

Matthew 10

Read Matthew 10:1-15: Jesus empowered his 12 apostles to heal, bring back the dead to life, and exorcise demons, etc.. Why did he do this? It was a fulfillment of prophecy. It also was needed to get a message out to the world quickly. The message of the gospel is the highest priority. The signs attracted an unbelieving audience. The fulfilled prophecy attracted the believers; and authenticated the messiah.

Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe. (1 Corinthians 14:22)

The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, And the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose; It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice, Even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, The excellency of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the LORD, The excellency of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, And make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear!
Behold, your God will come with vengeance, With the recompense of God; He will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. (Isaiah 35: 1-6)

Key

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Jesus and his apostles were walking in the power of the Spirit; but it was to an unbelieving world. The ensuing crowds would follow them just for bread, political control and healings; and not necessarily to be saved. Jesus had to offend them with things that would force those *on the bandwagon* to exhibit some level of faith to continue following him. The crowds would vanish every time a faith test was required. It was like throwing out bait; and then catching a very few fish.

Why didn't this kind of apostle and disciple-based healing spread out and continue long after Paul and the others were gone? Partially because Israel is supposed to drive the world evangelism model. Israel went to sleep; while the Gentiles and the *church age* mystery period continues. These Holy Spirit signs and miracles will return as we draw near to the resumed spiritual awakening of Israel, and the Day of the LORD approaches. The Gentiles are less fruitful and less anointed...even though they are one in Christ with the Jews. This dynamic power begins to unleash as the church further-embraces Israel.

May God enlarge Japheth, And may he dwell in the tents of Shem;
(Genesis 9:27)

"And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. "And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of

the great and awesome day of the LORD. And it shall come to pass
That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved. (Joel 2)

Even to them I will give in My house And within My walls a place and
a name Better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them an
everlasting name That shall not be cut off. "Also the sons of the
foreigner Who join themselves to the LORD, to serve Him, And to love
the name of the LORD, to be His servants— Everyone who keeps
from defiling the Sabbath, And holds fast My covenant— Even them I
will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of
prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices Will be accepted on
My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all
nations." The Lord GOD, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, says,
"Yet I will gather to him Others besides those who are gathered to
him." (Isaiah 56:5-8)

Read Matthew 10:16-26: God sends us out without fangs and claws
into a pack of wild dogs. He calls us to be very thoughtful and
consider all of the involved elements in our evangelism efforts. We
need the mind of Christ to know what is truly going on. We are
protected; but not by our own abilities. Prayer is critical. The point
is that to be successful we have to be Spirit led. We are to display
love and mercy to those who bite us and threaten us. Our fruit is our
manner of living; not our saved head count.

It is also comforting to know in advance that we will be unfairly
treated. We should see this as a sign that things are on track. What

about the painful scourging's, imprisonment and martyrdom? Isn't that scary? Normally, yes. There is a different dynamic that kicks in. A new level of joy comes to us.

And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw *them* into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely. Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. The Philippian Jailer Saved But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. (Acts 16:23-25)

The reformers tried whipping themselves just to achieve this state. Jesus reminds us that this is what happened to him; so we should not expect different treatment.

Read Matthew (10:27-33): Jesus has characteristics of both a lamb and a lion. We need to be gentle when we have the right to assert ourselves. We also need to step out and speak up when intervention is required. As Christians, we can be a little lamb-like when we should have the confidence to speak freely. The Holy Spirit gives us the confidence and the words when needed. Have you ever been prayerfully concerned about what you were going to tell someone, only to realize afterwards that what you said was better than you had planned?

...woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! (1 Corinthians 9:16b)

"So you, son of man: I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore you shall hear a word from My mouth and warn them for Me. When I say to the wicked, 'O wicked *man*, you shall surely die!' and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked *man* shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. (Ezekiel 33:7-8)

This world can be intimidating and unwelcoming to the *Jesus message*. Our life needs to be a platform for the gospel. At work and play; we need to not exercise our rights, or to say things that might offend or close the door for the gospel. The advancement of the gospel needs to override any complaint or peeve I want to air.

If others are partakers of *this* right over you, *are* we not even more? Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ. (1 Corinthians 9:12)

I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship. What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel. (1 Corinthians 9:17-18)

How safe are we sticking our neck out for the gospel (when the Holy Spirit is prompting us)?

For your Maker *is* your husband, The LORD of hosts *is* His name; And your Redeemer *is* the Holy One of Israel; He is called the God of the whole earth. (Isaiah 54:5)

TRIBULATION TIME

For the mountains shall depart And the hills be removed, But My kindness shall not depart from you, Nor shall My covenant of peace be removed," Says the LORD, who has mercy on you. "O you afflicted one, Tossed with tempest, *and not comforted*, Behold, I will lay your stones with colorful gems, And lay your foundations with sapphires. I will make your pinnacles of rubies, Your gates of crystal, And all your walls of precious stones. All your children *shall be taught* by the LORD, And great *shall be* the peace of your children. In righteousness you shall be established; You shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; And from terror, for it shall not come near you. Indeed they shall surely assemble, *but not because* of Me. Whoever assembles against you shall fall for your sake. "Behold, I have created ^{SATAN} the blacksmith Who blows the coals in the fire, Who brings forth an instrument for his work; And I have created the ^{SATAN} spoiler to destroy. No weapon formed against you shall prosper, And every tongue *which rises* against you in judgment You shall condemn. This *is* the heritage of the servants of the LORD, And their righteousness *is* from Me," Says the LORD. (Isaiah 54:10-17)

"The harvest truly *is* great, but the laborers *are* few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves. ... Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I give you the authority to trample

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on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. (excerpts from Luke 10)

Read Matthew (10:34-39): Sometimes the lamb-like peace-maker in us gets in the way of the assignment. We need to risk all things when God is clearly requiring it. To hold back on the gospel to avoid risking a relationship is to fall short. We have to put Jesus first; in order to ultimately be the best husband or father or employee. That does not justify ignoring our responsibilities just because we want to run out and do a ministry thing. Timing is a different matter. We have to be willing to lose what we cherish most in order to truly have all things in their proper place in our lives. The person who always puts the gospel behind family and friends will end up with neither, You have to be willing to lose what you have to really gain it. It is a trust issue with God.

Read Matthew (10:40-42): It is interesting to see how quickly my prayers for alliances are answered. It seems that any situation I am in brings a new and unexpected helper. Many times it is an unbeliever. Have you ever reached out to a fellow believer who you did not like? Have you seen a believer in a jam; and reached out? We cannot be a good Samaritan if we don't have communications with those who we do not like.

Do we hold our tongue, or criticize the pastor for his weak or off-track message? We may not be impressed; but we have to support

our team. It would be better to just pray for God to speak through him. ~~THAN TO PUT THE BOY DOWN PUBLICLY~~