

Matthew 20-05-10b

We're ready now to resume our study in Matthew chapter 10. We've looked at the 12 disciples and I have a question for you. Who wrote most of the New Testament? Close.

Luke. Luke wrote 27% of the New Testament. Luke acts, takes up more space than anything else in the New Testament.

Got a lot of letters of Paul, but most of them are not that long. Luke wrote over a quarter of the New Testament all by his lonesome self. So where is he in this list? If I spent three years, three and a half years training a bunch of guys in my human plan of Sam mentality, I would have the New Testament be written by the guys that I trained.

But Mark isn't in this group. Luke is not in this group. Paul is not in this group.

And I asked myself, why isn't Paul born a little earlier, gets to spend this time with the Lord, and then he can be the apostle to the Gentiles. Why is he like one born out of time? And he's not in this group. You've got 12 guys.

How many of these guys are authors of scripture? Out of 12, how many of these are going to write scripture? Help me out here. Two. Peter and John.

Two out of the top four. None of these other guys have any lasting... Listen, if it wasn't for the gospel of John, you wouldn't know anything about Thomas Didymus, Thomas the twin. The only reason we know anything about doubting Thomas is the gospel of John.

What I was expecting, I would expect, if somebody was going to tell stories on Thomas, it would be his traveling partner, Matthew, right? Well, here we've got Matthew. Matthew never mentions Thomas again. The guy he went around with on this mission.

In fact, here's my second question. If the Lord Jesus came to you and said, fill in your name here, I'm giving you authority related to these unclean spirits, so you can cast them out. I'm giving you authority, and you're going to travel around to these towns and villages.

And when somebody is sick, you're going to be able to speak a word in my name, and they're healed, totally healed, blind from birth, they can see, and they've got all the faculties of sight to navigate, to parse three-dimensionality and colors and all the rest of it immediately. I'm giving you that authority. Now, it's time to write some stuff down.

We need a historical record of what has happened during the earthly ministry of the Lord. And so you're going to sit down and write three. Matthew.

Matthew writes this book. Outside of this book, we have two, Peter and John. But notice in the gospel of Matthew, and you've been through the thing before, we've not proved

this out in this pass.

But if you had that experience and you went out and raised the dead and healed the sick and cast out demons, what a testimony. So wouldn't you expect in Matthew's gospel, wouldn't you expect in Peter's letters, or wouldn't you expect in John's gospel? Well, and you know, now that I'm talking about this portion of the Lord's ministry, let me just tell you that when we went out, let me tell you what happened in X town. Matthew says, you know, Thomas and I got there and the first two places we went, we had to shake the dust off our feet.

But when we got to the third town, and then you would have this big section of Matthew that's all about this excursion. But if you notice all of the red ink in chapter 10, going all the way through, and this is going to lead to a teaching section. I've talked about the structure of the book and how you've got, you know, miracles followed by a teaching section.

And here we're going to have another teaching section. And then you get to chapter 11. It came to pass when Jesus finished commanding his 12 disciples that he departed from there to teach and preach in their cities.

Then you have this conversation with John, and then you get back to, to a chapter 12. And at that time, Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath and his disciples are with him. There's no account of this mission.

We've got this big chapter introducing it. We've got all of these specific instructions, but we've got no account of, well, how did it go? You know, we've got a few verses where they say, well, Lord, we came back and, and the demons were subject to us. And he says, I saw Satan fall from heaven, like lightning, no specifics, no anecdotes, no stories from that at all.

And yet you've got six teams, 12 disciples going out and accomplishing this mission for something measured at least in weeks, if not months. So I'm, I'm suggesting an application from what's not written. How important is it for us to share our testimony or for believers in general to share their testimony as a function of getting across the message of Christ, the truth of scripture.

None of these guys, quote unquote, testimony is in here from this sending forth. It's traditional in American churches that you have missionaries that go out and they come back and they tell, you know, here's, here's how your support turned out. You supported us.

We went to the mission field, not saying there's anything intrinsically wrong with that. I'm just saying it's not here. What is here is the fact that Jesus sent them forth and the guidance that he gave them, the results will be manifest at the judgment, but not here.

And they don't come back and make an issue out of, well, you remember that time I raised the dead guy down there in, you know, the village of X. Remember when it took both of us, Thomas, we both had to get in there and, you know, pray. And suddenly this demon left. None of it is there.

It's conspicuous to me by its absence. If this was a humanly produced book, there would be two or three chapters of nothing, but anecdotes of this mission. And there's not a single one.

There are a couple of general statements, Lord, we succeeded. He says, Satan fell. Let's go rest.

And that's it. So that's a little bit of an anticipation, but it's the reason I bring that up now is the reason this is even mentioned since the results of it are not mentioned. It's the sending out that is mentioned and it's the instructions that accompany the sending that are the issue, not the results.

So as we go through what Jesus tells them, that's the emphasis. That's the focus. And there's a lot of it here.

Notice in verse five, the 12 Jesus sent out and commanded them saying, do not go into the way of the Gentiles and do not enter a city of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, lost sheep, house of Israel, specific mission. Why this is the, this is the first line of the five paragraph field order here. This is defining the mission and it is only to Israel and only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel lost sheep.

Remember just shortly before this up in verse 36 of chapter nine, Jesus was moved with compassion because the crowds were scattered like sheep having no shepherd. What happens to sheep with no shepherd? They get lost. So Jesus is now sending.

He's not sending laborers into the field to reap the harvest. He is sending shepherd teams to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and only them, no Gentiles, no Samaritans, only Israel. Why? What's the message? What are they told to preach as you go over seven, the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

For whom is the kingdom prepared? For whom was the kingdom promised? It's not a kingdom for the Gentiles and it's not a kingdom for the Samaritans. It is only a kingdom for Israel. The king, the Messiah is only the king of Israel.

He's not the king of the world. He's not the king of the planet. The anointed son of David is the king of Israel.

David wasn't king of the world. Solomon wasn't king of the world. This was the sovereign for God's people.

This is a kingdom for God's people and they are sheep. They belong to God. He doesn't say go assemble a flock from the wild sheep and goats that are out on the hillsides.

Go find the sheep that have strayed. You are sent to these scattered sheep that have no shepherd and you're going to give them the message of the shepherd. The shepherd was David.

The shepherd is the Lord Jesus. And this has come to the fold. This is the kingdom.

The kingdom is at hand. So it makes sense in that light that you're not going to waste time. This is not a gospel of salvation.

Do the Gentiles need saving? Are they currently lost and bound for hell? Yes. Why isn't Jesus concerned about the Gentiles and their salvation? Is he concerned about the Gentiles and their salvation? Yes, he is. What is the mission for these individuals? Not that.

Is there a need? Are Gentiles dying every day? Are Samaritans dying every day and haven't seized and laid hold of salvation, redemption, reconciliation, propitiation, all the things that Jesus is going to accomplish on the cross? Oh, but there's a need. It's an urgent pressing. They're bound for hell.

We have to know our mission. There are a lot of wonderful missions, but they're not a wonderful mission for me. There are a lot of worthy causes, but it's not a worthy cause for you.

Your mission, my mission, is the specific God-assigned tasks, functions, objectives. And in the same way that you organize a military force, some people are in logistics, some people are in transportation, some people are in communications, some people are in combat arms, some people float on the sea, some people slip below the surface, some people fly in the air, some people maintain the ships or the aircraft. If you say, gracious sakes, something needs attacking, I'm only a mechanic, but let me jump into the cockpit and go fly and see if I can hit it.

It's just chaos. It's confusion. Notice the specifics of this mission.

Here is your target. It's the lost sheep of Israel only. And you 12 only, Jesus had a number of disciples.

It's an interesting thing to look at the word mathetes or mathetai in the plural, which is the Greek for disciple. And in Matthew, particularly previous to this chapter, when it says disciples, it seems to be a fairly numerous group. And after this, you have to look at the word and decide, now, is he only talking about the 12 disciples, sort of capital D, capital T, D, or is he talking about the larger group? There were many disciples, but these 12 were tasked.

We know later on he'll send out 70 disciples, but he sends these 12. So point of application, who am I? Why am I here? And those last two words are both fraught with importance. I, myself, why am I? Not that guy, not that gal.

Why am I here? These circumstances, this situation, these potentials, this background, my experience, my understanding, my family, my friends, my business acquaintances, my social circle, my opportunities, my options. Why am I here? And it's very specific and we cannot be all things to all people. It is better to be very good at a few things than to be poor at many things.

Right? It's important for us to sit and prayerfully consider, why am I here? These 12 individuals have a specific mission and are sent. Jesus says, here's where you don't go. Is there a need? Yes, but it's not your need.

Is there a mission there? Yes, but it's not your mission. Does Jesus care about the Gentiles? Yes, he does. He's going to send the greatest apostle who says that he's the least of the apostles to these Gentiles.

And Paul is going to have a wider ministry than these 11 guys put together. In God's plan, less is often more. Paul is going to cover more ground, evangelize more people, have a bigger witness than these 12 put together.

God's got that covered. And these individuals can't see it coming. They have no notion that there's a Saul of Tarsus out there sitting at the feet of Gamaliel.

They have no notion that there's a Barnabas or that there's a Silas or a Timothy or a Dr. Luke or any of the rest of that that's going to be detailed later on. They have no knowledge of that, no comprehension of it. And they could ask themselves the question, but Lord, what about the Gentiles? What about those Samaritans? Does Jesus care about the Samaritans? Read John chapter 4. Of course he does.

The woman at the well. But that's not for them. This is for them.

Do not go in the way of the Gentiles. Do not enter the city of Samaritans. Know your purpose.

Know your field where you hoe your own row. Other people have other rows in the field and they can hoe that row. They can cultivate.

They can weed. They can plant. They can plow.

They can nurture. You've got to know the assignment and don't get distracted. And as you go, preach saying the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

These individuals, their mission at this time is to preach the at handness of the kingdom. Is this ever the message? No. This is also a limited duration mission.

The kingdom is only going to be at hand for this short period of time. It started to be at hand with John the Baptist. He preached that the kingdom was at hand.

The Lord Jesus is preaching the kingdom is at hand, but it's a finite period of time. Pretty soon with the rising resistance in the land, the kingdom is no longer going to be at hand. So to come to this and say, we should all be out preaching the kingdom is a completely wrong interpretation and application.

We have to rise one level above that. We will be given assignments and those assignments will also often be of limited duration. You can be assigned to be a parent and you've got a limited amount of time to nurture and raise kids.

And then you're done and you're not nurturing and raising them anymore. You can be in a church fellowship for a certain period of time and have the opportunity to serve or to minister or to be a blessing even as you are blessed. And that time comes and then that time goes.

Pastors come and go. People come and go. It is the mission that is at hand.

We focus on what the current opportunity is and do that. So the kingdom of heaven is at hand. What is at hand in our lives? This is another point of application.

Ask yourself what is it that is at hand? There's pie in the sky by and by. There's wouldn't it be great if I would love to build this. I'd love to plant that.

I'd love to harvest this. I'd love to get into that. What's happening right now? What is at hand right now? The kingdom is at hand.

That's what Jesus has his disciples building into functioning to promote and support. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Notice that the command is commensurate with the ability that he has granted.

Look back up at verse 1. He gave them authority for this. Now he is giving them the command. He's given them the ability.

Now he is commanding them to exercise that ability. So if you're kind of wondering, well, what's next for me? What would God have me do? I would love to have a simple, clear set of instructions like this. This is the example.

What have you been fitted for? What have you already been given ability and opportunity for? What have you, what do you know and know well? And when you do it, you can do it well. These guys have seen Jesus do this, as I said in the first session, and he has given them delegated authority to do the very same thing. And now he is telling them, go do that.

He's not telling them, go see if you can throw a mountain into the sea and I'll wait here

and you come back and tell me. This is not new stuff. These are familiar experiences.

Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons, freely you have received, freely give. This ought to be a new, this is where the verse should have broken in my humble opinion, because this is the header for the next paragraph. When I taught English, I used a book called Building Better Paragraphs.

And one of the things they talk about is there are different ways you can construct a paragraph. One of them is put your topic sentence at the beginning. This is the topic sentence for what follows.

Freely you have received, freely give, colon. Here's what I mean by that. Don't take a bunch of stuff with you by way of provision.

Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper. These were the three kinds of money materials, much as we used to have in this country, in your money belts, nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandal, nor staff. A workman is worthy of his food.

A workman is worthy of his hire. Now, why does Jesus say this? Why doesn't He say, throw a hook in the sea, you'll get a coin, use that to finance your trip. Anytime you see a flat rock with a green bush on top, turn it over and there will be money for your journey.

God will provide. Hold out your hand in the evening and coins from heaven will drop. Who's supposed to finance this journey? The recipients of the message.

You are giving what you have freely received. They have been trained. They have been taught.

They've been commissioned. They've been given ability. They didn't have to pay for that.

It wasn't a course that you subscribe to. Freely you've received, freely give. This is true for us as well in the spiritual realm.

Remember, we're still in the age of Israel. These are physical things that have spiritual connotations. So wouldn't it be great if you could find a way to share insight into the Word of God, share the blessings of what is in the Word without having to charge, without having to cover publishing costs or whatever.

We're in an age where you can just put something on the web and someone can come to it. Things that we receive freely because we're studying and learning and benefiting from the ministry of the Holy Spirit. We can put that out there at no charge.

Freely we have received, freely give in the area of spiritual things because that's our application. So don't finance up. Don't wait and, what did they call that? Deputation.

Used to be, I don't know if they still do it or not, but there was a day when if somebody was going to go to the mission field, they would go around and get people to subscribe and to promise, I'll pay X amount each month so that you can go to Morocco or somewhere and minister. And you would have to basically provide for yourself. I'm not saying that's a bad thing.

I'm just saying that when Jesus sent these disciples out, he said, you go there and you look for someone who is receptive enough to support you to stay. You will know if you're in the right place. If there is a response, what would happen if they had, if he had not given them this instruction and if they had taken plenty of money and stuff with them, what would have happened? Well, I've got support.

I'm just going to camp in this town. I don't have a real measure of whether the message is being received or not because I'm paying to be there. I can stay as long as I've got money and inclination.

Right? This prohibition means they can only stay in a town as long as there is someone there who will feed them and house them. Right? And that's what you get where it follows. Don't take to anything.

Verse 11, uh, whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy and stay there until you leave. Inquire who is worthy. Now, when you inquire who is worthy, you're going to get two kinds of answer.

You're going to get an answer of worthy people who actually are worthy. And you're going to get an answer of people who are considered worthy, but they're really not. Sometimes the reputation is deserved and sometimes it isn't.

So Jesus addresses that. If the household is in fact worthy, once you greeted this house, let your peace come upon it. But if it's not worthy, notice he said, only go into the house of someone who's worthy.

But if you get there and it's not worthy, withdraw your peace. Now, what does that mean to let your peace remain on a house or let your peace return to you? What does it mean? They're not paying. What would peace mean? Pretty important.

If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. You know, this is, this is Shalom in Hebrew, right? It's Salaam in Arabic. And this is the blessing that you pray God to grant to those who have extended their hospitality to you.

You don't have a physical means to recompense them. And so you pray a blessing. Your peace is a blessing by association.

And God is going to look down on your peaceful stay and bless the household who supported it. If you get there and they're not really worthy and they're trying to give you

the bum's rush and your peace returns to you, they lose that blessing by association. You're not going to pray that God will recompense them in ways that you cannot.

And your peace returns to you. You keep your peace either way. You either share your peace or you leave with your peace.

But the effect on the hosts, those who have the opportunity to recognize what these guys are doing and be a part of it, either enters them into the peace that God has given these individuals, that Christ has given them, or they miss out on it. Their recompense for hosting and sustaining these individuals and supporting them is God's peace. We don't have personal peace as believers.

Our peace comes from God and it's either shared or it leaves with us. That's the idea. And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet.

Now notice that there is no instruction to go to the marketplace. There's no instruction to, and when you arrive at a city, stack up a couple of boxes, stand on top and shout in the street, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Where does this communication ministry take place? Where do the disciples do all of their talking according to the instructions of the Lord? Where? In a house.

When you arrive at a city, find who's worthy, go to their house and stay there. They communicate in the house. Jesus did so much of his teaching in homes.

Got to open up the roof to get somebody down in because people are at the house. You can see the implications of that. I may be prejudiced, but I'm not a big fan of brick and mortar church.

I think church should happen in homes. The communication model throughout the early church and beginning here is homes, perhaps the synagogue. He's going to talk about synagogues here in a moment, but he says you, the ideal is you go to a city, find out who's go to their home and you hold forth at their home.

That's the model. When you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. Verse 15.

Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city. This is curious because it seems to imply a group judgment, but the land of Sodom and Gomorrah, a land is only meaningful if it's made up of people. What this implies is not that they're going to be judged as a city, but that as a group of individuals who share the same attitude, they're going to receive a similar judgment.

Now we've seen in times past that a prophecy, we saw this in some of the minor

prophets and in some of the major prophets, there is a near term prophecy about what the Medes and the Persians are going to do and what the Greeks are going to do. And then it seems to, it's like an aircraft going down a runway and then it kind of lifts off and it no longer matches what we know to have happened in history after that prophecy. The first part of the prophecy pertains.

And so you've got the bear with the ribs between his teeth and you've got the big horn and the little horn for the Medes and the Persians. And it all matches in Daniel's prophecies in particular, you have the initial part of it that matches the history that we know, Babylon, the ongoing sequence of the beasts. But then the prophecy lifts up and we begin to sense that it's actually talking about future things and it blends seamlessly from the present to the future.

That's what's going to happen right here, right now. Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. This is the third mention of sheep within a double handful of verses here.

I have compassion on them. They're like sheep without a shepherd. I'm sending you to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. So if they're going to the lost sheep and they're being sent out in the midst of wolves, there is a real threat to the sheep that they are sent to recover, right? Therefore, be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. Harmless means without guile, without stratagem, deception, subterfuge.

So much of Christian practice in modern days has been bait and switch or let's lure them in. We'll have a function. You can invite your friends and then we'll hit them with the gospel.

That's guile. It's not harmless. It's guileless.

Don't sugarcoat. Don't bait and switch. Don't wheedle.

Don't woo. Don't cajole. Don't soft pedal.

Doves just fly in and fly out. They don't look one way and then grab another. Be wise as serpents.

The serpent again goes all the way back to Genesis chapter three and he was the most crafty. Remember the same word for naked means crafty, craftiness. Jesus says to his disciples, when you go forth, you need to be really smart.

Think ahead, make plans, follow these instructions to the letter and don't get crafty. Don't start adding your own little personal strategies. Be as innocent as a dove.

Dove was a sacrificial animal. You need to be as wise as the wolves, as the serpent who's

behind those wolves. You need to match them in wisdom.

Well, that wisdom has to come from God. Be wise as the serpent. The serpent is wiser than anything according to Genesis three.

So that wisdom has to come from God, just like the peace comes from God, just like the authority comes from God. Authority, ability, peace, provision, wisdom are all divinely provided for this mission. Be wise as serpents, be guileless as doves, but beware of men.

One of these days I'm going to do a special on the bewares. Jesus says, beware a certain set number of times, beware the leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod, beware lest. There's a great topical study there on bewares.

Here's another one. Beware of men because now this is where the wheels are about to leave the runway here. This is a limited duration mission to the towns and cities just in the Jewish areas of Israel, right? But look at what he says here.

Beware of men. They will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. Now there's no indication that in this short mission, any of the were arrested and whipped in the synagogues of these towns that they go to.

The level of resistance at this time was just not at that level. They would be listened to. And Jesus says, if they don't listen, just shake the dust off your feet.

He doesn't say if they scourge you in the synagogue, stand outside and pronounce a curse and fire will fall from heaven. This is now looking beyond this immediate mission. They will deliver you up to councils.

This is Sanhedrin's scourge you in their synagogues. You will be brought before governors and kings for my sake. How many kings are there in Israel right now? There's only one.

This is kings, plural governors. How many governors are there for the region? There's one. He's a Roman governor.

He's a Roman sponsored king, governors and kings for my sake as a testimony to them. Here's what I ended the first session asking you to note. There's a huge seeming contradiction here.

You will be hailed before the governors and kings as a testimony to who the Gentiles. Where is it? They're not supposed to go and not supposed to talk to the Gentiles. What happened? Don't go to the Gentiles.

Don't go to the Samaritans, but you're going to call it before kings and governors as a testimony to the Gentiles. We're in it. We're in a heightened state of awareness here.

This is a resonant instruction that goes beyond the immediate moment as does so much of the word of God. You have the immediate situation of the people of Israel in their journey to the promised land and in their conquest, but it resonates and there are overtones and there are applications. Jesus is looking to and through this proclamation of the kingdom, skipping the entire church age and looking at the final seven years.

Remember from Jesus perspective here, the final seven years of this age in which he is sending out his disciples are close at hand. If you bridge the canyon that is the church age and just walk from one side of the cliff to the other, it's a very short distance from where Jesus is to the final seven years. This pertains to the 70th week.

This doesn't happen in Jesus lifetime, but none of the disciples are arrested. None of them stand before kings and governors, none, not, not till after Pentecost. And that's a whole different kettle of fish.

But Jesus says you will. And they're going out on this little journey to these towns and villages with these words ringing in their ears. What does he mean? This is further training and experience for what they or their kind are going to do in the 70th week.

In the 70th week, they will be arrested. They will be scourged. They will be arrested and brought before governors and kings all over the place.

This mission is much safer and it's preparation in a sense for that that comes later. That's what's happening with us now. We have preparation now for greater service in the future.

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. Now he's already told them for this mission, what they should say, what should they say? It's easy.

It's only one line. It's like a bit part kingdom of heaven is at hand. It's like Jonah yet 40 days.

None of it will be destroyed. This one is easy later on. There's going to be an opportunity for greater witness and more fulsome communication.

And it will be given to you in that hour. What you should say. I've given to you what to say on this mission.

Later on, it's going to be different for it is not you who speak, but the spirit of your father who speaks in you. Holy spirit speaking. We're not yet in the age of the spirit.

Are we? Jesus gives a special dispensation of the spirit. You get the idea that this authority that he gives them is the same power by which he did his miracles. How did Jesus in his humanity performed the miracles that he performed? God, the Holy spirit.

How are the disciples going to do it? It's implied in the early part of the chapter when he gives them authority. It's the Holy spirit and they're going to go forth in that power. Spirit of your father speaks in you.

Now brother will deliver up brother to death. You remember the list? How many brothers are in this, in this group? Peter and Andrew are brothers. James and John are brothers.

It's been suggested in some of the early church fathers say that some of these other disciples, these teams were brothers. They say that, uh, uh, James, the less and Thaddeus were brothers. And an early church tradition says that, that, that there were, you know, quite a few brother groups here.

So when Jesus says brother will deliver brother up to death and a father, his child, what's he talking about here? Brother will deliver brother to death talking about the 12 he's talking to. That's a scary thing. But what is he actually talking about in the 70th week? And we have this in other passages where children betray their parents.

And this is in the audience to whom they are sent. Well, this is not the case in the Israel of Jesus day. It will be the case in the Israel of the tribulation where there is such pressure and such hostility and people are forced to take sides and to survive.

They either have to flee to the Hills or take the mark. And it's going to be like a health crisis in the sense that, well, I believe I'm doing a good thing by turning you in. This is for the greater good.

I have an ethical, moral, justifiable reason to betray my brother or to betray my parents. Uh, I'm, I'm a child of the state here. And I believe that what the state says is best.

Jesus is describing the last days. Children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. There's no hint of this happening in these days.

Is there none whatsoever? This is later. You will be hated by all for my namesake, but he who endures to the end will be saved. Notice how we're talking about a completely different situation in a completely different time.

This is the beginning and the inception of an effort that is going to continue to and through the 70th week when they persecute in this city, flee to another. What did he say up above verse 14, whoever will not receive you nor hear your words. When you depart from that house or city on your own recognizance and, and by your own free will shake the dust off your feet.

Now what's he saying there, persecute you in this city, flee to another different time, different situation, different, different mission. For surely I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the son of man comes. If it wasn't clear before now, right? What do you mean? You will not have gone through before the son of man

comes.

They're going to go and come back in a few weeks or a couple of months and report back to the Lord Jesus. He didn't come. He didn't go anywhere.

He's going to remain and do some things and they're going to go out and come back. What's this talking about? We have lifted up and flown across the church age into those final days. The 144,000 witnesses, 12,000 from each tribe are going to come back to these instructions and follow them to the letter.

That's why they're here. And they're also here for our application for our instruction. What is physical for Israel is spiritual for us.

There are times when we're going to hit opposition. There are times when we're not going to be sure what we should say and our job might be on the line. Somebody who is in a position of authority or determining our fate will be in opposition.

Here's your guidance. Don't try to build a big case. Don't see lawyer.

Don't see if you can argue your way out of it. Don't get defensive. Just trust God.

Be sure that you're amenable and susceptible to the ministry of his Holy Spirit. The Spirit will guide you when you need guidance. The Spirit will give you words when you need words.

You realize you're going to be talking to someone and maybe their salvation is on the line. Maybe their spiritual progress is on the line. Think, Oh, what should I do? Let me read a book.

Let me get a track. Let me hand them a website. Just relax, pray and let God the Holy Spirit guide when it is time to communicate.

That's our opportunity. And it's going to be on familiar ground. Jesus is sending these out on familiar ground.

We minister and function on familiar ground. Relax. Keep your peace.

Share your peace. If someone is unresponsive, your peace just draws back within yourself. And often you need it because it's a disappointment or it's a challenge or there's there's awkwardness in the wake of it.

Just keep your peace. Wonderful fruit for reflection and meditation and application in these physical instructions when it comes to our spiritual practice. Well, we're going to pick up here in verse 24 next time.

A disciple is not above his master. Why does Jesus bring that up at this point? Why would

they think they were? So we've got the remainder of the chapter, which we'll endeavor to cover next Sunday. But let's close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for the preservation of these wonderful instructions and teachings from the Lord Jesus, his example, his working with the disciples. We thank you for the Holy Spirit and the opportunities and capacities that we have in this life.

And we pray that as we reflect on what we've seen in this portion of your word, that God, the Holy Spirit will minister to our hearts, give us perception, insight and understanding, help us to see the pertinence and application in our own lives so that we can live in a way that bears fruit and reflects the glory of the Lord Jesus, both now and in the ages to come. We pray these things in Jesus name. Amen.