



Matthew 10

Matthew 10
Tape #8009
By Chuck Smith

Let's go to Matthew 10, as we continue our journey now through the New Testament.

And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. (10:1)

Christ gave to His disciples the power. As a disciple of Christ, He gives unto us power. There are forces of darkness in this world, powers of evil, and they are opposed to the child of God. Our real battle are spiritual battles, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against these principalities and powers, these spirit entities." In our self, we are no match for them. I cringe when I hear people challenging Satan. I want nothing to do with him. But "Greater is He that is in me and in you, than he that is in the world." We don't need to fear the prince of darkness", Martin Luther wrote, "We tremble not at him, one little word will fell him." So through Jesus Christ we have victory, we have power over the forces of evil and darkness. We don't have to submit to those attacks of the enemy, you have victory through Jesus. Gave them power against these unclean spirits, you have that same power against the unclean spirits. He gave the power to heal all manner of sickness and disease.

Now the names of the twelve apostles

Now, there were many disciples but He called twelve of them as His apostles. Twelve is the number in the Bible of government. There were twelve tribes of Israel. And thus, twelve apostles. And the word "apostle" means "one who is sent out." And He is to send these twelve men out as more or less, advance team, into the areas where He would be going and ministering. And so, of the many disciples, there were probably hundreds of disciples, twelve He called apostles. The synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke, all list the names and the calling of the twelve to be apostles. As you study the list and the names, you find slight variations; number one, a variation in the order in which they are listed, but most of them follow the same order but on a few there's a reversal of some of the names. But then we have the name here of Thaddeus, and in the gospel of Luke, he is called Jude, the brother of James. So in the listing, we have two sets of brothers, three sets of brothers: Simon and Andrew, James and John, and James and Jude. As Matthew lists them for us,

First of all, there's Simon, who is called Peter,

[Jesus sort of developed for some of these fellows nicknames. That should have represented somewhat their characters, Simon called little stone, Petros. And then there was,]

Andrew his brother;

[Andrew was always bringing people to Jesus, in every account that we have of Andrew in the New Testament, he's bringing people to Jesus. Good kind of a reputation. And then there was,]

James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; (10:2)

[And Jesus called them the sons of thunder. These are the guys who are ready to call down fire on the enemies of Jesus, and so Jesus sort of nicknamed them sons of thunder. Then there was]

Philip,

[the evangelist and he also was bringing people to Jesus with Andrew]

there was Bartholomew

[of which we know very little];

Thomas

[who we know was famous for his doubting],

and then there was Matthew who was a tax collector; there was then this other James

[two James, the second one is]

the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus (10:3)

[who was a brother to James, also called Jude];

[Then there was another]

Simon the Canaanite [called in another gospel], a zealot. Now the zealots were the most fanatical of all of the Jews. They were real nationalists. These fellows were always willing to stir up any kind of strife against the Roman rule; Simon was one of these zealots.], and [finally, another Judas] Judas Iscariot. (10:4)

Remember in John chapter fourteen, when Jesus was talking to His disciples that, it said that Judas now Iscariot, said, How is it, Lord, that you will not show yourself to us and not unto the world? Major distinction, this was the other Judas or Thaddeus, and so you have two Judases, two James, and two Simons; two sets of brothers, so you start getting those in your mind, you probably could memorize quite easily the names of the twelve apostles.

And Jesus sent them forth,

That's the name "apostle," one who is sent forth, so "Jesus gave them the power to cast out evil spirits, to heal all manner of sickness and disease," and He sent them forth,

saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and to any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: (10:5)

The Gospel was first presented to Israel because God gave to them the promise of the Messiah. Later on, after His crucifixion, after His rejection by the chosen people, in the twenty-eighth chapter of Matthew, Jesus will say, "Go ye and teach all nations." Mark's gospel, "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." But this is a mission now, to really announce to the Jews that the Messiah has come. The kingdom of God is among you, the King is here. The mark of the Messiah would be the healing of the sick, and of the disease. And Jesus is sending them out with this power that they might proclaim to the people the fact that the Messiah is here. It's presenting now to the Jews. So they were not to go in the ways of the Gentiles. They were not to go to the cities of Samaria,

But rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (10:6)

You hear a lot of talk today by a group known as British Israel or Anglo Israel, the people that try to identify the Anglo Saxon nations with Israel, of the lost tribes of Israel. The Bible doesn't speak anything about the lost tribes, they're not lost, God knows exactly where they are. There are lost sheep of the house of Israel. And so that Lord is telling them to "go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,"

And as you go,

[notice what they are to do, first of all, you're to]

preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. (10:7)

The message, the King is here. The kingdom of heaven is at hand. If they would receive and accept, the kingdom could be established. They were to,

Heal the sick, [they were to] cleanse the leper, [they were to] raise the dead,[and they were to] cast out devils:

[This was the ministry of the apostles to Israel. And Jesus said to them,]

freely ye have received, and freely give. (10:8)

You're not to use these powers in any way to enrich yourself. You're not to use them for your own benefit. But you are to freely give. "You have received freely." Thus, you are not to

Provide gold, or silver, or brass for your purses, (10:9)

[The coins were made of gold, silver and the lesser value coins of brass, but you're not to take the money with you. Nor are you to take,]

scrip

[which was a form of exchange]

for your journey, neither two coats,

[travel light]

neither extra shoes, or staves:

[the walking sticks]

for the workman is worthy of his meat. (10:10)

Go out, don't take anything with you.

And into whatsoever city or town you will enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide until you

leave there. (10:11)

And when you come into a house, greet it. (10:12)

And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it's not worthy, let your peace return to you. (10:13)

It's interesting how this did develop in time, as you would meet someone and say, Bless you, brother, and then if you realize the guy's a scoundrel, they would run to him and say, I take that blessing back. I'm sure that you would like to remove a few blessings that you've pronounced on some too. "If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it's not worthy, then let your peace return to you."

And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. (10:14)

Symbolic action, the Jews did this when they would come to Jerusalem, at the outskirts of the city they would take their sandals and shake the dust off, they didn't... they may have walked through the area of Gentiles, they didn't want to bring any Gentile dust into the city of Jerusalem. So, take and shake the dust off your feet.

Verily or truly I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city. (10:15)

So, this is the commission. They are to go only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, they're to preach the message that the kingdom is at hand, they're to heal the sick, cleanse the leper, raise the dead, they're to cast out devils, they're to go with just the clothes that they have. The people where they go are to take care of their needs while they are there for the servant or the workman is worthy of his hire. Thus, the people were to provide for their needs. They were to go in the house, bless the house if the people were worthy, and minister from them. Now, whoever receives them will receive Christ and be blessed of the Lord.

In the early church, Paul wrote to the Galatians telling them that they should communicate unto those who teach them in all good things. "The workman is worthy is his hire." But yet, the workman is not to demand so much, he is to go just trusting in the Lord, "freely you have received," Jesus said, "freely give." Don't become a mercenary. Don't make a charge for the ministry. Don't make people feel they are obligated in any wise. God doesn't want our giving to ever be out of pressure, out of constraint, God loves a cheerful giver. And He wants you to give to Him cheerfully. He never wants you to resent that which you have given to Him. But to cheerfully give to the Lord. So, they will go forth with power, proclaiming the Word of God, and where their word is rejected, the judgment of that city will be worse than the judgment that will come upon Sodom and Gomorrah in that final day of judgment. Now He said,

I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves:

[That really doesn't speak of militant action by the disciples of Jesus. He is sending them forth as sheep among wolves. Have you ever heard of attack sheep? Take 'em! And yet it seems like there is a spirit of militancy that has come into a portion of the church. But "I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves."]

be ye therefore wise as serpents,

Now some naturalist have said, Well, that proves the Bible could not be inspired because serpents aren't really very smart. They're not really wise. I heard someone who answered this fellow and said, "I like to see how you could survive in the desert without any arms or legs." Maybe they are wise. "Wise as serpents,"

and harmless as doves. (10:16)

That's the way we're to be. Now He said,

Beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, they will scourge you in their synagogues; (10:17)

He is going now beyond just the immediate ministry of the apostles. Paul the apostle, who later went out, found himself scourged, beaten with rods, he experienced all of these things, as he was delivered up to the council,

You'll be brought before governors and kings

[Paul was brought before the governor and the king. Governor Felix and Festus, King Agrippa, (???). "You'll be brought before governors and kings,"]

for my sake, [and here Matthew says] as a testimony against them and the Gentiles. (10:18)

In another gospel, it says, “And it shall turn to you for a testimony.” Or it will give you opportunity to give your testimony. Now it is interesting to observe when Paul the apostle was brought before the council. What he did was just give his testimony of his conversion on the road to Damascus. Later when he was brought before Festus, and then Felix, then King Agrippa, he gave his testimony of his conversion on the road to Damascus. He used these opportunities to testify of the grace of God that he had experienced in his life. So, they’re going to hail you before the courts, before the governors, kings, but don’t worry, it will become a testimony.

But when they deliver you up, don’t take thought on how or what you’re going to speak: for it shall be given you in the same hour what you shall speak. (10:19)

You don’t have to worry about your defense, the Spirit of God will anoint you and give you the words to speak. In the book of Acts, when Stephen is brought before the council, the defense that Stephen gave before the council was absolutely classic. Anointed by the Holy Spirit, in fact, he looked, his face looked like an angel from heaven as he was speaking to them. There was power, there was anointing of the Spirit and surely, an inspired message by Stephen to those of the council. And in his message, basically, he pointed out to them how that they were constantly boasting of their heritage.

Our father, as though their father, the Jewish people were so righteous, so wonderful, so glorious. But he is pointing out the flaws of their fathers, the blindness of their fathers to spiritual things. He points out to them how that their fathers sold their brother Joseph to become a slave in Egypt. Your wonderful fathers that you brag about and you boast about. They didn’t recognize that God had ordained Joseph to be the ruler over them. And thus they sold him for twenty pieces of silver to the slave traders going to Egypt. Your wonderful fathers. But later, the second time around, they recognized that Joseph was indeed ordained of God. Your wonderful fathers rejected Moses when Moses first came as their deliverer. Moses, he said, thought that they would understand that God had chosen him to deliver them from the bondage of Egypt. But they didn’t and he fled and he spent forty years in the wilderness and they didn’t recognize him until the second time around. Can you see what he’s leading up to? Your fathers missed it, man. When God’s leaders were sent to them, the first time around they missed it. And he said, You’re far worst than your fathers, you really missed it. You missed the One that the Father sent. What’s the implication? The second time around, you’ll recognize Him. That this was God’s ordained leader.

And when Jesus comes again, they will recognize that He was God’s ordained leader. So the Spirit will give you the words, you don’t have to make up a little speech ahead of time.

For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which will speak in you. (10:20)

You don’t have to worry, the Spirit of God will give you the thought, the ideas, the witness, the testimony, that you are to give.

And then brother will deliver up brother to death, the father the child: the children will rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. (10:21)

And you shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. (10:22)

There is yet to come a time among the Jews of the last seven years when there will come a great division over Jesus Christ. The antichrist will put to death those that refuse his mark and refuse to worship him, and at that time, families will be divided. A brother will witness and deliver up his brother to death, a father his child, a child his parents. Even now there is a rising climate of hatred towards Christians. It has become a popular thing to bash Christians in the news media, or especially in movies and TV sitcoms and so forth, among the comedians, an awful lot of Christian bashing. In the editorials in the paper, an awful lot of Christian bashing. It’s going to increase, you’re going to be hated because of your faith and belief in Jesus Christ. And we are going to be considered and are considered a threat by those in the New Age movement who are seeking to bring in the new world order. Because of your fundamentalist belief, because you believe that Jesus is indeed the Son of God and the only way to salvation, you see that marks you as narrow and bigoted. And persecution is going to rise more and more against those who firmly believe in Jesus Christ as “the way, the truth and the life,” and the only way to the Father.

When they persecute you

Jesus said,

in this city, flee to another:

Don't fight it, we make a mistake in thinking that we have to argue people into a faith. All you have to do is witness. That's your responsibility. To be a witness of Jesus Christ and after you have done that, you have delivered your soul. You really don't have any further obligation or responsibility. It's just to be a witness. And thus, if you're persecuted in one place, just go to another.

for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man is come. (10:23)

Jesus is going to be following up on this advance team and He will be visiting these cities throughout Israel and they will not make the circuit until He comes and ministers to them also. But then He warns them,

The disciple is not above his master,

Now the disciple was the student, the pupil. The master was the teacher. And so what He is saying is the student or the pupil is not above his master or teacher,

nor is the servant above the lords. (10:24)

So this shows us really sort of a two-fold relationship that we have with Jesus Christ. First of all, we are to learn of Him, we're disciples. Secondly, we are servants. He is the Lord, He's the Master, the Teacher, He is the Lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master. Oh, that's the goal and the desire of every true believer; to be like Jesus.

It's enough just to be like your master, [you're not greater than Him; but to be like Him] and the servant to be as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household? (10:25)

Now back in the last chapter, verse thirty-four, Jesus was accused by the Pharisees of casting out devils through the prince of devils. The prince of devils was Beelzebub. So He is picking up on this accusation that was made, and He said, "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of this household." But,

Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. (10:26)

In the end, the truth will out. And,

What I tell you in darkness, that you are to speak in the light: what you hear in the privacy, that you are to preach upon the housetops. (10:27)

I'm teaching you these things, I'm telling you these things in these private sessions, but you're to go out and to proclaim them.

And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul:

Separate, definite distinction between body and soul. Don't be afraid of those who can kill your body, can't kill your soul.

but rather fear him which is able to destroy both the soul and body in hell. (10:28)

That's the one to fear. The fear of man, the Bible says, brings a snare. Jesus is saying, Don't be afraid. You're gonna be facing some real hardships. They're gonna take you into the synagogues and beat you. Some of you may be slain for your witness. And, of course, they all were. But don't fear them, they can't touch your soul. But rather fear God.

Are not two sparrows sold for a half of a cent?

So that's, you can buy four sparrows for a penny. In other words, they aren't worth very much.

And, yet, not one of them shall fall to the ground without your Father knowing it. (10:29)

Being aware of it. God oversees His creation. God is interested in His creation. Sparrows, which are so plentiful, and I don't know why a person would buy a sparrow myself, but evidently they were sold, two for half-a-penny. And yet, Jesus said, "Not one of them falls to the ground, but what your Father isn't conscious and aware. And then, even further,

the very hairs of your head are all numbered. (10:30)

God is interested in His creation, the birds and all, but He is much more interested in you. He knows every detail of your life. He's concerned with every detail of your life. And, therefore,

Fear ye not, because ye are of more value than many sparrows. (10:31)

That is to God, not to the environmentalist.

Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men,

[Now He's sending them out, Share the things that I have told you. Jesus is the Messiah, the promised Messiah, and if you confess me before men]

then I will confess him also before my Father which is in heaven. (10:32)

You confess me before men, I'll confess you before my Father,

But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. (10:33)

Heavy duty. You want Him to confess you before the Father? Then you better be confessing Him before men. Do you want Him to deny you before the Father? Then you better be careful concerning denying Him before men. That's the sin that Peter, you remember, was guilty of. Of course, the Lord dealt with him and restored him as we will find out Thursday night. But, that denial of Christ. Then he said,

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth:

[Now that's what the angels said when he was born, Peace on earth, good will toward men. But what He is saying is that, Don't expect the world to receive the Gospel. Though we preach the Gospel to all men, not all are going to receive or accept it. In fact, the Gospel is going to create a sharp division between men. Now, there is a segment of the church today, and there is a certain theology that has been called "Dominion Theology," and a social gospel and an interpretation of the parables, some of the parables of Jesus, where people have gotten the idea that through the influence of the church in the world, the world is going to become better and better and better until we will bring to the world the kingdom of God. And when we have brought this world into a recognition of Jesus and all, then He will come to the restored earth that which we have brought to Him.

I would be extremely discouraged if I held to that view, especially as I look at the world today. There was in the thirties a group called the "Moral Rearmament" and their, they used to have little stickers on the windshield or on their car windows, "Live and Let Live" and their motto was "Every day and in every way, the world is getting better and better and better." That was before Hitler came along. And with the advent of the Second World War, that group "Moral Rearmament" sort of died off.

We are not going to bring the kingdom of God to the earth. Jesus said, "Evil days are going to wax worse and worse." I guess Paul said that. But it's not to be expected that we should bring the world to Jesus Christ and we gradually are going to bring the kingdom of God in. There's a couple of parables, the one about the woman who hid the leaven in the bread until the whole lump was leavened and so they say, the influence of the church in the world will gradually permeate into the whole world, influenced by the church. Well, where in scriptures is leaven used of anything other than sin? Jesus said, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees."

There was the parable of the mustard seed, a very small seed but it grows into a great tree and the birds come and lodge in the branches. And so they say that this is the influence of the Gospel. We start small but we will grow into a great power, into a great force, and ultimately, the birds, the world will come and lodge in the branches of the church. Interesting that in all parables birds are spoken of as evil. When the seed was planted on the ground, the birds came and ate the seed that fell on the pathway. And that is Satan, Jesus said, that comes and takes away the Word that's been planted before it has a chance to take root. So rather than these parables indicating that the church is going to bring the world to the knees of Jesus Christ, and that we're going to have strong, powerful influence, and we will take over government, and we will vote in a Christian president, and we'll vote in Christian senators, and we will legislate righteous.. dominion Theo... it's not going to happen. Not going to happen. You're going to be hated.

I didn't come to bring peace, [Jesus said] but a sword. (10:34)

For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. (10:35)

And a man's foes will be they of his own household. (10:36)

It is sad but it is true that Christianity has divided many households. When a member of the family has

faith in the Lord and other members do not, many times there comes a sharp division. And sometimes the holidays are a very rough season because there are all of these divisions and arguments that rise out of the differences of opinions concerning Jesus Christ. Jesus said, it's going to be so. It isn't necessarily, it doesn't have to be... when the whole household love the Lord, then that's glorious. But it isn't always so. Many households are divided over the issue of Jesus Christ. If you have that kind of an issue, then if, in order to placate the family members, you turn from Jesus Christ,

He that loveth father or mother more than me [Jesus said] is not worthy of me:

It is sad that many times this kind of a decision is forced. Where the parents will say, If you're going to continue to believe in this Jesus bit, then you're not welcome in this home, especially in the Jewish homes. There are many times when a person, a Jew, will receive Jesus as his Messiah, the family will hold a funeral service for him and treat him as though he were dead. If under that pressure, you give up your faith in Jesus Christ, your family ties are more important to you than Jesus Christ, then He said, You're really not worthy of me. Same is true,

he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. (10:37)

If it's the other way around, and your sons or daughters are seeking to turn you against Christ, and for the sake of peace and harmony, you begin to turn, you're not worthy of Him.

He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. (10:38)

Many times, in following Jesus, there is a sacrifice to be made. If you're not willing to make it to follow Him, you're not worthy, He said, of Him.

For he that findeth his life

[or seeks to find his life by compromise]

will lose it: and he who will lose his life for my sake he'll find it. (10:39)

And then He said,

He that receives you receives me,

Jesus, in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, was talking about in the day when He returns and judges the earth, gathers the nations together for judgment, that He will separate them as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. To those on His left hand, He'll say, Depart from Me, you workers of iniquity into the fires of hell that were prepared for Satan and his angels. For I was hungry and you did not feed me; thirsty, you did not give me to drink; sick and you did not visit. And they will say unto Him, Lord, when did we see you hungry? When did we see you thirsty? And He said, Inasmuch as you did it not unto the least of these, my brethren, you did it not to Me.

Jesus so identifies with those who are His disciples who are proclaiming His truth to a hostile world. He so identifies with you in your witness for Him, that the rejecting of you because of your witness, is paramount in His reckoning to the rejecting of Him. Many times, because of your Christian witness, you'll find that people will turn against you. And many times, a person takes that quite personally. They're saying all of these horrible things about me, they're telling lies about me and all of this, and they take that personally. It's not you that they are rejecting, it's Jesus Christ of whom you are bearing witness that they are rejecting. And so Jesus said, "He who receives you receives Me." As we receive each other in Christ, we are receiving Christ.

And he - who receive me receives him that sent me. (10:40)

So receiving Jesus is equivalent to receiving God. Rejecting Jesus is equivalent to rejecting God.

He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. (10:41)

And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward. (10:42)

Now you're going to go out, don't take anything with you. If a home is worthy, stay there. Let your peace be there. He who receives you receives Me. He who receives you as a prophet will receive the prophet's reward. In other words, they will share in the reward of your ministry because of their support of you while you are there, their acceptance.

Paul the apostle, when he was writing to the Philippian church who had sent a gift to him while he was

there in prison in Rome, he thanked them for that gift. Appreciate what you sent. He said, Not that I had... I don't appreciate it because of the need that I had, that isn't really the big issue in me, but I desire that fruit may abound to your account. Now Paul's life was very fruitful for Jesus Christ. I wish I would have been able to contribute to Paul's ministry because of the tremendous fruit of his ministry. And Paul is saying that in the contributions, you will share in the fruit. If you give a cup of cold water to a disciple in the Name of the Lord, then you will receive a reward. You won't lose the reward. And thus, the identity of Jesus with His servants, with His disciples, with His apostles, with those that have been sent out to do His work.

Brings us now into chapter eleven which we will take next week, as we continue the life of Jesus, the teachings of Jesus, as has been recorded for us by the gospels.

Father, we thank You for the way You identify with us, your servants, for the power Lord that You had given to us to proclaim Your Gospel and for Your commission to us to take it into all the world and to share with every living being. Lord we thank You for the way the Gospel has gone forth from this church, the way You have spread it throughout the world. We stand Lord in awe and in wonder and in amazement at what You have done. Lord, what a privilege it has been to be a part of this tremendous ministry that You have established. We do pray, Lord, that You will continue Your work in our hearts and in our lives and that You will deepen our commitment Lord to You. And may our love for You excel all other loves. May our commitment to You exceed every other commitment. May we be totally, wholly dedicated to You. In Jesus Name we pray Father, Amen.