

Gospel of Matthew Chapter 10 -- John Karmelich

1. The end of Matthew's Gospel has "The Great Commission". It is as follows:
 - a) "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:19-20).
 - b) OK, there is our marching order in two verses. Now what? ☺
 - c) How do we go about "making disciples of all nations?"
 - d) The good news is that Jesus expands upon this command in Chapter 10.
 - e) When you read through the gospels, you will notice the disciples don't do much.
 - i) They mostly follow Jesus around, and occasionally ask him a question.
 - ii) You will notice Jesus spends more time rebuking them for wrongful thinking than he does complimenting them.
 - iii) You don't read much, if any of a disciple performing a miracle or leading people to salvation. Yet in Chapter 10, that is what Jesus tells them to do.
2. Chapter 10 is Jesus' instructions to the disciples about how to be a witness for Jesus.
 - a) It gives them a list of marching orders, a list of the powers given to them by Jesus and spends some time warning them about the dangers of being a missionary for Christ.
 - b) The interesting thing is we don't read much about their results.
 - c) I believe that is intentional. The work of the apostles and us didn't really begin until after Jesus was resurrected and the church was "born" on the day of Pentecost.
 - i) It wasn't until the Holy Spirit came down on the church that you begin to read of the miracles and the trials of the apostles as described here in Matthew 10.
 - ii) I believe that was on purpose. We can't be a witness for Jesus without the Holy Spirit working through us. It can't be done on willpower.
3. Chapter 10 is a combination of direct orders ("do it now") and future predictions.
 - a) Almost the entire chapter is a speech by Jesus explaining to the disciples their jobs as missionaries and witnesses for him.
 - b) I do believe when Jesus gave the order in Chapter 10 to go from town and town and preach about Him, it was a direct order. In Chapter 11 there is no mention of the disciples. There are passages in the other gospels about the results of their work.
 - c) The Chapter also has future implications.
 - i) For those who have studied bible prophecy, it is a common style for Hebrew prophets to have "double-fulfillments".
 - ii) It is best explained by an illustration. On a clear day, one can look out in the distance toward a mountain range. What you cannot see is the fact you are actually looking at two ranges of mountains with a great valley in-between.
 - a) Bible prophecy is often the same. There are "short term" and "long term" implications. From the direct reading of the text, it appears to be "one in the same" just as that view of the mountains appears to be just mountains.
 - b) There are passages in the Old Testament that deal with Jesus 1st and 2nd comings. These predictions are often mixed together. We know that the passages describing Jesus' 1st and 2nd comings are explained further in as the New Testament. An example is that Isaiah predicted that the Messiah would die for our sins (see Chapter 53) and at the same time teach that the Messiah will rule from earth (e.g., Chapters 65-66). You can only reconcile that fact by either 1) the Messiah comes twice (right answer) or 2) there are two Messiah's (wrong answer☺).

- d) Let's get back to Chapter 10 of Matthew. Jesus speech is a combination of "do it now" and "this is what will happen to you in the future".
 - i) The chapter is written to all people who will be witnesses for Jesus.
 - a) There are passages that apply only to the disciples for that time period.
 - b) There are passages that apply only to the future (from their perspective).
 - ii) The point is to read this chapter and realize:
 - a) This is the power Jesus has given you and I to be his disciples.
 - b) This is the warning Jesus has given us as to what to expect if we are to follow him. With that in mind, let's start the Chapter.

4. Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 10, Verse 1: He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.

- a) Verse 1 is an overview commentary by Matthew.
- b) Verses 2-4 are where Matthew names the 12 disciples.
- c) From Verse 5 to the end of the Chapter is a speech by Jesus.
- d) Verse 1 is Matthew's comment on what Jesus asked them to do.
- e) Let's discuss the miracles of the last two chapters:
 - i) We saw Jesus performing all sorts of miracles.
 - a) All of which are beyond human rational explanation.
 - ii) The disciples, for the most part, just stood there with their mouths opened watching Jesus like the rest of the crowd. ☺
 - iii) At best, they were simply known as the guys following Jesus around. They were known as the men who gave up their financial livelihood to go follow Jesus.
 - iv) A modern cliché is the "entourage". A famous athlete or actor/actress enters a room surrounded by a group of people. (What do these people do anyway? ☺)
 - v) That is my vision of the disciples in the early chapters.
- f) Like a good teacher, there comes a time to tell your students, "Ok people, its time for you to stop just observing and it is time for you to go out on your own. You've watched what I do, now go and do likewise. Here are some final warnings before you go".
 - i) In a sense, that is a summary statement for Chapter 10. Its time for the disciples to stop just observing and time for them to start being a witness.
 - ii) For Christians, a day like that must come for all of us. When we first get saved, we spend a lot of time learning about Jesus, reading our bibles, praying etc. There comes a day when we need to realize, "I just can't sit here and keep learning. It's time for me to get involved in the program".
 - iii) One time I was reading my bible and I saw this verse:
 - a) "In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food!" (Hebrews 5:12, NIV)
 - b) That was God telling me to stop "just" studying the bible and start teaching it to others.
 - c) God is not calling everyone to be a bible teacher. This is just my personal example. My point is that we are all called to serve in some capacity, not just to sit in church and "take it in".
- g) Let's get back to Verse 1. Jesus gives the disciples authority to "drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness".
 - i) That had to be a shocker to the disciples.
 - ii) It was one thing to watch the God of the Universe do that.
 - iii) It is another to say, "OK guys, you go out and do that".
 - iv) It had to be intimidating.
 - v) Yet in the book of Acts, we read of Jesus' disciples doing just that.

- vi) In Luke Chapter 10, we read of Jesus sending out 72 followers to cast out demons and do miracles.
 - a) That is a different occasion than what we read of here in Matthew.
 - b) The interesting thing is that when these 72 guys report back of how they cast out demons, note Jesus response:
 - (1) “However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.” (Luke 10:20, NIV).
 - (2) Jesus point is that all of this power He gives us is wonderful. Healing people is a great way to have them listen to what you have to say. ☺ Just keep in mind these healed people are going to die again. Eternal life is far more important than the miracle itself.

5. Verse 2: These are the names of the twelve apostles first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John;³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;⁴ Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.
- a) Here we have the names of the 12 apostles.
 - b) Notice that Jesus didn’t go the best Jewish seminary in town and say, “Let me have your top 12 students”. ☺
 - i) He picked “average Joe’s”. He picked mostly uneducated fisherman.
 - ii) That application is for you and me. Never believe that you are “inadequate” to be a witness for Jesus. God can and does use anyone who is willing to be his disciple. God is not looking for ability, God is looking for *availability*.
 - c) Some of these disciples we know a lot about, and some we know very little about.
 - i) Peter is the most obvious example of a disciple we know a lot about. He becomes the leader of the twelve and he is known for boldness. Peter is the kind of guy who “shoots first and asks questions later”.
 - a) It is interesting to compare how Peter acts in the Gospel accounts with how Peter acts in the Book of Acts and Peter’s letters. Peter is changed from a bumbling, overzealous person into an articulate leader after the Holy Spirit comes upon him in the Book of Acts.
 - ii) Andrew, along with his brother John were originally disciples of John the Baptist. (John 1:40). Therefore Andrew knew who Jesus was when he was called out by John the Baptist. It wasn’t until later that Jesus called Andrew to follow Him. (Matthew 4:18).
 - a) My point here is that some disciples were fairly quiet and worked in the background. I believe Andrew was that type.
 - b) The application to you and I is if you don’t have “Peter’s boldness”, don’t let that stop you from becoming a witness for Jesus. Jesus picked all sorts of people, not just bold ones, but quiet ones as well.
 - c) Andrew’s brother John is the writer of the Gospel of John and other books.
 - d) Notice that among the 12 disciples, Matthew is the only one that lists his profession.
 - i) It doesn’t say for example, “Peter the fisherman”, but it does mention that Matthew is a tax collector.
 - a) Remember to be a tax collector was to be excommunicated by your own people. A tax collector was considered a traitor.
 - b) I believe as Matthew realized his own betrayal and sinfulness, he never forgot “who he was”. Notice that Jesus never condemned Matthew’s former profession. Matthew only did this to himself. Jesus doesn’t see us as the way we were, only for our potential.

- e) Another thing to notice is the disciple “Simon the Zealot”.
 - i) First of all, this is a different Simon that Peter-Simon.
 - ii) The “Zealot’s” was political movement among the Jews that called for a revolution. They believed to die as a freeman is better than to live under the Roman authority.
 - iii) In the same group of 12 as a Zealot, was Matthew, the tax collector.
 - iv) If it wasn’t for Jesus, Simon the Zealot would want to kill Matthew
 - v) Jesus draws people together, who normally have nothing in common.
 - vi) Look around your church, and ask yourself, “If it wasn’t for Jesus, what do I have in common with this crowd?” God can draw people together for his glory from totally different political and social levels for His glory.
 - f) Some other minor notes:
 - i) When you read the list of 12 disciples elsewhere in the Gospels, the names don’t always match up evenly. The order is often different. Some people have more than one name, as people today have two or more names.
 - ii) Judas who betrayed Jesus is always placed last in these lists. Nobody likes a turncoat, no matter what group they are. I think it bothered the disciples for years afterward the fact that Judas would do that. To put Judas last was a put-down.
6. Verse 5: These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. ⁶ Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel.
- a) From here to the end of the Chapter is one speech by Jesus.
 - b) His first instructions were to go only to the Israelites.
 - i) You have to remember that in a Jewish mind at that time, salvation was only to the Jews, or to someone converting to Judaism.
 - a) To tell the disciples to go to Samaritans or Gentiles at this time would have been too radical for them to handle.
 - b) Jesus works that way in our life too. God has far greater plans for our lives than we can comprehend at any one given moment. His instructions are often, “Here is what I want you do now”. Once we accept that assignment He may choose to give us larger assignments later.
 - (1) God’s plan was for everybody to be saved including Gentiles. In Acts 1:8; Jesus specifically states that we are to preach the Gospel to “Samaria and the ends of the earth”. That is to say, “non-Jews”.
 - (2) Here Jesus is saying only preach to the Jews because at this point in the ministry, that is all they could “mentally handle”.
 - ii) Since the Jews were given the responsibility of bringing God’s law in the world and responsible for bringing the Messiah into the world, it is natural that Jesus would want to give the Gospel message to them first in pecking order.
 - a) Paul said, “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.” (Romans 1:16, NIV).
7. Verse 7: As you go, preach this message ‘The kingdom of heaven is near.’
- a) That is the entirety of the message.
 - b) The rest of the chapter is all about miracles the disciples are to perform in validation of this simple message and warning about what happens when they preach this message.
 - c) The message “The kingdom of heaven is near” is a reference that salvation comes from the acknowledgement of Jesus as Savior. It is not that salvation can be obtained from visiting some distant land, nor does it come by a lifetime of perfectly following the rules of the Old Testament. That is what Jesus meant by “near”. It is near as to verbally or consciously admit that you are a sinner and your only hope of salvation is to turn your life over to Jesus.

8. Verse 8: Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.
 - a) Jesus says to go perform the miracles like the ones He has done in the last two chapters.
 - i) Jesus is given them the authority to perform these miracles.
 - ii) There is no cost associated with the given of this power.
 - iii) Jesus simply says in effect “I’m given you this power for free. Since I give it for free, give it to others for free. Use it freely and don’t charge. I didn’t charge people when I performed miracles on them. Go and do likewise”.
 - iv) The same applies to the message of eternal salvation. It was given to us for free. For free, we are to preach and give it (In God’s name) to others.
9. Verse 9: Do not take along any gold or silver or copper in your belts; ¹⁰ take no bag for the journey, or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff; for the worker is worth his keep.
 - a) This is about stepping out in faith.
 - b) On this particularly journey, Jesus tells them not to take any extra supplies.
 - c) I stated in my introduction that some of the instructions apply to this particular journey although the principals apply to you and me.
 - i) On another occasion, right before Jesus crucifixion, He gave these instructions to his disciples:
 - ii) “He (Jesus) said to them, “But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don’t have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one”. (Luke 22:36, NIV).
 - a) This verse in Luke 22 is different from Verse 9 here in Matthew.
 - b) That tells me that Jesus instructions in Matthew are temporary for this particular missionary journey.
 - c) As a Christian witness, we need to have “balance” of both principals.
 - (1) If we go on a missionary journey, there is nothing wrong with planning and taking supplies. I believe good planning is biblical.
 - (2) Even with our supplies in hand, we are still fully dependent upon God. God may take away your supplies and still expect you to be a missionary. The key is to focus on God for our needs and not the supplies in hand.
 - d) Verse 9 is about stepping out in faith.
 - i) Here were these 12 guys, following Jesus around. They have yet to go out on their own. Now Jesus is telling them not only to go out on their own, but also not to take any extra supplies with them.
 - ii) I believe this is a “training mission” for the future. It is about learning to trust God for all of your needs.
 - e) Notice the last phrase: “for the worker is worth his keep”
 - i) If Jesus calls you to a specific missionary journey, don’t you think He is going to find a way to provide for you needs at that time? Where God leads, God provides.
10. Verse 11: “Whatever town or village you enter, search for some worthy person there and stay at his house until you leave. ¹² As you enter the home, give it your greeting. ¹³ If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴ If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that home or town. ¹⁵ I tell you the truth, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.
 - a) Imagine hearing these instructions. Let me paraphrase. “Go into a town and go to the town square. Look around for a friendly, or maybe a religious person. Preach the gospel message in the town square and see if you get any friendly response. If someone responds positively, ask to stay at their house. When you stay at that house, give a blessing from God upon that house. If you don’t find someone, publicly shake the dust off your feet as you leave as a warning to these townspeople.

- b) Verse 15 says that Sodom and Gomorrah will be judged lighter than that town.
 - i) Genesis 19 is the story of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.
 - ii) That town was judged for sin. The sin was the public tolerance of homosexuality. God destroyed those towns as a warning to all people of the future.
 - iii) Billy Graham was famous for saying, "If God doesn't judge the United States of America, He owes Sodom and Gomorrah an apology".
 - iv) Jesus point is that Sodom and Gomorrah never heard the Gospel message.
 - a) These towns will receive less judgment because they were "only" guilty of disobeying God's commandants. These towns where the disciples will preach have greater guilt because they rejected the Gospel message.
 - (1) Jesus said, "For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more." (Luke 12:48, NIV)
 - v) These verses have other implications:
 - a) It means that there are different degrees of punishment by God.
 - b) It also implies God judges towns (and nations too!) as well as people. God judges locations by giving those locations future life. It implies that the "death" of a town or city may be due to the corporate sin of that town.
11. Verse 16: I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.
- a) I believe the principal of "shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves" should apply to our Christian witnesses at all times.
 - i) It means as "doves" our attitude should be peaceful. People need to see our joy and our love to want to become Christians. If they can see how you can have joy in difficult situations, that is something the world will never offer.
 - a) People will know we are Christians by our love for one another. (See John 13:35). This concept of love is to give up one's own desires in order to fulfill someone else's desires.
 - ii) As "shrewd snakes", we should be aware of what the world is like.
 - a) God wants us to be a witness to the world, but at the same time not "trust" the world. Jesus will go on in a few verses to teach that people will hate us because we hate Jesus. We'll get to "why is that?" in a minute. For now, this verse is to make you aware of that fact.
12. Verse 17: "Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues. ¹⁸ On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles.
- a) Remember that we have "double-fulfillments" in this prediction by Jesus.
 - b) In the immediate context, Jesus was sending his disciples into towns ahead of himself to tell people about Jesus and his salvation plan. The modern term is the "front-runner". This is a person who is sent ahead of time to a location to plan for the main event.
 - c) This verse also applies to the disciples in the post-resurrection era.
 - i) When we read of the apostles' lives in the Book of Acts, all of these predictions by Jesus in these two verses came literally true. The apostles saw their greatest persecution in the early-days from the religious Jewish leaders trying to stop the spread of Christianity. Later, Paul himself spoke before "(Roman) governors and kings" as a witness for Jesus in the latter chapters.
 - a) Paul is not one of the "12" in view here. This is why I take these sets of verses to have double-fulfillments. It applies to the 12 disciples as well as all future believers.

- d) These verses have many examples over the past 2,000 years.
 - i) For most of the next 300-400 years Christianity was outlawed. Christians met in secret. Therefore, the predictions about being “handed over to men” came true.
 - ii) During the Protestant reformation, persecution happened all over again. Many Protestants died at the hands of Roman Catholics because during this era, (not today), the Roman Catholic church was not only corrupt, but it discourages people owning or reading the bible. Anyone who swore allegiance to Christ but not the Roman Catholic Church was killed.
 - iii) Today, there are many countries where Christianity is illegal and these same principals apply to them as well.
13. Verse 19: But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, ²⁰ for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.
- a) Notice Jesus doesn't say, “If they arrest you”, it says, “When they arrest you”.
 - i) Persecution for following Jesus was to be expected.
 - b) What Jesus is saying in these verses is not to worry about what to say at your trial.
 - i) At that moment, the Holy Spirit will guide you as to what to say.
 - ii) Many Christians have taken verses like this one out of context and used it as an excuse to not study your bible. Because the Holy Spirit will help them at the right time, they think it is an excuse not to study.
 - a) The Holy Spirit will help you recall what God wants you to say. You still have to learn the fundamentals of Christianity in the first place.
 - c) Jesus spends a lot of time in the Gospels telling us not to worry.
 - i) We spend more time worrying about the future than the event themselves.
 - ii) Most of the things in life we worry about never happen. The ones that do happen are when we get promises like this from Jesus that He will be there and support us.
 - d) Some commentators make a big deal about the phrase, “Spirit of Your Father”.
 - i) It is only used here in Matthew and nowhere else.
 - ii) Personally, I find it a colorful way of saying the Holy Spirit at a time prior to the “formal” coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. That's all. ☺
14. Verse 21: "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death.
- a) I find these two verses to be the toughest to comprehend in the chapter.
 - b) It's hard for me as a parent to consider doing anything to betray my child.
 - c) It's hard for me as I have loving parents to consider doing anything to betray my parents.
 - d) What would it take for a person to betray their own child, their own sibling or their own parents to death?
 - i) Imagine living in a world where Christianity is illegal. Would you turn in your own parents or your children to save your own life? Probably not. Most parents would be more than willing to die to save their own children.
 - ii) I would have to be under the influence of Satan himself to do something like this, and that is Jesus point. Further, I would have to be so anti-Jesus that I thought I was “doing the world a favor” by betraying my own child/parent/sibling.
 - a) Throughout history we have seen people excommunicate their own family members because they have joined a different religion. That is what is being discussed here. A person loving their own lifestyle, or their own false-god so much, they are willing to betray their own family member.

- e) I find the hardest part about people accepting Jesus is not His existence or the price he paid for sins, but it is about changing your lifestyle.
 - i) Far more people would be willing to accept Jesus if it didn't mean changing their lifestyle or their habits.
 - ii) When it comes down to it, people would rather keep on getting drunk, keep on living sexually in sin or pick-your-bad-habit rather than turn to Jesus.
 - f) It could also be a matter of converting from another religion. This is often a death sentence, or at least an ex-communication from their family. Even if someone realizes Jesus is the truth, it takes tremendous courage in many cultures to turn and accept him as your Savior.
15. Verse 22: All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.
- a) I usually say, "All means all", but in this context, "all" refers to "all who are unsaved".
 - i) Jesus is warning of attacks. They come from two sources:
 - a) First, Satan himself wants to attack you as a Christian. His job is to make you an ineffective witness for Jesus as to not lead others to salvation.
 - (1) One of my favorite Christian expressions is, "If you don't think Satan is real, try opposing him for awhile".
 - b) Second, people themselves won't come to Jesus because they don't want to change their lifestyle. For that reason they will have either a subconscious hatred of Jesus (and therefore us). For others, it is more verbal & abusive.
 - b) The good news is that "He who stands firm to the end will be saved." (Verse 22b)
 - i) Jesus warns elsewhere in the Gospels that some people turn away from God out of fear of persecution. They would rather be popular with people than with God.
 - ii) This verse is about "hanging in there" during times of persecution.
 - iii) By the way, this is not saying "If you are scared to stand up for Jesus at a time, you then lose your salvation". Peter denied Jesus three times and I believe Peter is in heaven right now. ☺
 - a) This warning is about a *lifetime* of the denial of Jesus.
 - b) I also take the view Jesus does not want us to be "closet Christians". There comes a time in our lives where we have to publicly take a stand for our faith. If this is a concern, pray for boldness. God wants you to be a witness for Him and will give you the courage.
16. Verse 23: When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. I tell you the truth, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.
- a) Notice Verse 23 does not say, "When you are persecuted, stand there and let people hit you over and over again." ☺ It says to flee. In times of persecution, it is "biblical" to run.
 - i) One has to read this verse in context of the surrounding verses. God is not calling you to avoid being a witness in order to avoid persecution. Jesus is saying that when persecution comes from being a witness, if you can, then flee.
 - b) The second part of this verse is very controversial. It says in effect that before the disciples go to every single city and town in Israel, "The Son of Man" will come.
 - i) What does Jesus mean by that?
 - ii) It could refer to the resurrected Jesus appearing prior the disciples hitting every town.
 - iii) It "sounds like" the second coming of Jesus will occur before they reach every town. Since the second coming of Jesus is a future event, this can't be true.
 - iv) The consensus opinion among the commentators is that this is about judgment on the Nation of Israel. Back in Verse 15, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town."

- a) I believe the “Son of Man comes” reference ties to the judgment reference in Verse 15.
 - b) Approximately 40 years after Jesus was resurrected, Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, and most of Israel. Jews were scattered all over the world from 70AD onward. Millions died during then.
 - c) When Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed, it was “relatively quick and painless” in that the inhabitants died in a moment, or a day. When Jerusalem was destroyed in 70AD, it was a slow, horrible painful moment.
 - d) We don’t know for sure this is the correct interpretation, but this one appears to fit best with the historical facts.
- 17. Verse 24: "A student is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. ²⁵ It is enough for the student to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebub, how much more the members of his household!
 - a) As Christians, we are Christ’s servants. Our job is to do what he commands us to do.
 - b) As Christians, we are called “disciples”. The same root word is used for “discipline”.
 - i) The word “Christians” means “little Christ’s”. As disciples of Christ, we do discipline ourselves to be like Christ. (We do that by spending time in prayer, time in his Word, time with other Christians, etc.)
 - ii) By this discipline, we become “like our master”.
 - c) Jesus says in Verse 25 “it is enough to be like our master”.
 - i) Folks, it is not our job to be better than Jesus. We can’t do it if we tried. ☺
 - ii) It is enough to be like Jesus and to live as he commands us.
 - iii) This is not about being perfect. All of us make mistakes. This is about trusting that God is working through us to change us into his image.
 - d) Now lets talk about this Beelzebub reference.
 - i) “Beelzebub” means “Lord of the Household”. It refers to Satan himself being the chief demon of the legions of demons.
 - a) I should also add that people get the wrong impression that somehow Jesus and Satan are equals in ranks...nonsense! Jesus created all things, including Satan. Satan was a “top angel” who led a rebellion against God.
 - ii) Jesus is saying in effect, “If they call me a devil, imagine what they are going to call you”.
- 18. Verse 26: "So do not be afraid of them. There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. ²⁷ What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs.
 - a) Jesus is saying in effect, “Hey don’t be afraid of those guys who want to kill you. They hate me and they will hate you because you follow me. It’s the price to pay to be my disciple, so expect it.”
 - b) Jesus then says in effect, “Look, don’t worry about the persecution. Just go out there and proclaim the gospel message. Do it loudly and boldly. The things I teach you in our private lessons I want you to preach boldly. I want you to be my “amplifier”. ☺
 - c) That lesson is for all of us. We are not to fear the attacks of the world, but to expect them. We should never make them an excuse to not be a good witness for Jesus.
- 19. Verse 28: Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. ³⁰ And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹ So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.
 - a) Jesus continues his “pep talk” in Verses 28-31. These verses are about encouragement.

- b) Jesus is saying in effect, “Look, people will try to kill you for what you believe. In fact, some of you *will* die for your beliefs. Don’t worry about that. You are going to live forever. “Forever” is a lot longer than your time here on earth. That doesn’t mean you are to be cowardly, nor does it mean you are to be suicidal (remember the “flee” verse). Just be aware that God knows everything you are going through.”
 - c) We tend to forget that God the Father is perfect. If God is perfect, then God knows all things. If He knows all things, He cannot learn anything. Since He knows all things, he therefore knows when a sparrow falls to the ground (Verse 28) and he knows how many hairs you have on your head (Verse 30).
 - d) The sparrow, in terms of market value, had little worth. Two were sold for the modern equivalent of a few cents. Yet Verse 31 says God cares more for you than sparrows.
 - i) This is a good verse to show your “animal whacko” friends who believe that humans are equal to animals in God’s eye. ☺ It is not an anti-animal biblical verse, it just puts us in perspective. God put humans in charge of all the animals. (See Genesis 1:26).
20. Verse 32: "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.³³ But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.
- a) Verse 32 is the biblical basis for the public confession of our allegiance to Jesus.
 - i) Many traditional churches (e.g., Roman Catholics) have public rituals called “confirmation” where young teens and adults publicly acknowledge their allegiance to Christ.
 - ii) Many evangelical churches use this as the basis for “alter calls”. This is where they ask if anyone in the audience wants to step forward (to the alter) and acknowledge Jesus as their savior.
 - iii) Personally, I don’t believe any of these rituals are a requirement for salvation. One can simply acknowledge Jesus in the privacy of their own hearts and be saved.
 - a) With that said, I do believe in public acknowledgment. If one does do it “privately”, it is important to share that with other Christians. Christianity is never designed to be a solo act.
 - b) Verse 33 is the “negative” of this law. If you deny your belief in Jesus before men, Jesus will deny you before God the Father.
 - i) Most Christians have had moments of failure where we were too shy or scared to publicly acknowledge Jesus. I don’t think that is what he is talking about.
 - ii) I believe this is about the continual denial of Jesus as God. If we confess Jesus publicly, and then live our life accordingly, we will eventually grow to a point of maturity where we have boldness for Jesus.
 - a) If you feel you’ve sinned by being shy in a situation you were you should have been bold, simply confess it and know that God has forgiven you.
21. Verse 34: Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.³⁵ For I have come to turn " `a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law--³⁶ a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.'
- a) Well now, there is a set of verses you don’t see on Christmas cards very often. ☺
 - b) We tend to envision Jesus, as one man put it, “A suntan carpenter with a big smile who goes around all day blessing people”. Here is Jesus saying, “I’m not here to bring peace to the earth, but sword”.
 - c) The concept here is similar to what Jesus said in Verse 21: “Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death.”
 - i) It is the idea that Jesus will cause division. In some cases it will cause division so severe it will separate families.

- ii) It is hard for us as Americans to imagine this. In other parts of the world, becoming a Christian is a death sentence, and people have turned in members of their own family for punishment due to conversion.
 - d) These verses are meant as warnings.
 - i) When we accept Jesus, we can't expect our family and friends to say "Well, good for you, you've accepted Jesus." For people who come from non-Christian homes, you can expect rebellion and family splits over this issue.
22. Verse 37: "Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; ³⁸ and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.
- a) These verses are the climax of this section. Jesus is saying in effect, "Look, for many of you, you are going to have to choose between your family and me. If you are not willing to love me *more* than your family members, you are not worthy of being my disciple.
 - i) Jesus is not anti-family. This is about choice.
 - ii) Let me give you a practical example. Suppose you are a young adult who wants to be a missionary. Your parents are against the idea. There comes a time (again, as an adult) where you may have to choose between your family and Jesus.
 - iii) We all need to have the attitude that Jesus comes before our family.
 - iv) To me, the secret of *being* a good husband, a good son, a good father is to make Jesus a priority over all of them. It is through God's love that I can be a better husband, son and father.
 - v) Jesus comment is not about abandoning your family, although in some cases it is a necessity. In most cases, it is about letting Jesus rule over your life so you *can* better serve your family.
 - b) Jesus says in Verse 39: "Whoever finds his life will lose it."
 - i) This means that if you live for your own, or the life of another over God, you will lose your life and not have eternal salvation. That is why Jesus commented that unless you love me *more* than family members, you cannot be his disciple.
 - c) Verse 39 is the climax verse. Salvation is about dying to yourself and living to God.
 - i) It is about telling God, "OK, I can't please you on my own effort. Everything I own, everything I am responsible for now belongs to you. I know take my marching orders from God and I seek you daily (through prayer and God's word) for guidance as to how to live my life. I want you to reign, not me."
 - ii) That is the Christian salvation message. It is not about making a one-time commitment and then going about your merry way, it is about moment-by-moment putting your trust in God and letting God rule over your lives.
 - iii) Being a Christian implies being ready to die at any time. God, and not you, decides how long you will live. Since we don't know the date and time, we should live as long as possible (healthy lifestyle, nothing suicidal ☺) until God calls us home. During that remaining time era, we are to live for God.
 - a) "An ancient Roman coin depicted an ox facing both an altar and a plow with the inscription "Ready for either." That should be the attitude of every believer." John MacArthur's Commentary on Matthew Chapter 10.
 - b) "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." (Ecclesiastes 12:13, NIV)
23. Verse 40: "He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me. ⁴¹ Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward. ⁴² And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."

- a) The last set of verses is all about service.
 - b) First of all, notice that there are rewards in heaven. Jesus says there is a “prophet’s reward” and a “righteous man’s reward”.
 - i) Whether or not they are the same pay scale, we don’t know. ☺
 - c) These verses are saying in effect is whoever helps and/or supports a prophet receives the same reward as the prophet. The same principal applies for the righteous man.
 - i) This calls for believers to financially and prayerfully support prophets, missionaries, church leaders etc. The eternal benefit is the same reward as them!
 - ii) It also is a call for those who do the work of God to be dependant upon others for prayer and financial support. Jesus opened this chapter with the idea of not taking along any extra supplies for your trip. Here Jesus is saying that those who help you, or you-helping-each-other both share in the same reward.
24. Verse 42: And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."
- a) Here is the end of the speech by Jesus before the disciples are sent out.
 - b) Remember that Jesus was sending out the “12”, two-by-two ahead of him into different towns in Israel to preach about Jesus coming.
 - c) Notice the verse says the “little ones” is not a reference to children, but to his disciples.
 - i) Jesus is calling his disciples “little ones”. I believe it is meant affectionately.
 - ii) Further, Jesus says, “Even if you give a cup of cold water”, you get your reward.
 - iii) A cup of cold water is a word-picture we can all relate to when we are thirsty. On one hand it represents helping others in the simplest of ways. It also represents caring for the needs of other Christians.
25. OK, let’s stand back and take in the big picture here.
- a) This whole chapter is all about the “instructions” for the 12 disciples.
 - i) Jesus gives them the same power to perform miracles that Jesus has been doing for the last two chapters.
 - a) To me, anytime anyone gets saved is a miracle, solely by the grace of God. The other miracles, which have been performed for the last 2,000 years are very inferior, in that they are simply demonstrations of God’s power.
 - ii) Jesus spends some time warning of the dangers of preaching the Gospel.
 - a) We as Christians can expect opposition. God allows Satan a certain amount of power. That power is greater than we can handle alone. God does this to keep us close to Him in prayer. God & us make a majority!
 - iii) Finally, Jesus teaches on the cost of being a disciple.
 - a) Your love for Jesus must be greater than your love for material things, your family and your own spouses and children.
 - b) If we make God a priority in our lives, the ability to love our family members will flow from that love.
 - b) Being a disciple of Jesus is costly.
 - i) In some cases it could cost you your relationship with your family.
 - ii) In some cases, it could cost you your family.
 - a) Remember the disciples were ex-communicated by the Jews. They gave up their livelihood as well.
 - iii) We as Christians have to give all to Jesus in order to have eternal life. It is a tremendous cost, but the eternal benefits far outweigh the costs.
26. Let’s pray: Heavenly Father, We thank you for the miracle you have performed on each of us as you have called us to be your disciple. Give us the boldness, the courage, the love and the will to go forth into the world and be your disciple. Rule over our lives so that we can be good witnesses to those around us. May you be glorified in all we do. For we ask this in Jesus name, Amen.