MATTHEW 10

Mat 10:1 - And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction.

Mat 10:2 - The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;

Mat 10:3 - Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;

Mat 10:4 - Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

* Matthew does not describe when and how every Apostle was called by Jesus but gives a summary list of the 12.
* The Apostles that feature most prominently in the Biblical story are listed first (except for Judas who is last for obvious reasons).
* Matthew lists himself and his profession in the middle of the list.
* We don’t have many details about these men but we know they played a huge role in the foundation of the early Church.
* Secular history tells us the majority of these men were martyred for their faith.
* There are many traditions about the later lives and deaths of the 12 Apostles. Not all of them can be verified, but I thought I would include some of the theories below to spark some interest in early Church history:
  + Peter – Martyred by being crucified upside down
  + Andrew – Went to Russia to preach the gospel, eventually crucified
  + Thomas – Preached as far as India, killed with a spear
  + Philip – Taught the gospel in Carthage (North Africa), killed by a Roman official
  + Matthew – Went to Persia and Ethiopia, some say he was not martyred while others say he was stabbed to death
  + Bartholomew – Travelled extensively to India, Armenia, and Arabia, no clear tradition on how he died.
  + James (son of Alpheus) – Preached in Syria, stoned or clubbed to death
  + Simon the Zealot – Ministered in Persia, killed after refusing to offer sacrifices to a false god.
  + Mattais (replaced Judas) – Preached in Syria, burned to death
  + John – Traveled to Ephesus, died of old age.
  + James (son of Zebedee) – Killed by Herod (verified by the Bible)
  + Judas Iscariot – Killed himself after betraying Jesus (verified by the Bible)

Mat 10:5 - These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, “Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans,

Mat 10:6 - but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Mat 10:7 - And proclaim as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’

Mat 10:8 - Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay.

Mat 10:9 - Acquire no gold or silver or copper for your belts,

Mat 10:10 - no bag for your journey, or two tunics or sandals or a staff, for the laborer deserves his food.

Mat 10:11 - And whatever town or village you enter, find out who is worthy in it and stay there until you depart.

Mat 10:12 - As you enter the house, greet it.

Mat 10:13 - And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it, but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you.

Mat 10:14 - And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town.

Mat 10:15 - Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.

* For the first time in his gospel, Matthew records Jesus giving His miraculous power to His Apostles.
* Matthew was one of the recipients of this power.
  + Notice how matter-of-fact he is as he retells these events.
  + He doesn’t include any statements of his personal awe at being able to heal the sick, raise the dead, and cast out demons.
  + This is probably because he is writing this good new to convince his fellow Jews of Jesus’ authenticity, not as a journal entry of his personal experience.
* The Apostles were given a very specific audience
  + They were not to go to the Gentiles (non-Jews)
    - The term “gentile” comes from the Hebrew word *goy* meaning “nation.”
    - The plural is *goyim* meaning “nations” or *ha-goyim* meaning “the nations” (used to refer to nations outside of Israel)
    - When the term was translated in the Latin Bible, the words *gentes* and *gentilis* were used.
  + They were not to go to the Samaritans
    - The Samaritans were a people who inhabited northern Israel.
    - In 2Kings 17:24, after taking Israel captive, the Assyrian empire moved foreigners into Israel’s land.
    - The foreigners married and intermixed with the Israelites that were not into captivity.
      * 2Ki 17:24 - And the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the people of Israel. And they took possession of Samaria and lived in its cities.
      * 2Ki 17:28-29 - So one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and lived in Bethel and taught them how they should fear the LORD. But every nation still made gods of its own and put them in the shrines of the high places that the Samaritans had made, every nation in the cities in which they lived.
    - So the Samaritans were partial-Jews who partially followed the Law of Moses but also worshipped idols.
    - They were despised by “true-Jews” even 750 years later in the 1st Century (John 4:9).
    - *If you have a chance, please read 2Kings 17:24-41.*
  + They were to go the Jews only (lost sheep of Israel)
  + They were compared to lost sheep because they had abandoned God, their true shepherd, and wandered off in their own direction or been misguided.
  + Jer 50:6 - “My people have been lost sheep. Their shepherds have led them astray, turning them away on the mountains. From mountain to hill they have gone. They have forgotten their fold.
* They were told to preach the same message John and Jesus had been teaching, “The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.”
* They were given miraculous powers to be an evidence of the truth of their message.
  + Anyone could go around preaching about a coming Kingdom.
  + But it was another things to have divine power to back up the claim.
* They were instructed by Jesus not to charge people for miracles performed but to entrust their livelihood to God’s providence
  + For this reason, they weren’t to take extra provisions with them
  + The time and length of their journey was irrelevant. God didn’t rely on their careful packing to ensure their provision. He had 1 million ways to get them what they needed at any given time.
  + APPLICATION:
    - The Apostle’s were about to make application of Matt 6:25-34.
    - Do you think any of them ask the “what-if” questions?
      * What if my sandal breaks?
      * What if I run out of money?
      * What if I fall in the mud and don’t have a change of clothes?
      * What if no one is hospitable to me?
    - Too often we allow all of what-if questions delay or prevent us from accomplishing Jesus’ mission.
    - We should do our best to increase our faith to believe if Jesus sent us, He will take care of us, and we are going to hand all the potential “what-ifs” over to Him to sort out.
* The Apostles were to rely on the hospitality of fellow Jews for housing and some of their provisions
  + This may seem really strange to a person whose isn’t familiar with 1st Century culture, especially among the Jews.
  + Jews took hospitality very seriously!
  + For them, it wasn’t just something nice you could do if you were feeling charitable, it was an obligation.
  + By the 1st Century, a significant number of traditions and rabbinic teachings existed which addressed the “rules” of hospitality.
  + Jews were expected to be hospitable to fellow traveling Jews, providing them with a place to sleep and some food.
  + The Apostles were told to rely on this hospitality for their shelter and stay in the home of any “worthy” Jew. By “worthy” Jesus probably meant any house that was amiable to the message of the coming Kingdom.
  + If the house was not “worthy” they were told to leave, wipe the dust off their feet, and find another home.
    - A stern warning is given to those unworthy houses
    - Their judgement would be worse than Sodom and Gomorrah

Mat 10:16 - “Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.

Mat 10:17 - Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues,

Mat 10:18 - and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles.

Mat 10:19 - When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour.

Mat 10:20 - For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

* Sheep are peaceful animals. When is the last time you heard about a sheep killing someone? Probably never!
* The message of the coming Kingdom was to be proclaimed with the same gentle spirit.
* Jesus warns His Apostles that although they were to be gentle and loving, they would always find wolves (enemies) who would resort to violent and dishonest means to destroy them and the message they preached.
* Although Jesus doesn’t tell them to fight back against these abusers, He does tell them to be wise in their dealings with them.
  + They were to use wisdom to determine when, where, how, and to what audience they ought to tell the good news.
  + To determine how long they should stay before fleeing persecution (10:23)
  + To gauge the hearts of their listeners.
* They were to be wise like serpents but also innocent as doves.
  + They were not to harm others or give anyone any reason to levy and accusation against them and undermine their message.
  + False accusations were sure to be flung at them but those with honest hearts would have been able to see that Jesus’ followers were honest men and the accusations of their enemies were not rooted in facts but in personal prejudice against their message and Master.
* In verse 17, Jesus tells them to “beware of men.”
  + Generally when someone tells you to “beware” they imply there is a reason to fear.
  + But if we look forward to verse 26, Jesus tells the Apostles not to fear these dangers.
  + They are to be aware of their enemies and their tactics but they have no reason to fear them (we will see why and how fear is removed as we continue through the chapter)
* As was pointed out in earlier chapters, the enemies of Christ and His message included the Jewish religious elite (Pharisees, Scribes, Sadducees). Jesus’ Apostles were not the religious scholars these enemies claimed to be, and so naturally, there would have existed some anxiety on the part of the Apostles as to how they would defend the Lord against their more educated opponents.
  + Jesus anticipates this anxiety and gives them the solution before they have a chance to express concern
  + They are told not to worry about their debate skills. God’s Spirit would speak through them and give the needed words.

Mat 10:21 - Brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death,

Mat 10:22 - and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

Mat 10:23 - When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next, for truly, I say to you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

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

Mat 10:25 - It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household.

* I can personally attest to the accuracy of Jesus’ words in verse 21. There are few things that divide a family as quickly as religious disagreement.
  + Perhaps one member of a family is convicted to follow Christ.
  + The unconverted part of the family is often critical or accuses the converted of arrogance when they try to share the good news of Jesus with them.
  + “We raised you and you grew up as equals with your siblings and now you want to come back and judge our lives and tell us we aren’t right with God?!”
  + As we read through the gospels, we will discover Jesus’ own family didn’t believe in Him.
  + Try to view this text through the eyes of a person who grew up in a devout Muslim family in the Middle East.
    - A meniscal number of westerners would face literal death by turning their back on their family members to follow Christ.
    - But “honor killings” are not extinct among Mohammed’s more radical eastern followers.
  + Consider also the context of this passage.
    - Jesus was asking His Apostles to leave behind a devotion to the Law of Moses, a Law which had been the guiding force of Israel for 1,500 years.
    - It was probably not easy for all of the Apostles to explain what they were doing to all of their relatives.
  + It wouldn’t just be relatives turning their backs on the 12, they would be hated by “all men” (verse 22).
* Jesus tells them that if they endure to the end they will be saved.
  + Persecution will be a constant companion.
  + When they were rejected and persecuted in one town, they were to move on to the next one.
  + Notice, it doesn’t say, “When they persecute you in one town, give up and go home.”
* The meaning of the end of verse 23 is the topic of much discussion and debate. What is meant by “you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes?”
* The identity of the “Son of Man” is not the part which is debated. The Son of Man is Jesus.
* But what “coming” is He referencing?
* Three predominate theories on the “coming” of the Son of Man:
  + (1) Refers to Judgement Day
  + (2) Refers to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD
  + (3) Refers to Jesus’ resurrection and the establishing of the Kingdom (Church)
    - Theory 1 and 2 seem unlikely to me, especially in light of Paul’s reference to the gospel bearing fruit in the “whole world” in Colossians 1:16.
      * Although some would contend for theory 2 by countering that the preaching of the kingdom meant the full instruction of the kingdom to all of Israel (which hadn’t happened by 70 AD)
      * I’m not in love with this interpretation but I don’t outright reject it.
    - Theory 3 makes the most sense to me.
    - I think it is likely Jesus is referring to the coming of the Son of Man in the same sense as Matt 16:28
    - Mat 16:28  “Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”
* Verses 24-25
  + The Apostles should not be surprised about the way they will be treated.
  + They had already seen Jesus be mistreated and had not yet seen the half of it.
  + If Jesus was a perfect man and was still persecuted, the Apostles should expect the same or worse treatment by carrying His message in an imperfect way.

Mat 10:26  “So have no fear of them, for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known.

Mat 10:27  What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops.

Mat 10:28  And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

Mat 10:29  Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father.

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

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

Mat 10:32  So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven,

Mat 10:33  but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

* Verse 26-27
  + Everything would be brought to light in the end.
  + The evil enemies of Christ would be exposed.
    - Their lies and slander would be revealed
    - They would not go unpunished for their rebellion against God
    - They would be exposed as the true children of Beelzebul
  + The Apostles would be vindicated as preachers of the truth.
  + In light of the way things would turn out, the Apostles were to boldly preach the things Jesus taught them in private in public.
    - There was no need to fear the opposition
    - They could have confidence that God would make everything right in the end.
* Verse 28-31
  + There was no reason to fear an enemy who could kill or injure them physically because God was prepared to take care of their souls on earth and in heaven.
  + God is the only thing worth fearing. He has power to destroy the body and the soul.
  + The term “fear” when used in reference to God has a richer meaning than being terrified of something. It means to respect God for His authority, both to save and destroy, and to keep Him in His proper place of priority and reverence.
    - If we fear God, we don’t need to fear anything else.
    - If we don’t fear God, we should fear God and everything else.
  + The good news is that this powerful God is on their side.
    - Jesus, who had just given them a measure of God’s power, told them about the God they served.
      * He cared for the tiny birds
      * He knew every hair on their head
    - He meticulously cared for them and was aware of them.
* Verse 31-32
  + The Apostles were about to leave Jesus presence and go out into a hostile world.
  + In that hostile world, there would be a strong temptation to turn their back on Christ.
  + Jesus has made them aware of the danger and the tactics of their enemies
  + He has also made them aware of the God who protects them.
  + He then plainly explains the two options in front of them
    - Acknowledge Me before men… I will acknowledge you before God
    - Deny Me before men… I will deny you before God.
  + You’ve probably seen a movie where one friend denies they know the other friend because they are in some way embarrassed by them, even though the friend they are embarrassed by has always been faithful to them.
    - If we deny Christ, we deny our most faithful friend.
    - We won’t want to look at Jesus on Judgement Day and tell Him we were embarrassed by Him. (The world has done a good job at making us feel embarrassed about spiritual things)
    - But often that is what we communicate with our lives.

Mat 10:34 - “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

Mat 10:35 - For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

Mat 10:36 - And a person's enemies will be those of his own household.

Mat 10:37 - Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

Mat 10:38 - And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

Mat 10:39 - Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

* Verse 35-38
  + I thought Jesus came to make peace?
    - What about verses like Php 4:7?
    - Php 4:7 - And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
  + It’s true, Jesus came to make peace between God and man, but in another sense, He brought a very divisive message.
  + Jesus is warning His Apostles about the potential hardships of being His followers
    - The gospel message has divided thousands of families since it was first preached in Galilee
    - Many people have had to make the decision to save their souls at the expense of their family.
    - If the Apostles were not prepared to make this sacrifice they were not worthy of Jesus
  + I feel like it is important to notice that loving your family is not a sin, but surrendering your commitment and conviction to Christ in order to have more of your family is a sin.
    - Not all of the decisions we make in life are a black and white between good and evil.
    - Some of them are a decision between what is good and what is better.
  + Surrendering your family to follow Christ may be one of the hardest sacrifices anyone can make.
    - Being around family is a very high priority for most people.
      * Some people live in the same location their whole lives, not because they love it, but because moving would require living away from family
      * People turn down career promotions.
      * Family location sometimes determines where we attend school.
      * Etc…
    - When I moved away from home to pursue mission work with my wife, it wasn't the fear of a new location that made me hesitant, it wasn't the danger of not having the best health care in the world, it wasn’t the fear of change.
    - The thing that tempted me most to stay was family. I didn’t want to leave my family (both immediate family and church family).
      * It mean missing the birth of my first nephew
      * Family traditions and holidays
      * Quality time
    - Luckily for me, I have video chat and Facebook Messenger and my family is supportive of me.
    - But for many, following Christ means being cut off from family completely
      * Rejection
      * No updates
      * No pictures
      * No holidays
    - You can see why someone would want to go back.
    - You can see how that would be a temptation to set Christ aside
      * To be a bit less committed
      * To be a bit less convicted
      * So they can have their family back
* Verse 38-39
  + That sacrifice, is the cross Jesus describes in verse 38.
  + Jesus would sacrifice Himself on the cross for all men but each individual follower would be required to make sacrifices.
    - There is no question we are saved by the grace of God (that is why Jesus is on the earth)
    - But notice here there are sacrifices we must be willing to make or be found “not worthy” of Christ.
  + It's easy for us to look at this statement and to understand exactly what Jesus is saying because we are on the far side of the cross, but imagine how shocking these words would have been to the Apostles who had yet to fully understand the sacrifices that Jesus was going to make.
  + “Whoever finds his life will lose it…”
    - This can be a bit of a confusing (in my opinion)
    - When Jesus talks about finding life, I understand Him to be talking about where a person’s heart belongs.
      * Mat 6:21 – “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”
      * A person’s “life” is what they live for and value.
      * Jesus was just talking about family
        + It is not uncommon to hear someone say, “My family is my **life**!”
        + They mean their family is their highest affection
        + Their family is their reason for living
    - So Jesus is saying, if we find out highest affection to be something in this world (family, money, marriage, friends, etc) we will lose our lives. Meaning, when this world passes away, so will our highest affection, and we will have nothing left. Not to mention, our souls will be in danger because we did not acknowledge Christ as our greatest affection (therefore He will not acknowledge us).
    - But if we find our highest affection in Jesus, our heart will not belong to a temporal world corrupted by moth and rust (6:20), and when all of this passes away we will inherit new life (true, real, and lasting life) when Christ acknowledges us before the Father.

Mat 10:40 - “Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me.

Mat 10:41 - The one who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and the one who receives a righteous person because he is a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward.

Mat 10:42 - And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.”

* Verses 40-42
  + The middle portion of this chapter was dedicated to those who would reject Jesus and His Apostles.
  + The last three verses are dedicated to those who are “worthy” and accept Jesus and His Apostles.
    - Those who honor God’s messengers honor God Himself (Similar the verses surrounding Matt 25:40)
    - Those who honor God’s messengers take part in the good works of the messenger and will be rewarded.
    - Those who give even something as small as a cup of water to a disciple will be counted worthy of reward.
  + Notice the progression
    - Prophet
    - Righteous person
    - Little one (disciple)
  + We can’t all participate in every work of the Church.
    - Sometimes we only have a small amount of time or resources to devote to a larger work.
    - We can’t all be caregivers, missionaries, burden-bearers, ministry leaders, etc…
    - But we can give our resources, time, and love to the people who fill those roles.
    - We will be counted worthy of their reward for helping them and sending them on their way well cared for.
  + Paul affirms this truth to the Christians at Philippi
    - The Philippians had sent him gifts to further his mission and he tells them that he uses those gifts to bear fruit to their credit.
    - Php 4:7 – “Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit.”

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