

5. What other motivation, besides fear of God, does Jesus provide for proclaiming the gospel under persecution (vv. 29-31)?

6. How do these motivations work together to provide courage in the face of persecution?

7. If you were teaching a class on this passage to a group of new followers of Jesus, what steps would you suggest for growing more courageous in the face of persecution?

8. What's one step you can take?

SERMON APPLICATION GUIDE

The Mission

"Being the Bad Guys" (Part 2)

Matthew 10:24-31

Our mission is to declare with words and demonstrate with works the good news of God's grace in Christ in our everyday lives.

Serving Jesus's purposes in the world and sometimes _____ for it go hand in hand.

Being the Bad Guys

"When secular society calls out Christians as bad guys, our first question should be: are they right? We have to acknowledge that the church has a mixed history, and when the church enjoyed power and influence, too often it used it in exactly the opposite way to its founder: to serve itself, to make its members comfortable. We have often been too little like Jesus, and for that we need to stop trying to justify or excuse ourselves, and hold our hands up, apologize, and do better. We have been perpetrators who made life hard for others who we decided were 'bad guys.' Not every critical voice is simply out to get us, and some critical voices have much to teach us; there are genuine wrongs that we need to right. Yet at the same time, the fact is that often we are accused of doing wrong not because we are living too little like Jesus but because we are living too much like him." (Stephen McAlpine)

How Can We Stay Focused on Our Mission When Some People Hate Us or Hurt Us?

1. Match _____ without making war.

Genesis 3: ¹ Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made.

Where is God leading you with your BLESS list this week?



"The disciples' cunning is to be directed not to harming their opponents, but to their own survival and the commendation of the gospel. They need the cunning of snakes without the venom." (R.T. France)

Acts 22:22-29

2. Take every opportunity to _____.

Philippians 1:12-18

Ephesians 6: ¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Colossians 4: ³ And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. ⁴ Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.

3. _____ on the Holy Spirit.

John 14: ²⁵ "All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶ But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Personal Reflection & Small Group Questions

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. The sermon focused on last week's passage, Matthew 10:16-23. Read that passage again and consider what specific application you can take from the sermon and/or your reading of this passage.
2. Read Matthew 10:24-31. Summarize the point Jesus is making about the persecution they will face in vv. 24-25. (A background passage and additional translation of verses 24-25 are offered below to help you answer this question.)
Matthew 9: ³⁴ But the Pharisees said, "It is by the prince of demons that he drives out demons."
(NLT) Matthew 10: ²⁴ "Students are not greater than their teacher, and slaves are not greater than their master. ²⁵ Students are to be like their teacher, and slaves are to be like their master. And since I, the master of the household, have been called the prince of demons, the members of my household will be called by even worse names!"
3. Compare The Message translation of Matthew 10:26-27 below to the NIV. What is the point Jesus is making?
(The Message) Matthew 10: 26-27 "Don't be intimidated. Eventually everything is going to be out in the open, and everyone will know how things really are. So don't hesitate to go public now.
4. What do you think Jesus means when he says we should "fear" the one who can condemn us to hell (v. 28)?