

John Wesley's Explanatory Notes - Matthew 10

by John Wesley

John Wesley's sermon emphasizes the authority of Christ in commissioning His disciples and the cost and commitment required in following Him amidst persecution and rejection.

Topics: "Discipleship", "Authority in Christ"

Description

John Wesley explains Matthew 10, emphasizing Jesus' selection of the twelve apostles and their mission to preach the Gospel. He highlights the authority given to them by Christ, the importance of relying on God for provision, and the inevitability of persecution for those who follow Him. Wesley also discusses the significance of public confession of faith and the cost of discipleship, urging believers to prioritize their commitment to Christ above all else. He concludes with the promise of reward for those who support and welcome His messengers.

Transcript

X. 1. His twelve disciples - Hence it appears that he had already chosen out of his disciples, those whom he afterward termed apostles. The number seems to have relation to the twelve patriarchs, and the twelve tribes of Israel. Mark 3:14; ; Luke 6:13; .

Verse 2. The first, Simon - The first who was called to a constant attendance on Christ; although Andrew had seen him before Simon. Acts 1:13.

Verse 3. Lebbeus - Commonly called Judas, the brother of James.

Verse 4. Iscariot - So called from Iscarioth, (the place of his birth,) a town of the tribe of Ephraim, near the city of Samaria.

Verse 5. These twelve Jesus sent forth - Herein exercising his supreme authority, as God over all. None but God can give men authority to preach his word. Go not - Their commission was thus confined now, because the calling of the Gentiles was deferred till after the more plentiful effusion of the Holy Ghost on the day of pentecost. Enter not - Not to preach; but they might to buy what they wanted, John 4:9.

Verse 8. Cast out devils - It is a great relief to the spirits of an infidel, sinking under a dread, that possibly the Gospel may be true, to find it observed by a learned brother, that the diseases therein ascribed to the operation of the devil have the very same symptoms with the natural diseases of lunacy, epilepsy, or convulsions; whence he readily and very willingly concludes, that the devil had no hand in them. But it

were well to stop and consider a little. Suppose God should suffer an evil spirit to usurp the same power over a man's body, as the man himself has naturally; and suppose him actually to exercise that power; could we conclude the devil had no hand therein, because his body was bent in the very same manner wherein the man himself might have bent it naturally? And suppose God gives an evil spirit a greater power, to effect immediately the organ of the nerves in the brain, by irritating them to produce violent motions, or so relaxing them that they can produce little or no motion; still the symptoms will be those of over tense nerves, as in madness, epilepsies, convulsions; or of relaxed nerves, as in paralytic cases. But could we conclude thence that the devil had no hand in them? Will any man affirm that God cannot or will not, on any occasion whatever, give such a power to an evil spirit? Or that effects, the like of which may be produced by natural causes, cannot possibly be produced by preternatural? If this be possible, then he who affirms it was so, in any particular case, cannot be justly charged with falsehood, merely for affirming the reality of a possible thing. Yet in this manner are the evangelists treated by those unhappy men, who above all things dread the truth of the Gospel, because, if it is true, they are of all men the most miserable. Freely ye have received - All things; in particular the power of working miracles; freely give - Exert that power wherever you come. Mark 6:7; Luke 9:2.

Verse 9. Provide not - The stress seems to lie on this word: they might use what they had ready; but they might not stay a moment to provide any thing more, neither take any thought about it. Nor indeed were they to take any thing with them, more than was strictly necessary. 1. Lest it should retard them. 2. Because they were to learn hereby to trust to God in all future exigencies.

Verse 10. Neither scrip - That is, a wallet, or bag to hold provisions: Nor yet a staff - We read, Mark 6:8, Take nothing, save a staff only. He that had one might take it; they that had none, might not provide any. For the workman is worthy of his maintenance - The word includes all that is mentioned in the 9th and 10th verses; Matthew 10:9,10 all that they were forbidden to provide for themselves, so far as it was needful for them. Luke 10:7.

Verse 11. Inquire who is worthy - That you should abide with him: who is disposed to receive the Gospel. There abide - In that house, till ye leave the town. Mark 6:10; Luke 9:4.

Verse 12. Salute it - In the usual Jewish form, "Peace (that is, all blessings) be to this house."

Verse 13. If the house be worthy - of it, God shall give them the peace you wish them. If not, he shall give you what they refuse. The same will be the case, when we pray for them that are not worthy.

Verse 14. Shake off the dust from your feet - The Jews thought the land of Israel so peculiarly holy, that when they came home from any heathen country, they stopped at the borders and shook or wiped off the dust of it from their feet, that the holy land might not be polluted with it. Therefore the action here enjoined was a lively intimation, that those Jews who had rejected the Gospel were holy no longer, but were on a level with heathens and idolaters.

Verse 16. Luke 10:3.

Verse 17. But think not that all your innocence and all your wisdom will screen you from persecution. They will scourge you in their synagogues - In these the Jews held their courts of judicature, about both civil and ecclesiastical affairs. Matthew 24:9. 19, Take no thought - Neither at this time, on any sudden call, need we be careful how or what to answer. Luke 12:11.

Verse 21. Luke 21:16.

Verse 22. Of all men - That know not God. Matthew 24:13.

Verse 23. Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel - Make what haste ye will; till the Son of man be come - To destroy their temple and nation.

Verse 24. Luke 6:30; John 15:20.

Verse 25. How much more - This cannot refer to the quantity of reproach and persecution: (for in this the servant cannot be above his lord:) but only to the certainty of it. Matthew 12:24.

Verse 26. Therefore fear them not - For ye have only the same usage with your Lord. There is nothing covered - So that however they may slander you now, your innocence will at length appear. Mark 4:22; Luke 8:17; .

Verse 27. Even what I now tell you secretly is not to be kept secret long, but declared publicly. Therefore, What ye hear in the ear, publish on the house-top - Two customs of the Jews seem to be alluded to here. Their doctors used to whisper in the ear of their disciples what they were to pronounce aloud to others. And as their houses were low and flat roofed, they sometimes preached to the people from thence. Luke 12:3.

Verse 28. And be not afraid - of any thing which ye may suffer for proclaiming it. Be afraid of him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell - It is remarkable, that our Lord commands those who love God, still to fear him, even on this account, under this notion. 29, 30. The particular providence of God is another reason for your not fearing man. For this extends to the very smallest things. And if he has such care over the most inconsiderable creatures, how much more will he take care of you, (provided you confess him before men, before powerful enemies of the truth,) and that not only in this life, but in the other also?

Verse 30. See note ... "Mt 10:29"| Luke 12:7.

Verse 32. Whosoever shall confess me - Publicly acknowledge me for the promised Messiah. But this confession implies the receiving his whole doctrine, Mark 8:38, and obeying all his commandments. Luke 9:26. 33, 34. Whosoever shall deny me before men - To which ye will be strongly tempted. For Think not that I am come - That is, think not that universal peace will be the immediate consequence of my coming. Just the contrary. Both public and private divisions will follow, wheresoever my Gospel comes with power. Ye - this is not the design, though it be the event of his coming, through the opposition of devils and men.

Verse 34. See note ... "Mt 10:33"|. Luke 12:51.

Verse 36. And the foes of a man - That loves and follows me. Micah 7:6.

Verse 37. He that loveth father or mother more than me - He that is not ready to give up all these, when they stand in competition with his duty.

Verse 38. He that taketh not his cross - That is, whatever pain or inconvenience cannot be avoided, but by doing some evil, or omitting some good. Matthew 16:24; Luke 14:27.

Verse 39. He that findeth his life shall lose it - He that saves his life by denying me, shall lose it eternally; and he that loseth his life by confessing me, shall save it eternally. And as you shall be thus rewarded, so in proportion shall they who entertain you for my sake. Matthew 16:25; John 12:25.

Verse 40. Matthew 18:5; Luke 10:16; John 13:20.

Verse 41. He that entertaineth a prophet - That is, a preacher of the Gospel: In the name of a prophet - That is, because he is such, shall share in his reward.

Verse 42. One of these little ones - The very least Christian. Mark 9:41.

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