

Introduction:

- Last Wednesday we looked at the Transition of Authority, The Mission and The Opposition
 - Jesus moves the heart chapter 6-7, amazed at His authority.
 - Jesus moves whatever He wants 8-9, demonstrates His authority over sickness, nature, demons, sin, afflictions, death and handicaps.
- As we look at the remainder of Chapter 10 tonight we will see how to respond to the opposition of the message and the persecution of the disciples. We will also see in this the radical loyalty that Jesus calls His followers to.

I. The Opposition vs 16-ff.

- A. The remainder of chapter 10 address the fact that not every will be excited to hear about the message of the Kingdom.
- B. Prepare to face/expect persecution.
 1. Be shrewd – phonimos Gr. be prudent and sensible, craft as snakes and harmless as doves.
 2. The persecution comes not because of social reason but because of Jesus.
 - a) Sent to face wolves 16
 - b) before authorities because of Jesus vs 18
 - c) hated because of Jesus name or we are his followers 22
 3. It is to also be note that persecution is bigger than just the limit time from of taking Gospel to Galilee. The whole world will hate and kill his followers.
- C. The Call is to be:
 1. Be shrewd as a snakes. The snake is one who has an instinct for survival or self preservation. We need to have the cunning of snakes without the venom. vs 16
 2. And to be witnesses by our words and by our actions. vs 18
 3. Do not worry. vs 19-20. God can be trusted because He is your Father.
 - a) The spirit of the Father will speak through us.
 - b) John 14:10 Jesus is an example of this. Holy Spirit - John 14:26; 15:26-27; 16:13-15
 - c) Endure
 - d) Flee to next town
 - e) vs 24 expect no better treat than what the Master, Jesus received.
 - f) Don't be afraid of threats vs. 26-27
 - g) Don't be afraid of those who want to kill you. vs 28 but fear God
 - h) Don't be afraid you are more valuable than the birds of the air.

II. Responding to Pressure

- A. The pressure is the opposition to the message of Jesus and the persecution that comes because of it. Jesus begins to speak this in preparation for His own cross and for what they will encounter because of Him.

1. If they miss treat me, you can count on nothing less than the same for you.
 2. Be shrewd as snake and harmless as doves.
- B. Parallels in the passage
1. Do not be afraid of threats instead announce the message from the mountain top!
 - a) vs. 27 states that the duty of the disciple is to shout the message from the house tops and what Jesus whisper into their ear they are to declare. The picture is one of no holding back.
 - b) The disciple is encouraged to not be afraid. Do not keep the message under wraps. Do not hide it. Do not put it under a basket. All of those refer to intimidation stop the message from going forth. The flat roof of the middle east was to serve as preaching platform.
 2. Do not be afraid of those who want to kill you. Your Father is totally aware of what is 'going down.' He knows the number of hairs on your head. He is aware. Be faithful. Steady. Hold the line! Fear only God. Reoccurring theme in the OT is the fear of the Lord. It is also the beginning of Wisdom. (Prov 1:7) It is about acknowledging God. We also need to be aware that this fear of the Lord does not exempt us from death or trials.
 3. Therefore "SO" Do not be afraid because of the two things I just spoke. You are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows.
- C. Find your loyalties! vs 32-33
1. The questions of priorities—whom to fear—leads to a radical choice of loyalty between Jesus and "people".
 2. Mt 26:69-ff give us the example of Peter falling to the pressure of public opinion.

III. The Radical Effects of the Mission

- A. The idea of persecution and death because of loyalty to Jesus leaves a mark on the mission they are called to.
1. vs 38 we are introduced to the concept of the cross. Only a man sentenced to die could carry the cross.
 2. He expects them to follow Him even into death because of Him.
 3. To agree to follow Jesus is to sign away all of your rights as a follower of Christ.
- B. vs. 34 "*Don't imagine I came to bring peace to the earth! I came not to bring peace but a sword.*" This message is meant to shock the hearer!
1. His coming was proclaimed as peace on earth. Lk 2:14
 2. The disciples are being sent out to offer peace.
 3. But the way to peace is not the avoidance of conflict.
 4. The depth of this conflict will reach even the most intimate of relationship vs 35-36
 - a) Mk 3:21 Jesus family thought He was crazy.
- C. There is encouragement!

1. Those who receive you.
 - a) If they receive you they receive me.
 - b) If they receive me they receive my Father.
2. They receive a reward.
 - a) Those who receive you will receive reward.

Conclusion:

- A transition of authority takes place in chapter 10.
- The mission is given – who, what, and where.
- The opposition is identified. Don't fear for they must hear. I will give the words.
- How to overcome/respond to the pressure is laid out.
- Loyalty is required and do not be surprised by those who will receive you. They too will be rewarded!
- Matthew 11:1, Jesus resumes his mission.