

Rev. Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church
Matthew 10:32-42 | The Worthiness of Jesus
Sunday, November 5, 2023

WELCOME:

- Please turn your Bibles to Matthew 10.
- Bibles in the back—our gift to you.
- Sermon Notes in the Foyer

REVIEW:

We continue our verse-by-verse exposition of Matthew's Gospel today.

If you have a red-letter Bible, Matthew chapter ten is all in red.

Jesus is ordaining and commissioning the 12 Disciples into Apostles.

Apostles have the gifts of supernatural healing and the power over demonic spirits.

Matthew chapter ten is a set of instructions not only for the Apostles—but for you and me as disciples.

Matthew chapter ten are the hallmarks, indications, and the authentic stamp of discipleship.

Jesus says if you are to be a disciple, you will do these things.

Last week, Jesus talked about fear in verses 24-31

 There are four main types of fear in Scripture.

1. The fear of God
2. The fear of people
3. The fear of the future
4. The fear of death

We had several key points:

- *Fear is a normal human emotion in the proper context.*
- *We are to fear the right thing.*

I closed last week's sermon by stating that, as Christians, we need to learn how to identify, confront, and overcome our fears.

It's normal to have fears—but living a life in fearfulness is not/abnormal.

I suggested starting small and walking slow with your fears.

First things first, write them down.

Secondly, take these fears to the Lord—allow Him to speak to you through prayer and His Word.

Additionally, there is nothing wrong with seeing a qualified Christian counselor to discuss your fears. (Biblical Counseling of Arizona | BiblicalCounselingAz.org)

INTRODUCTION:

Today, we close with Jesus' instructions for us as His disciples.

Contrary to Jewish expectations, Jesus does not immediately bring peace or prosperity to the nation of Israel.

There are many reasons for that, but today, Jesus presses into our decisions and priorities.

He uses a very interesting word - "worthy"

How do our every day decisions with our jobs, retirements, hobbies, time and money impact your walk with the Lord Jesus Christ? Let's find out!

Please stand for the reading and honoring of God's Word.

SCRIPTURE:

- Matthew 10:32**—“Therefore, everyone who will acknowledge me before others, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.
- Matthew 10:33**— But whoever denies me before others, I will also deny him before my Father in heaven.
- Matthew 10:34**— Don't assume that I came to bring peace on the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.
- Matthew 10:35**— For I came to turn
a man against his father,
a daughter against her mother,
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;
- Matthew 10:36**— and a man's enemies will be
the members of his household.,
- Matthew 10:37**— The one who loves a father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; the one who loves a son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.
- Matthew 10:38**— And whoever doesn't take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.
- Matthew 10:39**— Anyone who finds his life will lose it, and anyone who loses his life because of me will find it.
- Matthew 10:40**— “The one who welcomes you welcomes me, and the one who welcomes me welcomes him who sent me.

Matthew 10:41— Anyone who welcomes a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward. And anyone who welcomes a righteous person because he's righteous will receive a righteous person's reward.

Matthew 10:42— And whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is a disciple, truly I tell you, he will never lose his reward."

These are the very words from the authoritative, inerrant, inspired, and infallible Word of Almighty God.

PRAY:

Open my eyes so that I may contemplate wondrous things from your instruction. (Ps. 119:18).

EXEGESIS:

Matthew 10:32—"Therefore, everyone who will acknowledge me before others, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.

Matthew 10:33— But whoever denies me before others, I will also deny him before my Father in heaven.

Last week, we ended with Jesus speaking about fear.

He taught us how not to fear people when sharing the good news of the Gospel. Instead, we are to fear God.

That's why Jesus says, "therefore" in verse 32.

As disciples of Jesus, we have a reverent fear of Almighty God.

And it's out of reverence, excitement, and love that we want to acknowledge Jesus before others.

Big picture

Verses 32 and 33 point to our judgment day.

Jesus says, "I will" twice—the grammar in the future active tense—"I will acknowledge" ~~and~~ "I will deny."

Jesus' response on judgment day is in direct correlation to our duty and responsibility as a confessing Christian who shares Jesus day by day.

Romans 1:16—For I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes,
What do Christians have to be ashamed of?
Now, there are many ways to share the Gospel.

It's not only done through the formal preaching and teaching on Sunday mornings.

Pros/Cons
Your personal witness is a way to share the Gospel—how you live your life, what you watch, what you say, how you spend your money, and how you carry yourself—because the world is watching you.

There's a famous saying popular among some Christians.

"Preach the Gospel. Use words if necessary."

It's a cute and clever statement.

It fits nice on a bumper sticker next to the fish decal.

The statement is attributed to Francis of Assisi.

The problem, however, is that Francis never said it.

And Francis didn't say it because he disagreed with it.

Francis preached up to five times per day!

A statement like this is culturally acceptable in our churches because it eases our conscience.

We think, *If I live a good moral life (whatever that means) then I won't have to share the Gospel.*

People will automatically know the reason why I do what I do.

Because I'm too shy, don't want to offend, don't know enough...

We say to ourselves, "*Words are cheap,*" and "*Actions speak louder than words.*"

And then we take a deep sigh because we think we're off the hook of our duty in discipleship because we passed out some free food a few months ago.

But is that what Scripture says?

No, this modern-day social justice gospel is an incomplete gospel.

Serving at the local food bank is fine—but it's no substitute for sharing the Gospel with others.

The apostle Paul said this—

Romans 10:13 NLT—For "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Romans 10:14 NLT— But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?

Romans 10:15 NLT— And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, "How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!" (free food?)

So yes, we are to live out the Gospel and, at the same time, share the Gospel verbally.

Back to today's passage...

Matthew 10:32—“Therefore, everyone who will acknowledge me before others, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.

Matthew 10:33— But whoever denies me before others, I will also deny him before my Father in heaven.

To *acknowledge/confess* means that we affirm and agree with the Gospel.

Acknowledgement is different than recognition.

~~As Christians, we not only recognize God's truth, but we identify with it.~~

Here's the difference—

Did you know that even the demons recognized that God is the sovereign Creator of the universe?

James 2:19 NLT—You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! Even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror.

CONGRATS, you have the faith of a demon

The demons ^{know} believe that God is real—but they don't acknowledge, honor, or worship Him as God.

We acknowledge God and share what God has done in our lives because we have received Him as *our* personal Lord and Savior.

Romans 10:9—If you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

+ **Romans 10:10**— One believes with the heart, resulting in righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, resulting in salvation.

+ **Romans 10:11**—For the Scripture says, Everyone who believes on him will not be put to shame, (by others)

God will right every wrong.

Hard times will test our faith—and it's in the testing to where we build spiritual muscle.

Hard times hit a man named Demas.

Demas had been ministering alongside the apostle Paul—

Paul mentions Demas next to Mark and Luke in both Col 4:14 and Philemon as co-workers in the Gospel.

Demas was preaching, teaching, serving etc.
But something happened.

+ **2 Timothy 4:9/10**—Make every effort to come to me soon, because ^{why?} Demas has deserted me, since he loved this present world, and has gone to Thessalonica.

Demas did not continue acknowledging Jesus before others.

Maybe he deconstructed his faith.

Deconstruction is quite fashionable these days—Remove Jesus from the throne and crown yourself king.

Many well known Christian Authors & preachers

Maybe Demas failed to acknowledge Jesus by keeping silent when he should have spoken up.

That's the sin of omission.

Maybe Demas denied Jesus by his actions.

Maybe he was living like the rest of the world—perhaps it was all the above.

We do that, don't we?

Many years ago, I met a worship leader's friends—who had no idea that this man—who led worship at a church—was a Christian—let alone a worship leader!

KEYPOINT 1:

If we continually deny Jesus through word, silence, or action, we are in danger of Jesus denying us before His Father in Heaven.

*In other words, were not a ~~student~~ — were not saved — were just playing the part.
CHRISTIAN*

Judas comes to mind—

Judas professed Jesus but did not genuinely acknowledge Him as Lord and Savior.

Judas is the classic example of someone who professes faith but doesn't confess Jesus is Lord.

There are Judas' in every church.

Matthew 10:34— *Don't assume that I came to bring peace on the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.*

Assumptions get us into trouble, don't they?

(Expectations)

The first time you walked through the door—you had expectations:

- Cleanliness
- Kindness
- Music
- Preacher

Jesus is saying, don't presume or suppose something until you have more information.

+ Verse 34 is a fascinating verse—*theologically*

Notice how Jesus says, "I came...and did not come."

Came from where? Bethlehem? Nazareth?

Nope! Heaven!!!

Jesus is pointing to His preexistence.

When Jesus:

- stepped down off his throne in Heaven where the angels constantly sing "HOLY HOLY HOLY" (Isaiah 6)
- And was born of a virgin to bypass human sin
- He lived a perfect life.
- Died a substitutionary death by experiencing The Father's wrath because of our sin—
- Was buried in a borrowed grave—
- And then had the power and audacity to walk out of the grave just as He promised—conquering sin and death on our behalf—

When Jesus "came" to earth from Heaven—He started a spiritual battle for all of us.

+ **Matthew 10:34**— Don't assume that I came to bring peace on the earth.

What does Jesus mean that He didn't come to bring peace?

Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would not only be a person of peace but the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6—For a child will be born for us,
a son will be given to us,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
He will be named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

When Jesus was born, the angels said to the shepherds—

Luke 2:14—Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and peace on earth to people he favors!

Jesus even said—

John 14:27 NLT—"I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart.
And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled
or afraid.

When Jesus was being arrested, Peter, pulled out his sword and started lopping off ears!

What did Jesus do at that moment?

Matthew 26:52 NLT—Put away your sword," Jesus told him. "Those who use
the sword will die by the sword."

So what's the deal? And what's all this business about the sword?

Is Jesus talking out both sides of his mouth?

Matthew 10:34— *Don't assume that I came to bring peace on the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.*

The sword in verse 34 is a symbol for spiritual conflict.

Please remember that the universal symbol of Christianity is the cross—it is not the sword.

The universal symbol of Islam is a sword.

The cross, on the other hand, is a symbol of suffering and death.

So, Jesus' point in verse 34 is this—

The peace Jesus brings is deeper than peaceful human relationships.

KEYPOINT 2:

Jesus offers eternal peace between a holy God and a sinful man.

In the Garden of Eden, right after The Fall, we learn of the protoevangelium—the first mention of the Gospel—in

Genesis 3:15 (My Paraphrase) —*Jesus strikes Satan's head with a deadly blow. But first, Satan bruises Jesus' heel.*

Jesus “came” to earth to defeat our Enemies (Satan, sin, and death) because we can't.

Jesus “came” to break the strongholds of sin.

Now if so proud that he demands to be worshipped by the Son of God—he certainly is not going to tap out.

KEYPOINT 3:

Becoming a Christian does not mean the absence of conflict.

In fact, the opposite is true—before things get better, they ^{usually} must get worse.

And that's Jesus' point.

Matthew 10:35—For I came to turn
a man against his father,
a daughter against her mother,
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;

Against means to cut in two.

It is to split apart—sometimes, it's a permanent separation.

Matthew 10:36—and a man's enemies will be
the members of his household.,

So what's Jesus doing?

Is He picking a fight for no reason?

Jesus here quoted the OT prophet Micah 7:6—that's why your Bible is in bold.

Micah speaks of how divisive families will become.

Micah 7:6 NLT—For the son despises his father.
The daughter defies her mother.
The daughter-in-law defies her mother-in-law.
Your enemies are right in your own household!

As disciples, we are to expect the same kind of conflict.

We are not to be surprised by it.

Jesus Himself experienced this ~~division~~ type of division in His own earthly family.

John 7:3—*So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea so that your disciples can see your works that you are doing."*

John 7:4—*For no one does anything in secret while he's seeking public recognition. If you do these things, show yourself to the world."*

In other words, if you're God, Jesus—why not leave small-town Cottonwood and go to the big city of Phoenix—where all the VIPs are.

John 7:5—*(For not even his brothers believed in him.)*

~~Jesus is asking for unqualified allegiance from his disciples.~~

KEYPOINT 4:

Our love of God and for God must precede every other human relationship.

Many times, faith in Christ can renew a home.

Many of us have seen a wife receive God's grace, and then soon after, her husband comes to faith.

And in doing so, the fighting, hatred, disunity—even abuse slowly turns into genuine love and care for one another.

It ~~turns from~~ ^{into} a house of hatred ~~to~~ a home of hospitality and forgiveness.

But we've ~~often~~ ^{also} seen a household go from bad to worse.

Take the current debate about homosexuality, for example.

Suppose a young married couple gets saved by God's grace.

They're excited about sharing Jesus during Thanksgiving or Christmas.

At first, their families are tolerant and somewhat supportive of their newfound faith.

But after all the surface-level talk is over, certain family members start to get annoyed.

“So, do you believe Aunt Betty and Aunt Becky are ‘sinners’ because they happen to be gay?”

“Do they need to be forgiven because they were born this way?”

“Are they going to hell because their sinners?”


“Who are you to judge them and deny them happiness?”

What's our young couple to do?

Are they going to speak up or shut down?

Are they going to acknowledge Jesus or deny Jesus?

Jesus presses in to ensure we are all crystal clear on His point.

 **Matthew 10:37**— *The one who loves a father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; the one who loves a son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.*

Jesus uses the word [^]worthy [^]three times in two verses.

Worthy means *deserving*.

In the creation narrative, God puts so much value on the family that marriage is the first institution that He creates.

The family was ordained by God before any city was ever built, any nation ever formed, or any law ever penned.

However, the family is not supreme—God is.

That concept of being unworthy may sound familiar.

John the Baptizer—

John 1:27—He (Jesus) is the one coming after me, whose sandal strap I'm not worthy to untie."

In the parable of the wedding banquet, Jesus said,

Matthew 22:8—~~Then he told his servants,~~ "The banquet is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy."

In the parable of the prodigal son—

Luke 15:19— I'm no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired workers."

Luke 15:21— The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight. I'm no longer worthy to be called your son.'

What's Jesus saying? Verse 38 tells us:

Matthew 10:38— And whoever doesn't take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

Taking up the cross points to the Roman custom of forcing a guilty criminal to carry a literal cross to his crucifixion (cf. Matt. 27:32).

He was essentially a dead man walking.

He had zero rights as a person.

The mob of people could do whatever they wanted to him.

Only the worst criminals bore a cross—and were sentenced to die in prolonged agony.

The Romans were perfeters of pain


No Apostle missed Jesus' point at this moment.

The Apostles were probably shocked, scared and offended all at the same time.

Today, we hear people take this verse out of context, "Well, putting up with my mother-in-law, that's my cross to bear."

The cross is filled with real pain and prolonged death.

What's that mean for us today? Jesus tells us in verse 39:

 **Matthew 10:39**— *Anyone who finds his life will lose it, and anyone who loses his life because of me will find it.*

Do you hear people say, "Man, I'm losing it"?

The reason they're 'losing it' is because they're living for themselves—their priorities are upside down.

Notice the paradox—

Any attempt to avoid the cross and preserve our lives inevitably results in losing what you were trying to gain.

But accepting the cross and giving up your life results in gaining true life.

We are to love our family, friends, and even our enemies— but we must love Jesus above everyone else.

Loving this life is often the greatest road block to following Jesus.

KEYPOINT 5:

The cross is a shocking metaphor for discipleship.

Unfortunately, the cross has lost its punch in our day and age.

We love the cross.

The problem with loving the cross is that we've tamed and sanctified it.

We've made it pretty and glossy.

We wear them as rings and put them on our logos.

The horror, shame, and dread of the cross are lost.

But Jesus' illustration is still relevant for His disciples today.

Those who live for themselves die twice—they die a physical death on Earth and then experience a continual conscious death in a very real place called hell.

Those who die to themselves and pick up their cross on the earth, die once and live twice, now and forever.

Matthew 10:40— “The one who welcomes you welcomes me, and the one who welcomes me welcomes him who sent me.”

Those who accept the Gospel will accept the one who brings them the Gospel.

Matthew 10:40— ... and the one who welcomes me welcomes him who sent me.

There is no such thing as believing in God the Father without believing in God the Son.

Nobody gets to Heaven bypassing God’s Son, Jesus Christ.

John 8:19—Then they asked him, “Where is your Father?”
“You know neither me nor my Father,” Jesus answered. “If you knew me, you would also know my Father.”

KEYPOINT 6:

Receiving Jesus is equivalent to receiving God The Father.

Think about your own children—you love those people who love your own kids.

How much more does a Heavenly Father love people who love His Son.

Matthew 10:41— Anyone who welcomes a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward. And anyone who welcomes a righteous person because he’s righteous will receive a righteous person’s reward.

A prophet is not only someone who the Lord uses to predict specific events but, more so, anyone who shares the Gospel.

Righteous person = CHRISTIAN —

In other words, God rewards those who take care of His people.

Matthew 10:42— *And whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is a disciple,, truly I tell you, he will never lose his reward."*

Little ones are believers who seem insignificant (cf. Matt. 18:3–11; 25:31–46).

They might be new believers.

They might be older disciples who have never brought any attention to themselves.

Jesus' point is that *any* service done to *any* of His people in His name amounts to service to Him and, therefore, will be rewarded.

It costs nothing and takes no time to give someone a bottle of water.

A kind word is as small as a cup of cold water, yet it can change a life.

Illustration: High School Story

PREACH:

Are we worthy in our:

1. ~~Schedule~~ Relationships

- Do you change your schedule when family or friends visit?
- Are you fearful of inviting them to church?
- Fearful of leaving them alone for a few hours if they say no so you can go?
- Fearful of praying before dinner in your own home because of what your guests might think?

2. Work

- Are you fearful of placing boundaries on our work?
- Fearful of telling your boss that Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights are very important to you and that you need that time for personal time.

- Fearful that you might lose your job or that your boss might make things harder on you if he finds out your a Christian.

Personal
3. Free time / Calendar / Hobbies / Money

4. Fearful of the culture—especially with the hot topic of the day—homosexuality and transgender ideologies.

PRAYER

BENEDICTION

My dear brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the Lord's work, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. (1 Cor. 15:58).

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

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