

MATTHEW: THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM

LESSON 28 – MISSIONARY DISCOURSE – MATTHEW 9:36-10:42

MISSIONARY DISCOURSE INTRODUCTION - MATTHEW 9:36-10:4

Two-part introduction by Matthew to the second major discourse by Jesus. Missionaries sent by Jesus have a ministry that is empowered by Jesus, shaped by Jesus' own ministry, and centered in the message about the reign of heaven.

Matthew 9:36-38 – The compassion of Jesus is the source from which the apostles' work will flow.

1. What happens when Jesus sees the crowd?
2. He identifies the people as sheep without a shepherd. What is the explanation for this weakness of the people (9:34)?
3. Jesus speaks to his disciples after seeing the crowds. Jesus uses the metaphor of a great harvest. What is the purpose of the workers in this metaphor? Is there any urgency in this metaphor?

Matthew 10:1-4 – Jesus called the disciples and gave them authority

The prayer the disciples were asked to offer in 9:38 is answered by Jesus himself. The authority of the apostles is aligned with the work of Christ. Jesus' ministry that acts with authority that was witnessed after his sermon on the mount now is extended through the Twelve. The apostles are so unique from the crowd and the disciples that they are named. Jesus is rebuilding the people of God with twelve new "patriarchs," the nucleus of Israel.

10:5-42 Missionary Discourse

This is the second major speech of Jesus in Matthew, the first speech was the Sermon on the Mount.

10:5-15 – The Twelve Proclaim and Bring the Kingdom of Heaven

Jesus sent these twelve.

4. To whom? (10:5-6)
5. To do what? (10:7-8)
6. To be received how? (10:9-13)

7. To what final affect? (10:14-15)

God provides shepherds and watchmen and servant-leaders for his people. Not every Christian is sent in the same way as these apostles. Yet all Christians may find portions of this sending relevant for their lives.

8. What part of the apostolic mission do you share most in common?

Matthew 10:16-23 – Division and Judgment

Jesus declared, “I am sending you...”

Jesus has sent the apostles to the lost sheep, but he also reminds them that they are also sheep. Wise as serpents and innocent doves is an image that mixes sober realism and naïve and trusting willingness. This is a double charge to be shrewd and trusting.

9. What does it mean that a Christian missionary is wise as a serpent in the context of the persecution that will come (10:17-18 and 10:21-22)?

10. Jesus promises the Spirit and Salvation (10:19-20, 22-23). The eyes-wide-open recognition that evil will be at work in this world becomes a moment for the innocence of God’s people to be given in testimony. Where will the strength to act and to speak come from for the apostles?

Matthew 10:24-25 – Servants will be treated like their Master

11. Disciples of Jesus are not independent from Jesus. A disciple will be defined by his relationship with his teacher. As a slave in Roman times was identified by his master. According to this relationship of student and teacher, what defines a person a Christian?

Beelzebul in the times between the Old and New Testament and then in the times of the New Testament became another title for the devil. The word has a double meaning. First the ancient Canaanites called the fertility god Baal, which means Lord. The word Beelzebul adds the word “prince” to the word “Lord.” *The prince/Lord of earth*. The second meaning of this word is a mocking title, “The Lord of flies.” This double meaning is created by the similarity of the word prince and flies, and so with some sloppy pronunciation the word can mean both.

12. People in the twenty-first century struggle with the exclusive claims of Christ and the gospel. Christians will be mocked for being intolerant and narrow-minded. But it is enough for disciples to be like their master. What did our master do in the face of accusations?

Matthew 10:26-31 – Do Not Fear Them

13. Jesus says in 10:26, 28, 31 – “Do not fear.” How can we be so bold in the face of terror?

a. 10:26

b. 10:28

c. 10:31

14. What evidence do we have that our Heavenly Father will not overlook his suffering ones?

Matthew 10:32-33 – Bold

15. Confession – speaking of what we believe – is the evidence of what is in the heart (Romans 10:10). What does Jesus say about those who give witness about him (10:32)?

16. The terrible opposite is also true. To deny Jesus and the truth of who he is in the presence of others is very dangerous (10:33). Why is denial of Jesus so dangerous?

Matthew 10:34-39 – Division and Judgment

Jesus makes an exaggerated negative statement: “Do not think that I came *only* to bring peace upon the earth. The arrival of Jesus brings conflict and strife with sin and evil in this world. Jesus will cause division between people. Some will hear Christ’s call to faith and discipleship. Others will hear the same call, but due to their own ingrained sin and stubbornness will reject this call.

17. In a divided family the conflict between believing and unbelieving members will happen.

Christians can be a loving witness and bring unbelievers to faith. Other times, however, non-believers will demand allegiance and rejection of the gospel. What must a disciple do in these moments of conflict?

18. Conflict between believers and non-believers will at times be bitter. The loss of family and societal support may feel insurmountably great and will appear like defeat and destruction of everything, a “cross” to bear. When a Christian bears a “cross” does this mean eternal suffering and defeat?

Matthew 10:40-42 – The Lord is with His Servants

The teacher and his disciples will face opposition. The disciples will not be forgotten by this world. As the master faces persecution, so will also his followers. The disciples, apostles, and Jesus are joined together.

19. When the apostles go out, they do not go out alone. Who goes with the disciples on their missions?

When we proclaim the Word of the Lord to others, we do so by the authority and mandate of Jesus. How beautiful are the feet of those who bring the good news.