

## Living Without Fear of Others

Matthew 10:24-33

December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017

Big idea: A disciple of Christ does not need to fear people.

Life can easily be dominated by fear.

Watching the news leads to fear

North Korea, cultural drifts

Planning who you will spend Thanksgiving with can lead to fear

Will there be conflict this year?

Going to school can lead to fear

Kid with a desire to torture you, class you are failing

Thinking about the future can lead to fear

Sometimes fear is good.

If you see a large, aggressive, growling dog through the slats in the gate of a fence, you should be afraid to go in there! Fear can protect us from likely harm.

But often fear dominates and controls our lives in ways that are harmful. It can prevent us from doing things that we know we should do. It can consume us on the inside.

How do we recover and live without fear?

Jesus addresses fear in this discourse with His disciples. But it was a particular kind of fear. It was fear about people who might mock them or harm them as they carried His message as ambassadors.

Ch 10 as instructions before their short term mission trip around Israel with clear applications in many sections beyond their initial ministry.

We'll see here a series of 5 truths that should help us battle against the same type of fear.

1. Be **content** to be like your Teacher. (10:24-25)

a. General truth: A **disciple** should be like his or her **Master**.

i. **Luke 6:40** "A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher.

ii. **John 13:14-16** "If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. <sup>15</sup> "For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. <sup>16</sup> "Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor *is* one who is sent greater than the one who sent him.

iii. We are not like him in our nature in that He is both God and man. However, we are to share His values, His message, His mission, His reliance on the Spirit during His earthly ministry, His commitment to holiness, His commitment to service.

iv. We are to imitate Him as disciples and teach others to do the same.

1. **1 Corinthians 11:1** Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.

2. Illustration a Japanese sword maker, one of only 30 left in the world. "It is my duty to build up a disciple better than me. Otherwise the tradition will wear thin over time." He needs to pass on not just technique but passion so that his disciple will carry on and pass it down to the next generations.
3. The next generation of Christians always needs to be trained to follow Christ as disciples.

v. While those are true principles about discipleship, Jesus pinpoints a very specific application.

b. Specific application: If your Master was mocked, you should expect to be mocked.

- i. But there is a much more specific point of this general truth here in Matthew 10. He was misunderstood and mocked. So we will be misunderstood and mocked.
- ii. This was a vile and strong insult to call Him this, effectively equating Him with Satan himself.
- iii. **Matthew 9:34** But the Pharisees were saying, "He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons."
  1. Tense indicates it was a frequent saying
- iv. 2 Kings 1 we see this is a name for a false, pagan god.
  1. **2 Kings 1:2** "Go, inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, ...
  2. It had become associated with Satan, the leader of demons.

c. This should be enough for us to be treated like Jesus.

- i. **Hebrews 12:3** For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.
- ii. We're part of His household. That's who we are. That's our prime identity.

2. God's truth will be seen as true eventually. (10:26-27)

a. General truth: What is concealed will be revealed.

- i. Almost like a proverb
- ii. **Luke 8:17-18** "For nothing is hidden that will not become evident, nor *anything* secret that will not be known and come to light. <sup>18</sup> "So take care how you listen; for whoever has, to him *more* shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him."
- iii. **1 Corinthians 4:5** Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, *but wait* until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of *men's* hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.
- iv. **1 Timothy 5:24-25** The sins of some men are quite evident, going before them to judgment; for others, their *sins* follow after. <sup>25</sup> Likewise also, deeds that are good are quite evident, and those which are otherwise cannot be concealed.
- v. Certainly see this happening currently in politics and entertainment that abuse and misconduct are being exposed. Ultimately true as people step into eternity. No sin will be hidden. Certainly true before the Lord as we are open and laid bare before the one with which we have to do (Heb. 4:13).

- b. Specific application: **Tell others** what you have learned about Jesus.
    - i. The specific application though of the general principles is that what they have heard privately they will declare publicly. The message was concealed but it will be revealed.
    - ii. The original disciples would have a much broader, more public ministry than Jesus.
    - iii. The things he told them, some of which they didn't understand fully until after the Resurrection, will be taught publicly.
    - iv. Proclaiming on the rooftop referred to the practice of utilizing the flat roofs of Palestinian homes to make declarations to large crowds.
    - v. Encouraged this week as I was preparing this on Thursday to see several people manning a table outside our campus building, interacting and sharing the gospel with students. Later I met up with a guy who had been sharing Christ with someone at work and with someone else at an appointment this week.
  - c. Eventually, God's truth will win the day. When people are face to face with their Maker, what will they wish you would have told them earlier? Let that question override your fear.
3. If you **fear** God, there is no need to **fear** man. (10:28)
- a. The worst thing a person could do, Jesus is saying here, is kill you.
    - i. Ok, that sounds pretty bad.
    - ii. But that is only your body. And that isn't all that there is to you. There is an eternal, immaterial aspect to every person known as the soul. That lives on after death in one of two places – hell or heaven.
  - b. God alone has the ability and authority to determine your eternal existence.
    - i. **Revelation 20:14-15** Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. <sup>15</sup> And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.
    - ii. Jesus will say in a moment that eternity hinges on what we do with Him.
    - iii. Eternity is at stake and we should care more about what God thinks than what man thinks. That's it.
  - c. Asking "What's the worst that can happen?" is a great way to deal with fear.
    - i. Afraid to try out for basketball? What's the worst that can happen? You won't make the team.
    - ii. Apply for a job, ask a girl out on a date, etc.
    - iii. Jesus says, "What's the worst that can happen?" They take your life. But they can't take your soul. So don't be afraid of them.
4. God is in **charge** of His world and **cares** about you. (10:29-31)
- a. General truth: God has complete **knowledge** and **control** of His universe.
    - i. Vv. 29-30
    - ii. Sparrows were the cheapest protein for the very poor. Two could be purchased for a fraction of a day's wage.

1. They were surely abundant and miniscule. Not even a large bird. Less than an ounce.
  - iii. Yet, despite their miniscule size and small financial value, not even one falls to the ground apart from the Father.
    1. At least refers to His exhaustive knowledge. Likely refers to His sovereign oversight of even the death of a small creature.
    2. Illustration at the A-frame of two dead birds on the ground and two marks on the window.
  - iv. He numbers even your hairs
    1. He has complete knowledge of the minutest affairs of your life. It doesn't pass His watchful eye.
    2. Notice the head in front of you. How much time would you need to count every hair? (less time for some than others)
  - b. Specific application: You don't need to **fear** because God is sovereign and cares about you.
    - i. The context is don't fear. What does God's exhaustive knowledge about you have to do with fear?
      1. We fear that which we don't understand. That which can harm us. That which we are uncertain about.
      2. It's a natural, God-given response in many circumstances. It can protect you from harm. But it's not needed in the circumstances He is addressing – fear of people.
      3. As image bearers of God, you are more valuable than birds.
        - a. General truth about the nature of humanity as more valuable in God's eyes than animals.
          - i. And yet, it doesn't say the sparrow is without value, just less value.
        - b. Specific application though – you don't need to fear because God cares about you.
5. Those who **confess** Christ have Christ as their **advocate** before the Father. (10:32-33)
  - a. Confess here means to acknowledge. We acknowledge Him before people, He acknowledges us before the Father.
  - b. **1 John 2:1-2** My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; <sup>2</sup> and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for *those of* the whole world.
    - i. The message of the gospel is not try harder, be better. It is Jesus as a substitute, as an advocate for you as a propitiation for your sins.
    - ii. What you do with Jesus in this life will ripple through eternity. Let that sink in.
    - iii. **Psalm 130:3-4** If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? <sup>4</sup> But there is forgiveness with You, That You may be feared.
    - iv. **Proverbs 28:13** He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes *them* will find compassion.

- c. What we do publicly with Jesus reflects the inner reality of whether we are trusting in Him as our advocate before the Father or not.
  - i. Anonymous from Church history prior to the 7<sup>th</sup> century – He does not say, “every one who acknowledges me in his own heart” but “before others.” If one does not acknowledge him before others, it does one no good to believe in Christ in one’s heart. For it is impossible that one who denies with one’s lips can believe in one’s heart.

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Invest, engage, explain, invite

You have nothing to fear.



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