**Morning sermon series: Heaven Meets Earth**

 **"Freely Given"** (Matthew 9v35 to 10v16)

If you’re looking in on Christianity this morning, you might be surprised to hear that the idea of sharing is very central. How?

*What does it mean for us to live like Jesus, here in Abingdon in the 21st Century?*

**1) Sent with authority** (9v35-10v5)

The kind of compassion God feels for people is deep (9v36). That’s why the Father freely gives us the Son. This free gift (10v7) is wonderful, unconditional love that permanently accepts you and changes your heart. It really is free.

Jesus gives us the authority and power to do his life-giving, missional work (compare 4v17, 9v35 and 10v1, 7-8). *Do we see the desperate need of the many people around us who are trying to live without the love of Christ?* Do we pray out of heartfelt compassion for them, as in 9v38?

**2) Sent to give freely** (10v5-8)

Israel was small and seemingly insignificant (v5-6). Christ cared passionately about the crowds in that time and place (9v36). He cares passionately, today, about people in Abingdon (and beyond) who are his and do not yet know him.

Christ gave himself to us freely and he calls us, similarly, to give our lives away to the people around us. We’re sent by him to live like him − to love freely and unconditionally from the heart (v8).

*Are we praying passionately, as we start this new church year, that Christ would do something powerfully life-giving through the mission of people at Abbey?*

**3) Sent into difficulty** (10v9-16)

This work Christ entrusts to us will sometimes be hard and risky, but God provides for us as we work for him (v9-10). There is a spiritual battle, with eternal outcomes at stake, and so there will also be opposition (v14-16). But we have the amazing opportunity to share in the power of Christ’s kingdom and in bringing his compassionate love to those around us.

**Heaven meets Earth, as Christ its King sends us out to share the life of his Kingdom!**

**Evening sermon series: Song of the King**

 **"Victory!"** (Psalm 20)

*Should we read the Bible backwards?*

Jesus in Matthew’s gospel: the anointed King, the son of David.

**1) The prayer of God’s people** (v1-5)

Prayer that the King’s rule will be advanced − a prayer for victory.

**2) The victory of God’s people** (v6-9)

Confidence in God’s covenant promises − he is completely faithful as we trust his promises and call out to him (v6-8).

When the King is victorious, God’s people are victorious (v9).

**3) The confidence of Christ’s people**

Romans 1v1-4, 1 Corinthians 15v25-26.

Christ the King is already victorious through his cross and resurrection.

The Kingdom is “*now but not yet*” − breaking in powerfully *now*, but *not yet* complete.

Two ways for us to pray Psalm 20:

taking refuge in the King, the Son (v6-8);

and praying for Christ’s kingdom rule to be advanced now (v1-5).

The victory is already won (v6). Let’s be praying for its fruit and harvest (Matthew 9v37-38).

Heaven meets Earth, then, as we pray for Christ’s rule of life and love to be advanced!