

"The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few." "Freely you have received, freely give." *[Repeat this while dressing in work clothes; gloves, hat, shirt, and boots.]* Okay, I think I understand now what the Bible is telling us. *The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.*

I am ready to work in the garden. I've got my work boots on, and this shirt will help shade my arms because I burn easily; this hat is perfect to protect my fair complexion, and these gloves—well, we don't want to get our hands dirty, do we?

Now, for the next part: "Freely you have received, freely give." Hmm, this one's a bit harder. I have received a lot of free things in my life. And, really, I have so much stuff in my closets and in my garage.

Maybe instead of having a garage sale, I will just give this old stuff away. It's not my style, and it was probably given to me anyway. I am ready to serve God. I'll grow some tasty vegetables in my garden, and I'll finally do some spring cleaning.

Do you think that is what the Bible is telling us—to work in our gardens and give our yucky stuff away to someone to make us feel better? No.

It saddens me, but sometimes I think we forget to really read the Bible thinking about what God wants us to know. Too often we read the stories and make up our own selfish meaning—maybe because we don't want to do what the Bible asks us to do.

Let's look again at what these two scripture verses mean. "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few." Jesus told this to his disciples when they were walking through a

small town. As Jesus saw the crowds of people, he became sad. He saw many people who were helpless, sick, hungry and in need of love and care. He compared all those people to a harvest.

Do any of you know what a harvest is? Harvest is the time when plants, fruits, vegetables and grains are ready to be picked and brought in. Jesus said that there are many people out there who need to be helped, who need to be cared for, who need to be taught about God.

We don't need these things (*gardening props*) to care for the harvest Jesus talks about, and sometimes we do need to get our hands dirty to really serve and care for others.

Now for the second verse "Freely you have received, freely give." Jesus wasn't telling his disciples to take stuff to Goodwill or to give just their junk to others. He was telling them to give the love of God to others, just as they have been freely given God's love. The harvest is full. There are many people who need us. Freely give to others what you have been given, share God's love and serve others.

What would happen if we all did what the Bible tells us to do? I'll bet we would be living in another kind of world and that we would be another kind of church. Think of ways you can help those who are hungry and in need of God's great love. Can we together follow Jesus' instructions this week?

The harvest is plentiful, and yet the workers are few. God always needs another good worker. Maybe someone will see you serving others and join in! After church, share some ideas with your family about how you can be God's special helper this week.

--Andrea Moore is a former children's minister, and a mother of five, living in Waco, Texas. From Sacred Seasons, *Hunger Emphasis 1999: The Bread of Deliverance*.