



## Message Reflections

January 31, 2021

### Read Matthew 9:35-38.

As you reflect on this passage, consider how aware you are of lost people in your life. Read the following explanation of the *One-Degree Rule* from Organic Outreach International.

**1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10**  
*Ice* *Sizzling*  
*Cold* *Hot*

**The One-Degree Rule** involves identifying your personal evangelistic temperature. Using a scale of one to ten, we can identify the level of our evangelistic passion.

The One-Degree Rule is, above all, a measure of your outreach radar – not activity. Certainly, we expect that if we were to embrace each day with our temperature (radar) at a "10," God would bless our intentionality by setting up divine appointments for us to deepen relationships with the Kingdom in mind.

Everyone's scale of 1 to 10 is personal to them. This is not a tool to compare people against each other – so there is no specific, objective metric determining what qualifies as a "2" versus what qualifies as an "8." It is up to each individual to determine what their scale is – and then to be consistent in applying it to themselves.

A "1" could look like this: I get up in the morning, make it through my normal routine of shave, shower, teeth, dress and get myself to the office. I tackle all the projects/meetings/phone calls and other tasks on my calendar for the day. I drive home and join my family for dinner. I do some light

reading and spend some family time before getting the kids to bed and retiring myself. The next day, I get up and do it all over again. In this scenario, I never once consider doing anything related to people who are far from God. Never even think of it. God could have passed 100 people across my path that He intended for me to engage with on His behalf, and I wouldn't have even noticed a single opportunity.

In contrast, a "10" would then look like this: I wake up in the morning with the primary purpose of being an emissary of God's to the lost. I expect Him to bring people across my path who are in desperate need of knowing Him – even if they have no idea of their state of being lost. Before I do anything else, I pray for a specific list of people who are far from Him – some are family, some are friends at work or in our neighborhood, some may be friends of my kids, or their families. They may be teachers at the school, or cashiers at the grocery store. But they are on my list and I pray that God provides me opportunities to deepen relationships with every one of them; to the point that I have earned their trust (and the right in their minds) to share the Gospel with them.

I finish my prayers asking God to reveal all divine appointments clearly to me and that He would give me the words to say and the discernment to know what they need to hear most in that moment. On my way to the office, I pray these things again. As I get to the office and look through my calendar for the day, I identify any points that may be likely opportunities to reach out to the lost. All of my work is secondary to this purpose and it is all just a vehicle for me to engage in relationships and have encounters where I have the opportunity to share the love of Jesus either subtly through words and acts of kindness, or more overtly through sharing what God has been doing in my life.

On my drive home from work, I reflect on the day so far and pray that if I missed any opportunities that God would reveal those and show me how I can be better at recognizing them in the moment. When I get home and we sit down to dinner, we discuss what opportunities each of us had through the day to pray for, or with, someone or to build deeper relationships with non-Christians. As I relax through the remainder of the evening, I am mentally reviewing the next day and identifying how I can be praying for God to work through each encounter I have. I go to bed with prayers that God continues to work on me to help me discern and act on every opportunity He might present to me. I finish with more prayer for those on my list – that wherever they are laying their heads down that night, God would work in their dreams to open doors and prepare their hearts for hearing the Gospel. These are the last thoughts as I drift off to sleep.

Every day of life brings challenges that can tear our attention away from being in this state of "10". The key is to set a personal baseline on the temperature scale and move forward, frequently assessing where you are and asking others to hold you accountable for your temperature – and always looking to raise it just one degree. Sometimes you may find that life has come at you so fast and furious that you have dropped a few degrees...that's OK! Just be aware of it and be intentional about raising it back up...one degree at a time.

As mentioned before, there is no purely objective scale for this. Your "5" will not be like any other person's "5". Just know what your scale looks like and encourage others to do the same with theirs.

- What is your personal outreach temperature, and what can you do to raise it by one degree?
  
- In a normal week, how much time do you spend with people who are spiritually disconnected? What can you do to increase this amount of time?

Ask God to help you as you seek to raise your outreach temperature. Pray for God to open the hearts of the lost, and to send us out as people willing to share the gospel with them.