



# Hark! Hear the Voice

The prophet Isaiah recounts a glimpse into the Divine courts, where the voice of the Lord says, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?” We are a people called into covenant relationship with this same God. And thus we are a called people. This idea of our chosen-ness is not meant to puff us up, but rather to send us out. We are called to join in the unfolding story of God in our world.

From the beginning of creation God has been calling a people into a relationship. It is a relationship of doing justice, loving mercy and walking humbly with God. This call into relationship was never intended to be something we could use to set ourselves up as a privileged religious class who could complacently wait around for the end of the world.

The gospel of Matthew reminds us that this is a call from Jesus to go into “the crowds” of the “harassed and helpless.” Daniel March brings the weight of these words to rest upon us in this hymn. We sing that it is Jesus calling, “Who will go and work today?” Our whole world is pictured as a harvest only awaiting workers. We are the called people.

The flimsy excuses and self-doubt that we too readily trot out are answered swiftly in stanzas two and three of our hymn. You might not be able to “cross the ocean,” but you can find those in need of the Reign of God all “around you, you can help them at your door.” Next, you might assert that you do not have the kind of money to make a contribution that would make a significant difference in the world. Again, we are reminded, “what you truly give for Jesus will be precious in His sight.”

At first glance, this hymn might seem on the verge of being manipulative. While this hymn does try to awaken us from the slumber of our apathy and indifference to the brokenness of the world it does so by reminding us of our call and our relationship to the Caller. However, this hymn does not aim to use guilt and obligation as our motivation for going into the world. Rather, we are admonished to “take the task He gives you gladly; let His work your pleasure be.” It is out of a sense that God has joyfully called us into work that will bring us fullness of life that we respond to this call. Knowing this we can have but one response...

“Here am I, send me”

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