

Lesson 13: Review of Matthew 10:5-31: "Mission Risks And Rewards"

In this passage we are drawn into the moment when on the shores of Galilee Jesus prepared His disciples for going on their first mission without Him. In His commentary Fredrick Bruner notes three aspects of His preparation of the disciples to go and experience success on their mission. First, in 10:5-15 he notes that Jesus gives the disciples their *travel instructions*. Second, in 10:16-25 Bruner identifies Jesus' *trouble instructions*. And, third in 10:26-31 he draws from the text Jesus' heart for the disciples as He gives them *trust instructions*. O, how marvelous is the matchless grace of our great Savior King! He prepared them for success and never once candy-coated the risks of the mission!

In verses 5-6 Jesus gives them their *Travel Instructions*. His instructions to them were not as detailed as Mapquest but they were sufficient for their journey. Don't we like to know where we are to go, and when we get there what we are to do and how we are to do it? Jesus' instructions are like that. First, He tells them where *not* to go! "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans." This is so helpful for us. We are prone to wonder along the way. Like children sent to the grocery to purchase flour for mother. She knows that her children must pass by the candy aisle, so she turns them away from the temptation to wander by warning them, "Do not go down the candy aisle!" The point is Jesus was clear!

Now, why *not* go to the Gentiles. In that time Jews did not associate with Gentiles. So, perhaps the candy aisle illustration isn't very accurate, yet undoubtedly as the Gentiles would hear the message they would want to hear. But now was not the time. Jesus told them, "Don't go" because this was the time for Israel to hear! The prophets had promised Israel that Messiah would come among them first, and indeed, now the King was among them. *Now* was their time to hear and receive Jesus as the Savior King! For these twelve disciples Israel and the Jewish people was their mission field. The time for the Gentiles to hear the Message of the Savior King would come after Jesus' ascension! Sadly, Israel refused to believe, but the Gentiles would believe. In Romans 11:14 Paul explains that the reception of the Gospel by Gentiles would "arouse" the Jews to "envy and save some of them"! God has not forgotten Israel!

In 10:6-15 Jesus *instructs* the disciples on *how to do* the mission they were being sent.

First, Jesus tells them to "do" the ministry with simplicity. Preach! Heal! Cleanse! Drive out demons! Simple! He sent them with empty pockets. See! God can do mighty things with **nothing!** After all, He created all things from *nothing!* Simply through preaching the Gospel is how the Spirit plants the *imperishable seed* in the heart of whomever He chooses (John 3:8). Second, in vv.11-15 He tells them not to fight or argue or become offended when people reject the message! Simply, move on! Jesus wanted them to make the most of *time* for it is precious! (see Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5). This is very simple and very helpful for us today, especially as we think of how we spend our time! How do you redeem the time?

In Matthew 10:16-25 Jesus provides the disciples with *Trouble Instructions*. As we look at this section consider how great and loving is Jesus, our Savior King that he makes clear both the risks and rewards associated with the tasks He calls us to! It is good and loving of leaders to prepare those who "sign up" for ministry to prepare them for trouble. Pastors who go into the ministry without an inkling of the trials they will face will probably leave the ministry in a few short years. Whatever your ministry (service) to others (husband, children, church, etc.) you will have trouble but you can also expect reward!

Jesus spoke plainly of the risks. He said that the very nature of their calling (to preach the good news) would result in persecution, imprisonment, trials of different kinds. But consider the indescribable reward promised to those who would persevere in faithfulness. He promises two great rewards! In 10:22 He promises a full and complete salvation! This counts for us too! When our service is complete all the troubles and trials will be over! There will be peace and joy and love forever and ever. The second promise is linked to the first, and one in which most Christians should look forward too. He promises in 10:23 that He is coming again! O, Lord, come! But let us not neglect the responsibilities we have today as we wait for His coming!

Finally, in 10:26-31 Jesus calls them to receive His *Trust Instructions*. We must learn, as the song says, *to trust in Jesus and to take Him at His word*. Why? Because if we don't when trouble and trials come we will be tempted to quit. Jesus promises His involvement in our troubles, especially when we suffer because of the gospel. In this passage we learn that as our Savior King sees every hair that falls from our head to the ground! This means that He is intimately familiar with our troubles. He will cause the troubles to turn out for our benefit and reward if we are faithful (2 Cor. 4:17) Let me ask you, can you trust Him when your wants are many? Will trust Him when your soul feels lean? Learn to trust Him and believe that He is able to keep you. He is your Savior King!

Questions for Matthew 10:32-42 “What We Need To Know”

1. From the notes on page 1, **A)** what impressed and/or helped you? **B)** Explain “A”.

Introduction to Matthew 10:32-42: This section works in some ways as a *theological vise*. If the pressures were heavy in 10:5-31 they are intensified in 10:32-42. In this section it appears as though Jesus is turning to the rest of His followers and impressing upon some expectations and responsibilities associated with following Him. In other words, they learned what essentials must they know if they are to follow Him.

2. Read Matthew 10:32-33. “Expected to Confess Christ”. The NIV uses the word “acknowledge” but a better word is “confess”. The phrase should be “confess Me”. We can render 10:32 as follows: “Whoever will confess [that he/she is in] Me...etc.” **A)** In light of the definition given, explain 10:32 in your own words. **B)** How does this word “confess” intensify the personal nature of your relationship with Jesus? Think in terms of what He did *for* you, *to* you, and *in* you. **C)** Why do you think it is hard to “confess” Christ before other people? **D)** Read 10:33. The NIV uses the word “disown”. How would you define this word in contrast to the definition of “confess” above? **E)** Explain why “disown” is severe and is different than a momentary denial, or silence or compromise? **F)** Read Luke 22:31-33 and Heb. 7:25 and tell how these comfort you.

3. Read Matthew 10:34-39. “Expect Conflict because of Christ”. **A)** List all the conflicts you find in these verses. **B)** What about Jesus’ words surprise you in 10:34-36? **C)** How can you use Matt. 10:22 to help you explain why Jesus said this? **D)** Read John 16:33 and Romans 5:1. Where do these verses point us in order to find true inner peace? Considering all the conflicts listed above do you believe that true inner peace is possible? **E)** Turning to 10:37, what do you think? Is Jesus calling Christians to dishonor parents or what? Explain. **F)** 10:38-39. The cross is always associated with death. According to Galatians 2:20 what is the greatest benefit of dying to yourself?

4. Read Matthew 10:40-42. “Expected to Care for Followers of Christ”. **A)** According to 10:40 how important are Christian relationships? Why? **B)** 10:41 is difficult. But, what reward, or benefit do you receive if you listen to a *prophet*? What reward is there from associating with a *righteous man*? See Proverbs 13:20 for some help. **C)** What reward or benefit is promised when you serve God’s children? **D)** What are some simple ways you could be a servant to God’s servants?