

Matthew: Will Be Hated

Discussion Guide for Matthew 10:16-25 on August 16 & 17, 2025

Summary

In this sermon from Matthew 10:16-25, we explore Jesus' warning to His disciples about the persecution they would face for following Him. Jesus sends His disciples out as 'sheep among wolves,' instructing them to be 'wise as serpents and innocent as doves' - combining strategic thinking with pure motives. The sermon details various forms of persecution Christians may face, from legal challenges to broken relationships, especially with family members who reject their faith choice.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we gather to discuss the cost of following You, open our hearts to Your truth. Help us understand what it means to stand firm in our faith even when facing opposition. Give us wisdom to discern how to be both shrewd and innocent in a world that may be hostile to Your message. May our discussion today strengthen our resolve to follow You regardless of the cost, knowing Your presence goes with us. In Jesus' name, amen.

Ice Breaker

What's something you were really excited about that turned out completely different than you expected?

Key Verses

Proverbs 11:3

1 Corinthians 16:13

Psalms 16:11

Micah 7:6-7

John 15:18-19

1 Peter 4:12-13

2 Corinthians 4:8-10

Questions

1. What does it mean to be 'wise as serpents and innocent as doves' in today's world? Can you share an example from your own life?
2. The sermon mentions different levels of persecution from exclusion to martyrdom. Have you ever experienced any form of persecution for your faith? How did you respond?
3. Jesus promises His presence through the Holy Spirit during times of persecution. How have you experienced God's presence during difficult seasons of your life?
4. How do you balance maintaining relationships with non-believers while staying true to your biblical convictions?
5. Sometimes Christians face rejection not because of their faith but because of their behavior. How can we stand firm for truth without being obnoxious or unkind?
6. What relationships in your life might be strained if you took a stronger stand for biblical truth? How does this passage help you think about those relationships?
7. How does knowing that Jesus Himself was persecuted change your perspective on facing opposition for your faith?
8. Nabeel Qureshi said, 'All suffering is worth it to follow Jesus.' Do you agree? Why or why not?

Life Application

This week, identify one area where you might be compromising your faith to avoid conflict or persecution. Pray for courage and wisdom, then take one specific step toward standing firm in that area. This might mean having a difficult conversation, declining to participate in something that contradicts your values, or simply being more open about your faith. Remember to approach this with both wisdom (being strategic) and innocence (pure motives), asking God to guide your words and actions.

Key Takeaways

1. Following Jesus comes with a cost - persecution in various forms is to be expected for true disciples.
2. Christians should be both shrewd (strategically wise) and innocent (pure in motives) when navigating a hostile world.
3. God promises His presence through the Holy Spirit during times of persecution.
4. Sometimes following Jesus means choosing Him over even our closest relationships.
5. When we suffer for our faith, we resemble Jesus and share in His suffering, which has eternal purpose.

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for counting us worthy to follow You, even when it comes with a cost. Give us courage to stand firm when facing opposition, wisdom to navigate difficult relationships, and hearts that remain pure in our motives. Help us remember that Your presence goes with us through every trial. When we face persecution, remind us that we are resembling You in Your suffering. Strengthen our resolve to choose You above all else, knowing that any suffering we endure for Your sake is temporary, but our relationship with You is eternal. May our lives reflect Your truth and love to a world that desperately needs You. In Your name we pray, amen.