

## **Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ**

### **The 1<sup>st</sup> Mission Trip, Part 3**

Last time...Jesus continued with pre-mission instruction for

1. these 1<sup>st</sup> mission teams at this point in His ministry
2. us today, the Church as His witnesses on earth
3. Israel as His witnesses on earth, during the DoL

Jesus matter-of-factly told His disciples what lies ahead: they would

- be sheep in the midst of wolves (sheep-eaters)
- know persecution (Gov't and Religion...worldly power threatened by Him)
- be hated by all men, including family

just as He will be

This time...Jesus continues His instruction for His 12 disciples, us, and Israel during DoL

We are in Matt 10

To His sheep

- being sent in the midst of wolves
  - who will know persecution by society and the hatred of men,
- the Good Shepherd has 3 “Fear not”s to help them/you/us keep proper perspective and priorities

Here in the middle of His instruction, looking back over v1-25...

Honest questions needing honest answers:

- Are you shy or timid or quiet or “reserved”?
- Are you affected by peer pressure?
- Do you care what people think about you?
- Do you want to be liked by everyone...a people-pleaser?
- Do you try to keep the peace so everyone can just get along?
  
- Are you uncomfortable/afraid of talking to family about Jesus Christ?
- Are you uncomfortable/afraid of talking to strangers about Jesus Christ?
- Are you comfortable in your walk with the Lord?

If some/many of those ring true, you are invited to Workers in His Harvest gatherings...

- discipleship/making disciples
- pray
- if want to share Jesus and your faith but don't know how or are fearful
- if do share Jesus and your faith to share how and to encourage others to
- meet every other Sunday after service

v26-27 Fear them not:

1<sup>st</sup> “Fear not” for sheep in the midst of wolves:  
Do not fear the Truth

Gov’t, Religion, the world stands in judgment of the truth...  
as did Pilate before Jesus

John 18:37b-38 To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice.  
Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?

Pilate’s question was philosophical...and rhetorical in that he did not want an answer from Jesus but departed from Jesus to go talk with His accusers  
But the question remains: What is truth?

“Truth” can be very difficult for the common citizen of the world to discern these days because

- “truth” is an agenda
  - a subjective opinion or “correctness” that twists/omits/ re-writes facts
  - not an objective reality based on facts
- truth has died in the street
- evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived

Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd Who goes before us sheep into the midst of wolves, said, “Every one that is **of the truth hears My voice.**”

That means His voice/Word is Truth

John 17:17

His Word...the Truth...

- is absolute and unchanging (believe it or not)
- transcends all time, all cultures, all philosophies, all Gov’t, all Religion, all moral codes, all opinions, all “correctness”

John 14:1, 6, 15-21 [ read slowly, carefully ]

Truth has a name – Jesus Christ

Truth is all-seeing, all-knowing, and all-powerful

Truth is on our side!

The Spirit of Truth is in us!

Truth has set us free from the chains/bondage of this cursed. God-hating world

John 8:31-32, 35

Therefore, as free, fear them not...the wolves who will v17-18, 21-23a, 25b  
Nothing is hidden from the all-seeing/known/powerful God  
The True God knows the Truth  
Truth will be revealed...it is a revelation from the True God

Therefore fear not the Truth but instead proclaim it loudly!  
Our mission/calling: speak the liberating truth in love to those bound in chains

- “What truth I reveal to you in private, proclaim openly for whosoever will hear.”
- “What you hear, by My teaching or later by the small still voice of the Holy Spirit teaching you, preach in public for all to hear.”

How does this play out in everyday life for us missionaries/ambassadors?

- Be observant throughout your busy day, see/hear with the Lord's eyes/ears, thru The Absolute and Unchanging Truth of the Word of God
- Be willing to engage in someone in conversation
- Ask questions...because you care enough to ask and know
- Be mindful to make the Lord and eternal Truth a part of the conversation...because
  - you are ready for eternity and the unbeliever is not
  - you may find yourself in fellowship with a brother in the Lord
  - nothing matters but the Truth after a person's last breath
- Be not fearful to speak about what you see and know...because
  - Truth is on your side
  - Truth wins!

v28 And fear not them:

The 1<sup>st</sup> “Fear not”: Do not fear the Truth  
The 2<sup>nd</sup> “Fear not” for sheep in the midst of wolves:  
What is the worst that could happen?

Fear not them...wolves, the children of the murderer from the beginning...who can merely kill your body (mortal, of dust, for a vapor, as the grass) but cannot touch your soul (immortal that belongs to God...Ezk 18:4a)

Fear the all-powerful God Who is able to kill body and soul, separated from body and then from Him, in hell for all eternity

(which is what happens when a soul takes its last breath not believing the Word of God)

Ps 56:4        In God I will praise His Word, in God I have put my trust;  
I will not fear what flesh can do unto me

a psalm of David, who knew a thing or two about

- sheep
- shepherds
- wolves
- persecution
- being hated and hunted by men

Prov 29:25    The fear of man brings a snare: but whoso puts his trust in  
the LORD shall be safe

words of wisdom from the wisest man

Fear God and not man...

Ex 1:17-21    like the Hebrew midwives  
Dan 3         like Shadrach, Meshech and Abdenego  
Acts 4-5       like Peter and John before the Council  
1 Sam 15:24   unlike King Saul

For the believer who fears God and not man...

John 5:24     Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and  
believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and  
shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death  
unto life.  
2 Tim 1:7     unhealthy fear of death and of man  
1 John 4:18   there is no fear in love, perfect love casts out fear because  
fear has torment

Love is Truth  
Fear is a lie

For the unbeliever who fears man and not God...

2 Thes 2:9-12

The wolves to whom we are sent

2 Thes 2:13-14

The Absolute and Unchanging Truth teaches us that

- the fear of God is a healthy fear...  
and it is rare these days
- the fear of man is an unhealthy fear...  
and it can be found in superabundance these days –  
in the world and in the Church

Therefore, what is the absolute worst case scenario for sheep sent in the midst of wolves?

2 Cor 5:8

Phil 1:20-23

Rom 14:8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

All recorded by Paul, who knew a thing or two about

- being persecuted by Gov't and Religion
- being hated by all men
- Matt 16:24

Also, the lesson of Job: Nothing happens to us apart from the will of God.

God is “bigger” than any man, He is our Defense, Refuge, Fortress, Shield.

A man of God in the will of God is immortal until his work is done

How does this play out in everyday life for us missionaries/ambassadors?

- Trust the all-powerful God, avail yourself of His power
- Walk in love (the love of God is the motive for what you say and do) and His perfect love will cast out fear (of man)
- Lovingly engage people with His power, boldness, fearlessness  
“lovingly” is both action and attitude
  - smile...does not hurt or cost anything, softens others
  - listening,  
because what they are saying is important
  - remembering and saying their name,  
because they are important
  - genuine...  
because phoniness and flattery cannot be disguised
  - gentleness and meekness
  - grace and mercy
  - no condemnation
  - not being offended by the personality...look past it the  
personality trait to the character/person/soul
  - willing to be hurt
  - mindful (have the right/eternal perspective) of their end  
(not ready for eternity) if they reject the gift of God...  
Ps 73:12-21

v29-31 Fear ye not therefore:

The 1<sup>st</sup> “Fear not”: Do not fear the Truth

The 2<sup>nd</sup> “Fear not”: What is the worst that could happen?

The 3<sup>rd</sup> “Fear not” to Jesus’ sheep in the midst of wolves:

Know Whose you are

The combined value of 2 sparrows (most common bird on earth) was less than a penny

God alone knows how many there are exactly...but He does know!

He, the Creator, cares about every one of them;

if He were to stop thinking of even one, it would cease to exist

He knows every time a sparrow dies anywhere in the world

But He cares for us, values us, immeasurably more than many/all the sparrows

He knows everything about us...everything about us is important to Him,  
even the number of hairs on our head (He knows exactly!)

Our value is not wrapped up in

- ourselves
- what we do
- where we live
- what we “have” (according to the Truth, Ps 14:1)
- what others think of us

Our value is wrapped up in Jesus Christ...the great God and Savior who  
paid the very highest price for you and me

“Self esteem” comes from the value God places on me...the blood of His Son...  
not from how I or others feel about myself/me.

We are the children of God...by His power according to His love

Fathers love their children unconditionally

Fathers protect, preserve, prosper their children

Fathers fight for their children

Fathers give their all for their children

We are citizens of His kingdom

John 18:36a

Phil 3:20

Be always mindful of and meditate on how much God loves you...

and be moved into action by His love (Love is active, not passive)

Be true to His love...not be swayed, discouraged by man’s hate

3 “Fear nots” for sheep sent in the midst of wolves

1. Do not fear the Truth
2. What is the worst that could happen?
3. Know Whose you are

With a right perspective and with proper priorities, we march as sheep in the midst of wolves...

- observant to see/hear as the all-seeing/known sees/hears
  - availing ourselves of the power of the all-powerful
- to lovingly tell those who are not ready for (rapidly approaching) eternity that

- Jesus Christ loves them too
- He is their only hope and help with their fear...of death
- invite them to come to church to learn about Him
- give them a Gideon Card...an on line Bible to learn of Jesus

Matt 24:37-51

Honest questions needing honest answers:

- Are you shy or timid or quiet or “reserved”?  
Is that a “showstopper” or just an excuse?
- Are you affected by peer pressure?  
Do you honestly think “they” care about you, or only about themselves?
- Do you care what people think about you?  
Before Whom will you stand to give an account of your life after it is over?
- Do you want to be liked by everyone...a people-pleaser?  
Is it more important to please Self, people, or the all-seeing and all-knowing God?
- Do you try to keep the peace so everyone can just get along?  
How long does that peace last?  
What is the foundation of that “peace”?
- Are you uncomfortable/afraid of talking to family about Jesus Christ?  
What is the worst thing that could happen to you?  
What is the best thing that could happen?  
What will happen to them if you don’t speak up?
- Are you uncomfortable/afraid of talking to strangers about Jesus Christ?  
What is the worst thing that could happen?  
What is the best thing that could happen?
- Are you comfortable in your walk with the Lord?  
Are you being stretched?

## **Application**

Speak the truth in love...speak it plainly and boldly...by the power He gives you to do so

Be instant in season and out of season to share the Gospel (2 Tim 4:2)

Be ready always to give an answer to every man for the hope that lies in you (1 Peter 3:15)

Be willing to stand alone...but never alone or defenseless!

Do not try to be politically correct...because Jesus Christ never is!

Workers in His Harvest gatherings

- Pray...it is why we pray!  
    God's will in heaven being done on earth  
    Our hearts being changed...to receive His heart
- If want to share Jesus and your faith but don't know how or are fearful
- If do share Jesus and your faith to share how and to encourage others to