

MATTHEW 10:21-42 FINAL MARCHING ORDERS

Several years ago there was a movie with Jack Nicholson and Tom Cruise called "A Few Good Men." There is a scene in the movie where Tom Cruise is questioning Jack Nicholson on the witness stand in a military trial. Tom Cruise states that he wants the truth. Nicholson answers that he can't handle the truth. If Nicholson told all that he knew it would have torn down Tom Cruise's idea of what the world was really like. The same held true for people in the days of Matthew, as well as for most today.

Christians are often accused of living in a fantasy world, or of living with their heads in the sand or the clouds for that matter. For the Christian that knows his/ her Bible, that certainly isn't the case. We know and understand what is really happening. We can see the delusion under which the rest of the world lives. We know the truth. It has made us free. We can handle it. Many can't however. Today we will see this truth because Jesus explains the consequences of sharing the truth of the Gospel.

In verse 21 of Matthew 10 Jesus is giving the disciples the second half of their marching orders and a dose of the cold, hard truth.

Mat 10:21 "Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death.

Mat 10:22 And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved.

Mat 10:23 When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

Truth, by definition is exclusive. If a statement is true, then all statements opposing it are false. The Gospel states that faith in Jesus is the only way to Heaven. That rules out all other so-called options.

When we share the Gospel, even in the meekest way, it will often times cause division. Think about it. You are totally rocking somebody's world. Their whole belief system is often being turned upside down. That is what Jesus is talking about. Brother against brother, even to the point of parents having their children put to death.

Muslims having their daughters killed. (honor killings)

- The future tense of this portion of the passage.

Truth is divisive, hence political correctness. Truth is divisive because it exposes all else as untrue. No one wants

to be wrong! I don't know of anyone who wants to be wrong regarding something they believe! Their may be some who don't care, but that is another situation altogether. We all have a lot invested in what we believe. Therefore, truth will upset the apple cart, that is, unless we are truly seeking it. For those truly seeking truth – and we are supposed to be doing that. I know, as Christians, we already have/ know the truth, but we are to continue to grow in our faith and walk. Therefore we must continue to learn. **So, we should not be afraid to run anything we believe through the gauntlet of pier revue of differing opinions.** When we can say this and mean it, we are secure in our faith.

We have this belief that being a Christian is about everyone liking us, but the truth is that not everyone can handle the truth.

Jud 1:22 And on some have compassion, making a distinction;

Jud 1:23 but others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.

However, we shouldn't use the divisiveness of the truth as an excuse to be belligerent.

Tit 3:1 Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work,

Tit 3:2 to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle,

showing all humility to all men.

Tit 3:3 For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.

Tit 3:4 But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared,

Tit 3:5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,

Tit 3:6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

- Minister to those that are “worthy.”

Verse 23 –

- This has been one of the most problematic verses in the NT.
- This is why the shift in tenses from present to future and the contexts of those shifts are so important.
- If all of this discourse was in the present tense, then Jesus surely lied. “When the Son of Man comes” is a phrase linked to the Second Coming. When Jesus met back up with them, the Day of the Lord didn’t occur.
- But if we see the shift in tense to the future we can easily link the statement to the Second Coming. But there is still a problem. Israel is/was a tiny country. You would think that all the cities of Israel could have been reached within 2,000 years. So, shouldn’t Jesus have returned by now? He obviously hasn’t.

- So the only option we are left with is that Jesus isn't talking strictly about the geographical area of the Promised Land. Rather He is speaking of those cities in which Israelites find themselves all over the world today. Remember, the Word was to go to the Jew first. And though the church began to take on a very Gentile nature shortly after Pentecost, there are still Jews that have yet to be evangelized to this day.
- So keep moving, we won't have covered all the ground when Jesus returns

Our/ their mission is constant. There is plenty of job security here.

Cause and effect - truth brings persecution

THEY CALLED JESUS NAMES, YOU'LL HEAR IT ALSO

We should expect opposition, not run from it. We should in a sense welcome it. It means we are doing our jobs and are linked to Jesus.

Mat 10:24 "A disciple is not above *his* teacher, nor a servant above his master.

Mat 10:25 It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called

the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more *will they call* those of his household!

beelzebub - name of the Philistine god associated with satanic idolatry

Because of the source of our mission we shouldn't suffer from man-fear.

We tend to fear the unknown and dread the expected.

Opposition is to be expected, but we shouldn't dread it because it is a hallmark of discipleship.

NO REASON TO FEAR / EXPECT IT

Mat 10:26 Therefore do not fear them. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known.

Mat 10:27 "Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops.

Mat 10:28 And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

We aren't usually hesitant to voice our OPINIONS on ideas, politics, ballgames, or how someone else is driving.

Why are we hesitant to give people the truth if we really believe it can save their souls?

Rom 1:15 So, as much as is in me, *I am* ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also.

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

Don't fear man, fear God

Pro 1:7 The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge, *But* fools despise wisdom and instruction

Pro 9:10 "The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One *is* understanding.

Pro 14:2 He who walks in his uprightness fears the LORD, But *he who is* perverse in his ways despises Him.

Pro 14:26 In the fear of the LORD *there is* strong confidence, And His children will have a place of refuge.

Pro 14:27 The fear of the LORD *is* a fountain of life, To turn *one* away from the snares of death.

OUR VALUE TO GOD

Mat 10:29 Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will.

Mat 10:30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

DO NOT FEAR/ GOD DOESN'T THROW AWAY HIS VALUABLES

Mat 10:31 Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

2 sparrows sold for a farthing

Farthing 1/16 of a common day laborer's wage (half hour's pay)

They would even cut you a deal. According to Jesus you could get 5 for 2 farthings

140,000 hairs – that of course is a fluid number. ;/)

OUR VALUE IS PAID OUT IN SALVATION

Mat 10:32 "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men,
him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.

Mat 10:33 But whoever denies Me before men, him I will
also deny before My Father who is in heaven.

Don't hold it inside. Be wise, but also be fearless.

THE COLD HARD TRUTH

Mat 10:34 "Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth.
I did not come to bring peace but a sword.

Mat 10:35 For I have come to 'SET A MAN AGAINST HIS
FATHER, A DAUGHTER AGAINST HER MOTHER,
AND A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER
MOTHER-IN-LAW';

Mat 10:36 and 'A MAN'S ENEMIES WILL BE THOSE OF
HIS OWN HOUSEHOLD.'

Mat 10:37 He who loves father or mother more than Me is
not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter
more than Me is not worthy of Me.

Mat 10:38 And he who does not take his cross and follow
after Me is not worthy of Me.

Mat 10:39 He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses
his life for My sake will find it.

Mat 10:40 "He who receives you receives Me, and he who
receives Me receives Him who sent Me.

REITERATION:

To the true disciple/ missionary, God's will in his/ her life is top priority.

Truth divides, get used to it, but always seek reconciliation.

The truth sifts out whose side one is on. We just spread the Word while the Holy Spirit does the convicting, and the saving.

If they don't accept it, move on.

Mat 10:14 And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet.

(sacred dust and the reclaiming of the land for God.)

Mat 10:41 He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

If they welcome you, they welcome me.

Righteous man's reward, salvation

Verse 42.

Mat 10:42 And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold *water* in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward."

Even what we see as a very small thing, God sees as a large contribution. There are no big I's and little YOU's in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Conclusion:

We have been called to do a job that seems hard to most, but we actually have all the power on our side. We are armed with the truth.

- **Are we willing to face the opposition?**
- **Are we willing to declare the truth, knowing that it is divisive by definition?**
- **Are we willing to be humble in this declaration of truth?**

- **Are we armed with the truth, or superstition?**
- **If you have a gun (spiritually speaking) does it have any bullets in it?**
- **(As with last week's message) Do you accept the mission? The opportunity may self-destruct in 5 seconds, but the mission will go on until Jesus returns.**

Home group questions:

- Are you prepared to hear the truth, even when it may upset your world/ worldview?
- Are you prepared to speak the truth, even when it

may upset someone else's world/ worldview?

- How do we combine humility and love in order to speak truth into someone's life?
- Do we fear man more than we fear God?
- Do we see our salvation as "enough" of a reward on this side of Heaven, granted the difficulties speaking the truth can bring?