



SMALL GROUP CURRICULUM

Sermon: **"Outlaws for Jesus" (Matthew 10:16-20)**

Date: **October 13, 2019**

At this point in the book of Matthew, Jesus has appointed his twelve apostles and is in the midst of commissioning them to go out and to preach the message of the kingdom to the lost sheep of Israel. Jesus has some very important instructions for his disciples before he sends them out into the world. We will look specifically at what he has to say to them in Matthew 10:16-20. In this week's study, we learn that the disciples can expect opposition when they go into the world to proclaim the gospel. Gospel proclamation is a dangerous work. And we must remember that we too have been sent into the world to proclaim the gospel. Thus, the principles found in this text directly apply to the ministry we've been called to as well. Telling people about Jesus is a dangerous mission. We can expect hostility and opposition. Persecution will come to those who live as faithful witnesses to the truth. Therefore, we will learn that we must be wise, we must beware, we must be ready, and we must always be trusting in Jesus.

What you need for this study: Bible, Notebook, Pen

Individual Bible Study

1. Please read Matthew 10:16-20 and ensure that you've listened to Sunday's sermon.
 - a. In verse 16, Jesus brings up the imagery of "sheep" again. What has been said about sheep thus far in the previous few sections of Matthew (particularly at the end of chapter 9 and beginning of chapter 10)?
 - b. What does Jesus mean when he says that his disciples are being sent out like "sheep in the midst of wolves," (v. 16)?
 - c. Jesus tells his disciples to be as "wise as serpents," (v. 16). What does this mean? How does the Bible portray serpents (see Genesis 3:1 and Proverbs 10:39)?
 - d. Jesus also tells his disciples to be as "innocent as doves," (v. 16). What does this mean?
 - e. Why does Jesus warn his disciples to "beware of men" in verse 17?
 - f. Jesus warns that they will "be dragged before governors and kings...to bear witness before them," (v. 18). What are some examples of how this warning was fulfilled (i.e. John 18:28-40, Acts 4, Acts 12:1-5, etc)?



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- g. In verse 18, what is the significance of the words “for my sake” and how should this motivate us to be faithful in the face of persecution?
- h. What command does Jesus give his disciples in verse 19?
- i. What does Jesus promise his disciples in v. 19b-20? How does this promise encourage you?

Group Discussion Questions

1. How did the Holy Spirit speak to you through the sermon and the Bible study this week?
2. Why do you think our gospel proclamation is often met with hostility and opposition?
3. How can we practically apply the principle to be “wise as serpents” and “innocent as doves” when it comes to evangelism (v. 16)? What does this mean and how might this apply to us?
4. What promises can we cling to when the threat of persecution is a very real reality? How can we obey Christ’s command to not be anxious (v. 19)?
5. How does v. 19b-20 encourage you when you think about evangelism and persecution? Why is it important to believe this promise when it comes to our gospel witness?
6. Is there a situation or relationship in your life where you know you need to share the gospel but the fear of opposition has prevented you from doing so? How can you overcome this fear in Christ and be faithful to speak on his behalf? How can we hold you accountable to do so?