

Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ **The 1st Mission Trip, Part 2**

Last several times...to regain our context after a 2 week layoff...

Matt 9:35-38

Jesus begins His 3rd preaching/teaching tour of Galilee

The Good Shepherd sees the people

- as only God can (physically, emotionally, spiritually)
- with the heart of God – compassion, kindness in action

The harvest is...everywhere!

The laborers are...few

- Jesus Himself
- His 12 disciples

The call to action: pray

- God's will done on earth, starting with a change of heart by the one praying
- He will send laborers in His harvest
- Here am I Lord, send me

Matt 10:1-15

Jesus commissions and organizes the 1st Mission Trip without Him

The 12 disciples are given power and authority, the mission, the message, and operational instructions...

- being totally dependent upon Him
- to the Jew first, faithful to keep His promises

This time...Jesus continues with instruction for

1. these 1st mission teams at this point in His ministry

yet instruction also for

2. us today, the Church as His witnesses on earth

Great Commission in Matt 28:19-20

Acts 1:1 (all that Jesus began both to do and teach)

3. Israel as His witnesses on earth, during the DoL

We are in Matt 10

v16 sheep in the midst of wolves:

Jesus is sending His disciples (12, us, Israel) into the mission field of Galilee and gives them a straightforward, matter-of-fact, realistic expectation

- they are to go as sheep
 - meek and mild and gentle
 - utterly dependent upon their Shepherd...Him
 - not independent “attack sheep” or “Special Ops sheep”
- they are sent
 - to sheep (v6)
 - to their people, the Jews
 - in the Galilee, where they live
 - to wolves
 - fierce and cunning hunters
 - carnivores that eat sheep
 - Matt 7:15...in sheep’s clothing (discernment req’d)
 - Pharisees
 - Scribes plotting to kill The Lamb
 - Sadducees
 - Acts 20:29...Judaizers, false teachers
 - enemies/unbelievers

With this hint as to how they/we will be received, how are His sheep to carry themselves as they/we go into “hostile territory” as His ambassadors?

serpents...doves:

wise as serpents

- prudent vs naïve or foolish
- expect to be hated (only good snake is a dead snake!)
- aware of their/our surroundings...eyes open, alert

harmless as doves:

- simple and innocent
- taking no care, anxious for nothing (Phil 4:6)
- not weary in well doing, in due season reaping if faint not (Gal 6:9)
- bless them which persecute you/us (Rom 12:14, Matt 5:44)
- overcome evil with good (Rom 12:21)
- a soft answer turns away wrath (Prov 15:1)

Walk by the light of the Word, in gentleness and meekness

We are to use our head, to have keen senses...especially spiritual senses

This is a spiritual battle the Good Shepherd/Lord of hosts must fight in the hostile territory ruled by that serpent Satan

v17-18 Beware of men:

Be on guard, be aware, do not be surprised, regarding your fellow man
Just as Jesus was

John 2:23-25 many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all *men*, And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.

John 5:41 I receive not honor from men

Men...unbelievers/wolves...will

- deliver you, the ambassadors of Christ, to the civil and religious authorities
- scourge/beat you in the houses of worship (Religion)
- put you on trial as enemies of the State before governors and kings (Gov't)

Neither Gov't nor Religion are friends of God's servants

- the prophets
- John the Baptist
- Jesus Christ Himself
- Apostles (Acts 9:16)
- disciples/followers/believers throughout Church history even unto today when evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived (2 Tim 3:13)

for My sake...both Gov't and Religion are threatened by the KoK and LoL
They consider the words of Jesus to be "hate speech" and "intolerant"

Why will the disciples of Jesus brought before Gov'ts and Religions of the world?

- to testify against them...v7, Acts 4:12
- to share their personal testimonies of "I once was blind but now I see, I once was lost but now I'm found"
- to preach the Gospel of grace, the message of hope in a hopeless world

Jesus does not want His disciples (sheep!) to be caught off guard or surprised when they witness of Him

Persecution is forewarned

Part and parcel of the mission and the message:

persecution (2 Tim 3:10-12) and tribulation (Acts 14:22)

But...God is with them/us whom He sends

v19-20 take no thought...speak:

When (not if) the forewarned, even promised, persecution happens,

- do not defend yourself, clamoring for your civil rights and for the freedoms of speech and religion...be as a sheep led to the slaughter
- do not spend any time and effort in advance preparing speeches... the Holy Spirit will give you the words God wants to speak thru you when you need them
 - JIT words, straight from our Father which is in heaven, Who sees and cares
 - inspired and effective words
 - the wisdom of God
 - boldness and fear-less

Peter in Acts 2, 3, 4, 5

Stephen in Acts 7

before wolves, councils

Paul in Acts 23:1-11 (v6-9)

We just need concern ourselves with getting the Word of God “in” and then “out” before that time comes

v21-22 brother...father...children...all:

Across the spectrum of time, from this point until He returns to earth as King and Judge. not only will Gov't and Religion turn on/hate Jesus Christ's disciples/ambassadors/witnesses, so will their families!

The Gospel of the Kingdom of God...

the sign being lifted up is Jesus Christ and Him crucified... is offensive and divisive and “ear tingling”, not “ear tickling” and warm and fuzzy

Jesus Christ, the Servant of God, is the Father's Change Agent

Jesus Christ changes everything, including every relationship of every follower

Priorities and loyalties are changed

Blood becomes thicker than blood...”family” gets redefined

(Matt 12:47-50, John 1:11-13)

Jesus Christ will divide families...even more on that next week

Yet this promise of God: endure/be faithful/persevere to the end and

be saved/preserved from the wrath of an offended God on wolves/enemies

A choice must be made: offended family now or an offended God for all of eternity

Heb 11:24-27, 32-40

This is the patience/perseverance of the saints (Rev 14:12) –
to keep the faith of Jesus while being hated for Jesus' sake...
just as Jesus was hated (John 15:18)

Most hearers of the Gospel hate it and Jesus Christ...
and Jesus Christ's messengers, who bear the brunt of the reaction
He wants them/us to know this up front so we are not surprised when it happens
Count the cost...be resolved to be faithful to the Lord and His Gospel

This brother vs brother and father vs children will be especially marked in the
last days when Israel is the witness of Jesus Christ on earth
What people are more offended by Jesus Christ and Him crucified than the Jews?

v23 persecute...flee:

Jesus does not instruct His disciples to dig in their heels when they are opposed
and fight their persecutors, the wolves/unbelievers
Instead, He tells them/us to keep moving and sow the seed on other ground

Notice

- again “when”, not “if” we are persecuted
- the calling is hazardous (in the midst of wolves) but it is wise as serpents to flee the danger and continue the calling in the next town/place
 - it was persecution that fueled the engine of Acts 1:8
 - played out in the ministry of the Apostle Paul

What is the meaning of “Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the son of Man be come?”

Notice:

- cities of Israel (vs the world)
- Son of Man (Jesus) come

Possibilities:

1. Then, for these 6 teams of 2 who are the forerunners of Jesus' 3rd Tour of Galilee (Matt 9:35, Matt 10:5-6, Matt 11:1)
“Son of Man” in Matt 12:32
2. Future, for the His sealed servants during DoL (Rev 7, 14)...
“Son of Man” in Dan 7:13, the return to earth by
Jesus Christ the King to judge the world
3. Both

Certainly for then, now, and in the future...

v24-25 disciple...master...servant...lord:

Jesus Christ...Master and Lord...will in His Passion Personally show His
disciples and servants the very fullest meaning of v16-22

The Lamb of God Who came to take away the sin of the world as the Father's
sin sacrifice will know

- wolves
- persecution
- hatred and betrayal of brethren
- hatred of all men

to their fullest; His disciples and servants will know to a lesser extent

The disciple/servant will not escape the reception by the world of their Master and
Lord (John 7:7, John 13:16)

The world will not hate and reject Jesus and then turn around and lovingly
embrace His disciples who come in His name preaching His words
with His authority and power

The world will not slander and falsely accuse Jesus Christ as the prince of the
devils (first in Matt 12:24 and then again in Matt 9:34)
and then esteem His disciples as angels sent from heaven

No, it is sufficient for the disciple to be regarded and treated as his/her Master

Matt 5:10-12

Acts 5:40-42

Phil 1:29

In an article on Fox News this past Friday, a recent study by the Center for
Studies on New Religions, Christians continue to be the most persecuted
people group worldwide, persecuted by Gov'ts and Religions
(Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism).

This is a reality completely ignored by...USA

"There are many places on earth where being a Christian is the most
dangerous thing you can be."

"Those who think of Christianity as a religion of the powerful need to see
that in many places it's a religion of the powerless. And the
powerless deserve to be protected."

Despite these issues, experts say that the faith has continued to flourish
despite growing opposition.

"The persecution of Christians has failed to suppress the faith. On the
contrary, Christianity appears to be rapidly growing beneath the
surface."

[US on List of Christian-persecuting Nations]

Therefore, to His sheep being sent in the midst of wolves, the Good Shepherd has
3 “Fear not”s to help them keep proper priorities and a right perspective

Application

Be wise as serpents

Be harmless as doves

Beware of men

Be not silent

Rejoice, it is enough for the disciple to be as his/her Master

Next week: Fear not and the rest of Jesus’ instructions