

120. Jesus Warns About Persecution (Matthew 10:16-33)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, You promised that we will face difficult times and much persecution. But You also promised You will never leave us. Please strengthen our faith. In this study, make us see how You help us and how we can be faithful witnesses for You. We pray in Your name, Jesus. Amen.

Matthew 10:16. Jesus said, “Look! I am sending you like sheep among wolves. Therefore, you should be wise and careful like snakes, and innocent like doves.”

- Jesus recently finished telling the disciples they should preach, teach, and heal. Now Jesus warns them. Jesus said they will be like _____ in the middle of _____.
- If you are like a sheep and wolves surround you, how should you be wise? How should you be innocent? What does that mean?

Matthew 10:17-20. “Be careful with people. They will take you to court. In the Jewish churches they will whip you. You will be arrested and taken to governors and kings, why? Because you believe in Me, and you will witness to them and to the non-Jews. When they judge you, don’t become worried about what you will say. When the time comes for you to speak, God will give you the words. You aren’t the one who speaks. The Spirit of your Father speaks in you.”

- Jesus warned the disciples to be careful with people (unbelievers). Why? What will those people do?
- When Jesus said “Be careful,” does He mean we should avoid persecution? Does Jesus mean we should always run away? Or is Jesus warning us, this is what happens to people who follow Him?
- If a Christian gets arrested because he is a Christian, God will take that bad event and use it for good. What good thing can the Christian do in court?
- When a Christian witnesses, where do the words come from? Does that mean we don’t have to study the Bible or learn Bible verses?

Matthew 10:21-23. “A brother will betray another brother to death. A father will betray his child. Children will rebel against their Christian parents, so their parents will die. People will hate you because you belong to Me. But if a person continue faithful until the end, that person will be saved. When people persecute you in one city, run away and go to another city. I tell you the truth, before you visit every city in Israel, the Son of Man will come.”

- When persecution comes, how bad will it be? Will families protect each other?
- No matter how bad the persecution becomes, Jesus said keep doing two things. What two things?

Matthew 10:24-25. “A disciple is not greater than his teacher. A slave is not above his master. If the disciple becomes like his teacher, that is enough. If the slave becomes like his master, that is enough. If people name the head of the house Beelzebul, they will say worse things about the members of the house!”

- Jesus is talking about Himself and His disciples. The Jews named Jesus “Beelzebul” (a name for the devil). What does Jesus say will happen to the disciples now? Why?

Matthew 10:26-27. “So don’t be afraid of them. Everything covered will get opened and shown. Everything now hidden will announced. If I tell you something in darkness, you should say it in the light. What I whisper in your hear, you should announce from the roofs of houses. Don’t be afraid of people – they can kill your body, but they can’t kill your soul. Instead, you should fear God. He can destroy both your soul and body in hell. You sell two sparrows for a penny. But not one sparrow will die unless your Father lets that happen. He knows how many hairs you have on your head. So don’t be afraid. You are worth much more than many sparrows.”

- Jesus recently talked about how bad persecution will become, that people will hate and kill Jesus’ disciples. Then Jesus said, “So don’t be afraid of them.” Why not?
- What does it mean, we should fear God?
- Because we trust God will take care of us, what can we do with confidence?

Matthew 10:32-33. “Therefore, everyone who will tell other people they know Me, I will also tell My Father in heaven that I know them. But if people deny they know Me, I will tell My Father in heaven that I don’t know them.”

- If you are a Christian and trust Jesus, what will you do? If you deny Jesus (say you don’t believe in Him), what does that mean?
- What saves you and gets you to heaven? Telling other people about Jesus? Or trusting in Jesus as your Savior?