

# Matthew 10:16-33

## “The King Prepares for Persecution”

### Pastor Bruce Zachary

#### Discussion Qs

1. Do you believe that it has become easier or more difficult to share the gospel in your community. Describe why you believe so.
2. How can Jesus' disciples be effective at reaching a community that is resistant, opposed, or hostile to Jesus and the message of the gospel?
3. What are some ways to be wise (careful) as we engage the culture around us?
4. What are some ways to be harmless (gentle) as we engage the culture around us?

**Intro.** How can Jesus' disciples be effective at reaching a community that is resistant, opposed, or hostile to Jesus and the message of the gospel?

**Subject:** Jesus disciples are prepared for persecution

**Object:** Reach your community for Christ

**Context:** Disciples pray for God to send laborers into His harvest [9:35-38]. Then they are being sent to a people to proclaim the kingdom is at hand, God provides the gospel for free, and the place to reach a community is from the home [10:1-15]

**I. Christ's commission: reach your community despite hostility [16-21]**

**A. To overcome opposition to Jesus be wise and gentle [16]** Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

1. We are being sent as Jesus' ambassadors to a world that opposes His reign
2. Serpents assoc. in Mid-East with being careful. Not suggesting deception (Gen. 3)

**B. There will be varied opposition [17-21]**

**1. Religious persecution [17]** But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues.

a. Opposition from the religious authorities. Sanhedrin was the nation's religious council, but each synagogue had a council of leaders. Scourge = whip.

b. Peter and John [Ac. 4], Stephen [Ac. 7]

c. *App. re early church, persecution throughout the ages in various areas, & end times*

\*\* Ecumenical movement

**2. Regime persecution [18]** You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.

a. Opposition by government: **governors and kings** for Christ's sake [gospel]

b. **Testimony to them and to the Gentiles:** Paul re Felix, Festus, Agrippa [Ac. 24-26]

c. **NOTE:** Opposition is an opportunity to engage and bear witness for Christ

**3. Relative persecution [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.**

a. Division between siblings, children and parents

## **II. Christ's counsel [19-20, 22-25]**

**A. God will direct your words so don't worry [19-20] But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; <sup>20</sup> for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.**

1. The Holy Spirit will guide as you speak to those opposed so don't be intimidated

a. Ac. 2 Peter, Ac. 7 Stephen

**B. God prepares you for opposition [22, 24-25]**

**1. Jesus experienced hostility and His disciples will be opposed**

**<sup>22</sup> And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved.**

**<sup>24</sup> "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. <sup>25</sup> 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 Beelzebul, how much more will they call those of his household!**

a. disciple ... be like his teacher [24]: if Jesus was opposed so too His disciples

**b. Phil. 3;10 That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His suffering being conformed to His death.**

**2. Jesus' faithful disciples are encouraged by His salvation [22]**

a. Encouragement re eternal benefit of remaining faithful – assurance of salvation

**C. God's people are to flee from danger not from duty [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.**

1. Not ... through Israel before Lord comes: ref re 2<sup>nd</sup> coming & Trib. or current mission.

## **III. Christ's charge [26-33]**

**A. Don't fear opposition to the gospel [26, 28, 31] Therefore do not fear them. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known.**

**<sup>27</sup> "Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops. <sup>28</sup> 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. <sup>29</sup> Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. <sup>30</sup> But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. <sup>31</sup> Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.**

**1. Don't fear the temporal harm man can do, but revere the Lord & His judgment [28]**

a. John Knox [Scottish Reformer] Revered God so much that he never feared man

**2. Christ's disciples are loved, valued, and protected per God's will [29-31]**

a. God cares for and protects sparrows and you are of greater value

**B. Don't fail to proclaim the gospel [27] what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops:** What they have learned from Jesus is to be proclaimed to others

**C. Don't flinch from publicly declaring your identity in Christ [32-33] Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. <sup>33</sup> But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.**

**1. If you identify with Christ publicly Christ will identify with you in salvation.**

a. But if you deny Him before men then He must deny you before the Father