

Matthew 20-05-24a

Welcome to the Sunday morning services at Grace and Truth Bible Church. It is a privilege to look out upon the sea of faces here and see the group. We're able to do, you know, maintain proper distances here and assemble our group in a safe and happy fashion.

We're going to be continuing this morning our study in the gospel of Matthew, picking up in chapter 10. Today is the 24th of May, 2020. And in our study of the gospel of Matthew, we have come to this portion in chapter 10 where Jesus is sending out the 12.

We've looked at it for a couple of weeks now. We'll be concluding that and moving into chapter 11. If I succeed in my plan, let's take a moment as we approach the study of God's word to ask his blessing on our fellowship, to cultivate the ministry of his spirit and to seek to glorify his son, the Lord Jesus.

Shall we pray? Father, we are grateful for this opportunity to spend time together, to gather at the oasis of your word and find refreshment from the cool springs of living water that renew us and revitalize us and point our attention in the direction that is fruitful and productive in your plan and purpose for us. We thank you for the many ways that you have provided for us and protected us and carried us along and have challenged us with circumstances to encourage the growth of our faith and the concentration of our focus on important things. We pray that as we look at this part of your word this morning, that the Holy Spirit will impress it on each of our hearts, help us to see where it is pertinent for us, where it is applicable, give us wisdom to find those paths of righteousness that we should be walking to gather that harvest of righteousness by faith that the Lord Jesus spoke of at the beginning of this section.

And we pray that in all things, he will be glorified in our fellowship, in our conversation, and in the outcome in our lives. As we look at his words this morning, we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

As I said, we're picking up in Matthew chapter 10 and there is a breakdown here into two primary sections. The first is the commission for sending out the 12, which after he has named them in the first few verses there, he sends them out in verse 5 and gives them specific commands about how they should behave as they travel and what they should do, where they should go. So do not go in the way of the Gentiles, do not enter a city of the Samaritans.

This is really important. It's really important. It's important for our application.

And here's why. Sometimes Jesus will give instructions and teaching and guidance that is specific to a group or a person. He can heal lepers and send them to the priest.

He can instruct people to go home and remain quiet about a healing. These are specific instructions at specific times for a specific outcome in that moment, in that situation. Other times he gives guidance and we can still look at that and we can observe it, interpret it, and draw an application of a particular kind.

And we're careful to understand that I am not a cleansed leper, but should I still be thankful? You remember the 10 that Jesus cleansed and one came back to thank him? Uh, that's a specific instance, but we can still, we can always draw application, but it's a different kind of application. What I want to suggest as our first point of observation this morning, uh, is something I introduced last time, but these instructions in verses 5 through 15 are specific to the 12 as they go to Israel, not to the Gentiles, not to the Samaritans. And these instructions specifically deal with the audience.

Who is the audience? How much should you take with you as you go to that audience? Because they are going to be judged based on how well they provide for the messengers. A workman is worthy of his hire. If they do not recognize that and compensate these particular messengers with this particular message at this particular time, they will be judged.

Assuredly I say to you, verse 15, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for the city that rejects this mission and these messengers. Specifics, right? Now, beginning at verse 16, he's continuing to give guidance, but this guidance is of a different kind. It has a more general outlook and a more general application.

And it, this guidance is common guidance. It's not specific to this mission. How do I know that? Well, we've seen this context.

We've read this chapter through a couple of times. You remember, Jesus names the disciples. He sends forth the disciples and he says, I send you a sheep in the midst of wolves.

Be wise as serpents, harmless as doves. Beware of men. You'll be brought before governors and Kings.

Don't worry about what you're going to say. The spirit will help you. Brother will deliver up brother.

Children will rise up against their parents. This is verse 21. You'll be hated by all for my namesake.

Verse 22, when they persecute you, verse 23, uh, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the son of man comes. He's, he's here. He's talking to them.

What does he mean? You will have not finished fleeing from one city to another,

delivering this message until the son of man comes. This is looking at a different time and a different mission than this one. And I know this is the case because this is the context for these instructions about synagogues and councils and standing before Kings and having the words given to you.

But if you keep your finger here and turn over to, uh, the gospel of Mark, Mark gives the sending forth of the disciples in verse six, chapter six, verses seven through 13. Just take a quick look at, uh, don't lose your place in Matthew, but look at Mark chapter six and go down to verse seven. He called the 12 to himself and began to send them out two by two, gave them power over unclean spirits, uh, talks about what they should take and how they should expect to be treated in the towns to which they go, right? That's the sending of the 12.

That's our same. That's a parallel to our passage in Matthew 10, but sending them out as sheep in the midst of wolves, you've got to flip over three or four pages to Mark chapter 13, go all the way over to Mark chapter 13. And by the way, Mark chapter 11 is the tragic entry, the Sunday before the crucifixion.

That's Mark 11. See that as you pass by, they call it the triumphal entry, withering of the fig tree, cleansing of the temple that's in Mark chapter 11. In Mark chapter 12, Jesus is going to tell some parables.

He's going to confront the Sadducees that he's going to tell the, uh, disciples to beware of the scribes in, uh, 1238, but you've got to go all the way over to 13 verse nine. Watch out for yourselves. This is Mark 13, nine, watch out for yourselves for they will deliver you up to councils and you will be beaten in the synagogues.

You will be brought before rulers and Kings for my sake, for a testimony to them. The gospel must first be preached to all the nations. When they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand or premeditate what you will speak, but whatever is given to you in that hour, speak that for it is not you who speak, but the Holy spirit.

Now, brother will betray brother to death and a father, his child, children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. And you will be hated by all for my namesake. But he, you endure us to the end.

We say very similar. Some of it is word for word. The same as what we have in Matthew chapter 10, right? But this is a completely different setting.

Much, much later. This is a couple of years after the sending out of the 12 same guidance. So what does that tell us? And you could do the same in Luke.

If I had time, we could go over to Luke and see that in Luke chapter nine, we have the sending out of the 12 and it isn't until Luke chapter 21 that you have the parallel of this material that we have in chapter 10 verses 16 and following. So what does that tell us?

Two different ways to observe, interpret, and apply. We, first of all, look at this mission of the 12 and the specifics.

Then beginning in verse 16, we say, well, this is more general guidance. That's not limited to or restricted to this particular group or this particular mission. It has wider scope, wider application.

You say, well, okay, so what? Well, here's what in Matthew's setting and the reason it is incorporated here in Matthew's gospel, because this is the one we're looking at. We've already done Mark. We've already done Luke.

We've already done John. But in Matthew, this material that in the other gospels is tied to predictions about the end times. In those early twenties chapters of Luke is where you have the parallel to Matthew chapter 24, which is the coming of the son of man.

But we haven't pushed up here. Why? It's very interesting to me that Matthew under the guidance of the Holy Spirit has brought it up here. And here's why.

Do not go into the way of the Gentiles and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. So this guidance is for the disciples as they go to their brethren. Now, what do we know about their brethren? Who are they assumed to be? Who does Jesus say they are? They are the sheep of Israel.

They're lost sheep, but they're sheep. They are God's sheep. They're not goats.

They're not to be converted or one in the sense of coming to God and believing in God. These are believers in short. They're believers.

Did you hear what I just said? This message going to the villages, whether or not to shake the dust off their sandals, what is the response of believers to the communication of the word of God that is pertinent at that time? It's a message for the time, but it is the word of God and it is the exercise of gifting. Jesus gave them verse one power. Jesus gave them power.

You have been given a gift. Your gift is designed to function for the benefit of the blessing of the support of the encouragement of fellow believers. Your spiritual gift with the possible exception of evangelism is designed to benefit and bless other believers.

Our presence as we are sent into our circumstances, into our families, into our workplace, into our school life, into our social life, into our periphery, we are sent and we possess this gift. So what do we know about the gift? It is designed for the blessing and the benefit of those around us. Now, if you want an interesting experience, you can begin to look at conflict within the Christian community, within the Christian church, within Christianity in general.

You can go out and do a search on the web. If you're not familiar with this already, those of us that have, you know, ongoing personal and professional connections to denominational Christianity or to formal Christianity publications, churches, denominations, conventions, conferences are already well aware of this. But if you are blessed enough to be living in something of a germ-free bubble, when it comes to contention and strife in the Christian church, you can easily, all you have to do is put in Christians attacking each other in any search engine and you will get pages of denominational infighting and splits within churches and controversies, or like they say on PBS, controversies in Christianity, large and small.

And most of these go unreported because they're just fraternal squabbling that doesn't make the paper, but there is a lot of fighting amongst believers. That's what Jesus is talking about here. Read again, beginning at verse 16, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, but who did he send them to? The lost sheep of the house of Israel.

But your sheep and those lost sheep are actually wolves. They're wolves in sheep's clothing, but the wolves that he is sending them out among the synagogues where they're going to be arrested, the councils, that's Sanhedri is the word translated councils. This is Jewish.

These are their brethren. This is why he says, they deliver you up. Verse 21, brother will deliver up brother to death and a father, his child.

We're not talking about evangelists going to the Gentiles and being persecuted for spreading the gospel around the world. Jesus is warning the disciples and Matthew moves this material next to this mission on purpose under the ministry of the Holy spirit. Why? We are being warned.

It's easy. How many times we take warning passages and say, well, those are the unbelievers, love spots on your feast and darkness, which is outside weeping, wailing, nationally, those poor unbelievers. And we, we push it aside and we don't, we don't apply it to ourselves.

This happens with this chapter in the same way we say, well, these are, you know, uh, Jim Elliott going to the Alcas and getting speared on the, on the riverbed. And, uh, these are people persecuted overseas and, uh, in, uh, countries where the gospel is suppressed and that no, this says brother against brother, child against parent. I've not come to bring peace, but a sword and a man's enemies will be the members of his own household, his own household.

Now I find this interesting because we say, well, but in the Christians don't typically deliver each other up to death. Remember our rule of thumb on observing, interpreting, and applying when it comes to looking at what happens in Israel as the physical earthly people of God and the materiality of their rituals, their sacrifices, their laws, their

requirements, the way they dress and so on. And these are rendered symbolically for us into spiritual terms.

So rather than actually killing, you know, you're, you're in danger for the intent, the thought, and there are Christians who hate other Christians, uh, to the extent that it is essentially no different than murder in God's eyes, the spite dissension and, uh, similar divisive attitudes and treatment within the realm of those who call themselves Christians and to be a believer, striving to be faithful and obedient, paying attention to what the word of God says, seeking prayerfully to implement it in your daily life. Uh, you are sheep sent out in the midst of wolves in the sense of the larger Christian community. Now, some of us are fairly isolated.

Everybody's been somewhat isolated here recently, but we're privileged to be so because in much of the Christian world, it is as much as your life is worth. You can be professionally assassinated. You can be destroyed, uh, with the political infighting, with the, uh, things that, uh, Paul is going to talk about.

And we'll look at here shortly in terms of what brother does to brother, what children do to elders and vice versa, the lack of unity, the lack of love, the things that Paul chastised the Corinthian church for. I hear that there are wars and divisions among you wars. What happens in wars? Well, in a real war, people die in a spiritual war.

It's just as bad, but it's spiritual assassination. It's spiritual disintegration. It's spiritual failure and defeat.

Well, that's what this chapter warns us about. Don't think this is the world that is outside. It's not.

Jesus is not talking here about those who are outside. He told them, don't go to the Gentiles and don't go to the Samaritans, go to your own people. And you're going to be like sheep among wolves.

Your own people are the wolves. Now, lest you think I'm stretching a point here. Um, look down at verse 34.

Do not think that I come to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword for I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. This is not the random Gentile unconverted lost souls of the world.

This is family, right? And a man's enemies will be those of his own household. Now, what do we know? What, what's, what have I suggested to you as a favorite thing? Anytime we see an old Testament quote in the new Testament, what is it? It's a footnote, right? It's, it's an opposite. See the citation, right? Where is this from? This is from Micah chapter seven.

So Jesus has this, this verse, these verses on his mind when he's talking to the disciples, right? Why would Micah's scroll be on Jesus mind? What would bring this particular thing to his mind? Is he just proof texting? Is he pulling a couple of verses out? We've seen that that never happens, right? It's always important to go back. And this is just shorthand. Jesus essentially is suggesting, go back and read Micah.

So you might put a bookmark into Matthew chapter 10 here, and let's turn back to Micah chapter seven. What is Jesus talking about? When he says, your enemies are going to be in your own household. For us, this is the household of faith.

This is within the Christian circle. So you go back, don't often get to visit Micah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum. Let's begin in chapter six.

Hear now what the Lord says, arise, plead your case before the mountains and let the hills hear your voice. Hear O you mountains, the Lord's complaint and you strong foundations of the earth. For the Lord has a complaint against his people and he will contend with Israel.

Micah in general is a strong rebuke. Micah lived in the days of Hezekiah and the two Kings that immediately preceded him. Hezekiah is the King of Judah.

You remember from Kings and Prophets, the Northern kingdom is basically gone. This is circa 700 BC down into the sixes. Oh, my people, Micah six, three.

What have I done to you? This is Micah talking to the remnant of the Northern kingdom and to Judah primarily. How have I worried you? I brought you up from the land of Egypt. I redeemed you from the house of bondage.

I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. Oh, my people, remember what Balak, King of Moab, counseled and what Balaam, the son of Baor, answered him from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the righteousness of the Lord, that you may know the righteousness of the Lord. What is the difference? Did God stand up for Israel when Balak tried to get them cursed? Did God rebuke them when Balaam sent the Moabite women into the camp to seduce them? There is a difference between the opposition and the people of faith.

And God calls his people to be the people of faith. And even within the camp, you've got to watch that you don't have Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, that you don't have those who rise up, you know, sit down to eat and rise up to play and so on. There is sin in the camp.

Look at verse six. With what shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? And of course, the answer to that is you can't. There is nothing you can do.

There is nothing you can give. There is no way you can atone or recompense for sin. God has shown you, oh man, what is good.

And what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God? Daily faith and obedience. That's what is good. It's not a matter of simply recognizing sin and trying to bring a sacrifice, offer another lamb or a ram or a horn of oil.

The Lord's voice cries to the city. Wisdom shall see your name. Hear the rod.

Who has appointed it? Discipline and judgment are coming. And you remember that this is a part of the gospel that Jesus entrusted to his disciples, that John the Baptist began to preach. He said, change your mind.

The kingdom of heaven is at hand, but why do they need to change their mind? Why isn't it just, hooray, the kingdom of heaven is at hand? Why isn't that the gospel? What's the message? What's the first word of the gospel message from John the Baptist, from Jesus, and from the disciples? What's the first word? Repent. Why does that have to be the first word? If the people were doing what they were supposed to, there would be no need for change of mind. Hear the rod.

This is the voice of wisdom. The rod is coming. Remember, John, the ax is laid at the root of the trees.

He's going to burn the chaff with unquenchable fire and gather the wheat into his barn. I was telling somebody yesterday, you know, and this is free, no charge. The science is ongoing in trying to figure out why we have a pandemic in this country of obesity.

Over 70% of Americans are obese, not just slightly overweight, obese, 70%, upwards of 70%. Seven out of 10 people are overweight. Why is that? They've been trying to figure it out.

Well, in just the last few years, they have begun to figure it out. And there's different ones you can read or hear who will talk about and will collate and bring together these studies and explain what it is. But, and I'm not far afield from my subject, because I'm talking about chaff.

We've been told for years that, well, a healthier bread for you Boo on Wonder Bread. That white bread is bad for you. What's better is whole wheat.

Whole wheat. Well, come to find out. Thank you, scientists telling us the wonders of multi-grain whole wheat bread.

The darker, the better and all of that. Gluten, to which everybody has a sensitivity and many people are highly allergic, is one of a family of things called lectins, L-E-C-T-I-N-S,

lectins. And from ancient times, what did people do when they harvested wheat or barley and other grains for that matter? What did they do? Muzzle not the ox that does what? Treads out the grain.

And what did they do? They got the husks off, got the chaff off, ground the kernels into flour and ate that, right? What are we doing now with our quote unquote healthy bread? We're not doing it the biblical way. They're leaving the husk on, grinding it all up and selling that, which is economically better for the seller because he's stretching, he's making powder out of husks. The problem is the chaff, the husk is packed full of these lectins.

It's huge amounts of the gluten family, if you will, these proteins that in the same way that you've got a blood brain barrier that keeps things in your bloodstream from damaging your brain, there is also a gut body barrier and your intestinal tract is designed to only let certain things through. In a nutshell, lectins poke holes in that barrier and that's what they call leaky gut. When you have leaky gut, you have diabetes.

Look at a chart of diabetes. It's like the hockey stick graph. Diabetes in this country is off the chart, off the chain, off the hook.

Childhood diabetes, every different kind of diabetes. They can't figure out, I don't know why they can't figure it out. Look at every label that says corn syrup.

If you took every piece of grocery item out of the store that said corn syrup, the thing would be nine tenths empty. Everything's chucked full of corn syrup and it's a cheap, nasty sweetener that's poison in your system. Anything left in there is still got genetically modified wheat that's got 20 times the gluten that the bread had when I was growing up in the 60s and 70s, 20 times the gluten.

And everybody is inflamed by gluten. It's an inflammatory molecule. Lectins inflame the lining of your gut.

They poke holes in it and stuff, poison gets into your system creating inflammation. Inflammation creates arthritis, plaque, plaque in your brain. Why do we have this sudden ubiquitous level of early onset senility and Alzheimer's and the rest of it, inflammation in the brain, and it's the food we eat? I say that to say, if you're going to eat something made from wheat, try to find some wheat that's not genetically modified and doesn't have 20 times the poison in it.

I've gone off bread some years ago, as most of you know, and people would say, well, but bread's in the Bible, not this bread, not the poison bread that's on the shelves now. But part of the problem is so much of this is now made with whole grain flour, whole wheat, and they're grinding the husks, which have got a much higher concentration of these poisonous substances in them. And they say, well, it's good for roughage.

Well, you need to get your roughage another way because it's just terrible. This is why God burns the chaff. God knows what's edible and what's not.

And he didn't genetically modify the wheat to be poisonous the way ours is. This is man's gift to man. But the rod is coming and the chaff is going to be burned with unquenchable fire.

The axe is laid at the root of the trees. That's why the gospel message that Jesus sent out here is change your mind. Your minds need changing because judgment is coming.

If your mind does not change, did their minds change when Jesus sent the disciples out by and large? No, there was a remnant, but most of them did not. And so judgment came and the nation of Israel was destroyed. The temple in Israel was destroyed.

Jerusalem was destroyed. So here the rod, verse nine of Micah six, who has appointed it? Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked and the short measure, which is an abomination, unfairness, cheating, deception. Shall I count pure with wicked scales and with a bag of deceitful weights for her rich men are full of violence.

Her inhabitants have spoken lies and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth. Therefore, I will also make you sick by striking you by making you desolate because of your sins. You shall eat, but not be satisfied.

Hunger shall be in your midst. You may carry some away, but shall not save. It won't be preserved.

And what you do rescue, I will give over to the sword. You shall sow, but not reap. You shall tread the olives, but not anoint yourself with oil.

Make sweet wine, but not drink wine for the statutes of Omri are kept. All the work of Ahab's house are done. And you walk in their councils.

You remember Ahab and Omri were two of the wickedest Kings in, in the Northern kingdom. And I will make you a desolation and your inhabitants, a hissing, and you shall bear the reproach of my people. My people are going to bear reproach.

That's the context of Micah chapter seven. Whoa, is me. I am like those who gather summer fruits, like those who glean vintage grapes.

There's no cluster to eat of the first ripe fruit that my soul desires. The faithful man has perished from the earth. There is no one upright among men.

They lie in wait for blood. Every man hunts his brother with a net. The man hunts his brother with a net that they may successfully do evil with both hands.

The Prince asks for gifts. The judge seeks a bribe. The great man utters his evil desire.

They scheme together. The best of them is like a briar. The most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge.

The day of your watchman and your punishment comes now shall be their perplexity. Do not put trust in a friend. Do not put your confidence in a companion.

Guard the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your bosom. For son dishonors father, daughter rises against her mother, daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. A man's enemies are the men of his own household.

That's what Jesus quotes. So what's he talking about? This idea that, well, the missionaries need to be careful is not the application for you and me. We need to be careful of our associations within that which calls itself Christianity and be careful that we have changed our minds and have abandoned this kind of practice.

When we come back from the break, we're going to look at Paul's guidance on this same topic. It dovetails perfectly and beautifully with what Jesus is warning the disciples about. Their brethren in Israel are going to be their enemies, the wolves who deliver them up, family members, children delivering their parents, and brother against brother.

It's interesting to me that it says the son dishonors the father, daughter rises against her mother, daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And so if you're a man, both the father and the mother are in the enemy camp because you're married to a woman and her mother-in-law, which is your mother, is so generational splits, generational divisions. And we've decried the fact in the past that the education system in this country sows those seeds into young minds that the previous generation was fatally flawed, brainwashed, didn't know what they were doing, didn't know what they were talking about.

You can't trust them. Don't listen to them. They were benighted.

They were ignorant. They didn't know what we know. They didn't know how to raise children.

Their religious beliefs are certainly something to be impugned and discarded and set aside. They're unscientific and so on. And dividing that essential chain of custody of parents training up their children in the way that they should go is essential to the spread of evil.

And it happens in the household of faith. And it's something to watch for. We need to cultivate that unity.

And this is something Paul talks about. So we're going to pause here and take our break.

When we come back, we're going to return to Matthew chapter 10.

And then we're going to look at something Paul has to say on this subject. He has a lot to say in a lot of places. We're just going to look at one of them and it will make the point for us very effectively.

But let's pause here and take our break.