

Study Guide



Matthew 10:16-25 – Expect Persecution February 11, 2018

Welcome (40 Minutes)

Be intentional to have authentic relationships...

Worship (5 Minutes)

As the group transitions from of a time of fellowship to a time of intentional study of the word, it is important to facilitate that transition with a time of worship. This can look like praying together, singing songs together, or rejoicing in what the Lord has done throughout the week.

Word (45 Minutes)

As we look at Jesus' five discourses in Matthew, we see Matthew and the other disciples "at the feet of Jesus." These teachings are in the context of Jesus' calling and equipping the twelve apostles to go and make disciples of all nations. In our nine months of studying Jesus' five discourses of Matthew we will be sitting at the feet of Jesus learning the ins-and-outs of being disciple-makers ourselves. Our prayer is that we will be challenged to understand that we were saved in order to be disciple-makers and that we will be inspired to sit at the feet of Jesus to be equipped for our calling to be disciple-makers.

For further study on this weeks study please check out the following pages...

Action Step

This week discuss in you group who you can share the gospel with, where you can go to be a light in the darkness, and when will you go. Have your group pray for one another and earnestly pray for each other during the week.

Calendar

February 11th— Member's Meeting
March 4th- April 15th— Connection Group
March 16th- 18th— DNOW

Welcome (40 Minutes)

As you fellowship with one another, please be intentional about sharing what the Lord is doing in your lives. Get to know one another and encourage one another. Are your conversations pointing one another toward Christ?

Worship (5 Minutes)

If you are looking for a song to sing this week, here are the lyrics to "[Be Thou My Vision](#)":

Be thou my vision O Lord of my heart
Not be all else to me, save that Thou art

Thou my best thought, by day or by night
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence, my light

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise
Thou my inheritance, now and always

Thou and Thou only are first in my heart
High King of Heaven, my treasure thou art

Great God of Heaven, my victory won
May I reach heavens joy, O bright Heaven's Sun

Heart of my own heart, whatever befall
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all

Heart of my own heart, whatever befall
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all

Commentary: Read Matthew 10:16-25

In the previous section (Matthew 9:35-10:15) we saw the followers of Jesus are called to pray the Lord will send out laborers for God's harvest. And as the followers of Jesus pray, they will be sent out in different ways to different places. In Matthew 10:16-25 Jesus' followers are warned that they not only go to great need, but they go to great danger.

In the beginning of verse 16 Jesus says, "Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves..." The Good Shepherd (John 10:11) is telling his sheep to walk into the middle of a pack of wolves. What would happen to a sheep if he walked into the middle of wolves? It wouldn't be good. A sheep has no defense. Sheep are slow, helpless, and foolish. When they face danger all they can do is run, but Jesus tells his sheep, to go into the midst of wolves, go into dangerous places among the evil, and while you are there know that you are there for "my sake" (vs. 18 and 22). While you are there in the midst of wolves, "be wise as serpents and innocent as doves (16b)." Followers of Jesus must be wise and innocent when among wolves. **They are to go to dangerous places knowing God is with them (vs. 17-20), sending them (9:38), and instructing them to be wise and discerning as they take the gospel of the kingdom of God into the midst of wolves.** They are to be smart, not getting themselves into trouble or getting caught up in conflict. Watching out for themselves to not be exposed to unnecessary dangers while conducting themselves with innocence, not letting the wolves have anything against them. In difficult situations staying innocent not seeking revenge but being harmless in the midst of insults and oppression.

In verses 17-20, Jesus talks about that fact that as followers of Christ go to the needy, they will learn to depend on His presence. If they follow Christ for the spread of the gospel into the midst of danger, they will never be alone. He'll be with them and give them everything they need to stand and to speak and to preach (vs. 19). This is vital to understand because as Christians we are summoned to go, Jesus tells us in verse 21-23 that we will be betrayed, we will be hated, and we will be persecuted. If you follow Christ, you will almost certainly be misunderstood, the people you least suspect, even family members, may turn on you like wolves and betray you. People from all over, whether it is your family, the government, or even churches, will simply not like you because you proclaim Jesus Christ is Lord. They hated Jesus and they will hate you because your life identifies with Him. But Jesus says to endure, to know that I am with you, to remember my promise, to be wise and innocent, to press on till the end. When you go into the world, when you are among the wolves, you will be persecuted (see also 2 Tim. 3:12).

Concluding this section Jesus explains why persecution will come in verses 24-25. We as a disciple of Jesus Christ are not above Him as our teacher but we are called to be like Him. If we proclaim the name of Christ, people will betray us, the world will hate us, and we will be persecuted, and it is all because Jesus was betrayed, hated, and persecuted. People called Jesus "Satan," and if your life is identified with Him, they will call you the same thing. If we really want to be like Jesus, then our lives won't stay the same, and they won't be easy, they will be dangerous. We may never face life threatening persecution for our faith but we will have resistance, betrayal, and hatred toward our witness for Jesus Christ. But remember you are not alone, remember God's promises to you, and press on with endurance looking toward the cross.

Discussion - Read Matthew 10:16-25

1. Look at verses 16-18. In the passage we studied last week Jesus sent out the 12 disciples into the towns of the “House of Israel”. In verses 16-18 how can you tell that Jesus is talking about a mission carried out by people in addition to the 12 disciples and to places other than the “House of Israel”?
2. In verse 16 what do you think the word pictures of “sheep in the midst of wolves”, “wise as serpents”, and “innocent as doves” mean? How do these terms describe the nature of the mission and the behavior (methods?) of the sent-out ones?
3. What unintended, beneficial consequences of the persecution and opposition are hinted at in verse 18?
4. In verses 19-23 what is one of the main expectations that Jesus predicts for his followers when they are sent out into the world?
5. What is Jesus’ promise to those who will be called upon to defend their witness concerning the Gospel of Jesus? Please look at Acts 4:7-14 to see an example of what Jesus was promising.
6. Verse 23 is a very controversial verse to interpret. The key to interpreting the verse is to understand what the phrase “before the Son of Man comes” might mean. First, the term “Son of Man” comes from the book of Daniel (See Daniel 7:13-14). When does the Son of Man come and where does he come? In Daniel 7:13-14 the Son of Man comes to the Ancient of Days and He is given dominion, glory, and a kingdom. That coming to the Ancient of Days may be referring to Jesus’ assumption of authority and glory that he received after his death and Resurrection as described in Philippians 2:8-10. In Matthew 24, Jesus’ second coming to earth is taught. The Greek term for that 2nd coming to earth is Parousia. Parousia is not the term that is used in Matthew 10:18.

What problems are there with the interpretation that “before the Son of Man comes” is referring to Jesus 2nd coming to rule on the earth? How may these problems in interpretation be avoided if when the “Son of Man comes” refers to the Ascension when Jesus sits down at the right hand of the Father and receives all authority?

7. In verses 24-25 how does Jesus explain that it is reasonable to expect some opposition and persecution in their future as his witnesses?

8. What principles regarding being Jesus' witnesses do we see in these verses? In what ways are you encouraged by these verses to be a faithful witness for Jesus? In what ways are you warned about being a faithful witness for Jesus? Is it better to be warned ahead of time, or is it better to be blissfully ignorant of the possible difficulties?

9. Are you depending on the promise that the Holy Spirit will give you words to say, or are you letting the cautionary warnings scare you off from being a witness at all?

10. This week discuss in you group who you can share the gospel with, where you can go to be a light in the darkness, and when will you go. Have your group pray for one another, pray for the lost, and earnestly pray for each other during the week. Take time through the week to review these resources on sharing the gospel with others.
 - a. [Sharing your faith \(Article\)](https://billygraham.org/story/sharing-your-faith-101/): (<https://billygraham.org/story/sharing-your-faith-101/>)
 - b. [Life Conversation Guide \(Video\)](https://www.namb.net/video/3-circles-life-conversation-guide): (<https://www.namb.net/video/3-circles-life-conversation-guide>)

Walk (30 minutes)

After enjoying fellowship, worship, and time in God's word together, it is now time to pray together as a group and encourage one another in the faith. It is very easy for this portion of the group time to be consumed by the other portions. However, this segment of the group time is crucially important. It answers the question, how do we apply what we are learning in Matthew to our lives today?

Many groups have found that it is helpful to sometimes break up into a men's group and a women's group for the purpose of being able to be more transparent and honest as we encourage one another and keep one another accountable. I encourage you to try this in your groups.

In addition to praying for, and encouraging, one another, this portion of the group time should also be used for planning how your group can participate in God's work outside the walls of our church – "neighbors and nations." Discuss with your group some ideas on how you can be intentional with building relationships with your neighbors and co-workers. What can your Community Group do to impact the area around you?

Here is a list of local ministries Norris Ferry is actively involved in:

Hub/purchased	Celebrate recovery
Young life	Samaritan counseling
Heart of hope	Last call ministries
First priority	Golden age ministries
Ark-la-Tex crisis pregnancy center	Rescue mission
Community renewal	Luke's lighthouse
Grief counseling	FCA

Here is a list of missionaries Norris Ferry is actively involved in:

Shannon & Carrie Lewis (South Sudan)
Matt & Angie Johnson (Panama)
Meggie Hickson (Tanzania)
Kyle & Suzy Jagers (New Orleans)

May the Lord bless and encourage you as you are in your groups this week! Know that we are praying for you on a weekly basis and that we are here to help you in any way that we can!

Walk Prayer & Missions

For further information visit
norrisferrychurch.org or contact Jared
Clary (clary@norrisferrychurch.org)

Calendar

February 22nd- March 3rd — South Sudan
March 29th- April 1st— NOLA
June— Serve Shreveport
July— Community Outreach