

# Matthew

Sermon on the Mount

October 27, 2024

## I. Introduction

A. **Matthew 10:1–15**, Jesus summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness. [2] Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The **first**, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; [3] Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; [4] Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed Him. [5] These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them: “Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; [6] but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. [7] And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ [8] Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. Freely you received, freely give. [9] Do not acquire gold, or silver, or copper for your money belts, [10] or a bag for your journey, or even two coats, or sandals, or a staff; for the worker is worthy of his support. [11] And whatever city or village you enter, inquire who is worthy in it, and stay at his house until you leave that city. [12] As you enter the house, give it your greeting. [13] If the house is worthy, give it your blessing of peace. But if it is not worthy, take back your blessing of peace. [14] Whoever does not receive you, nor heed your words, as you go out of that house or that city, shake the dust off your feet. [15] Truly I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city.”

### B. Pray

## II. Identifying the disciples, the practical side of ministry

A. [1] Jesus summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

1. The **first** thing I want to point out is that just as God gave Jesus authority, that is, the power to cast out demons and heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness, so Jesus gave this power to His disciples.

a. What is important to understand is that the power to do these things belongs to God. God may give us this power, and we may

use it when and where we see fit, but it is always God's power – we are just the vessel or servant through whom God wills to demonstrate His power.

- b. Therefore, should there be any glory, or praise, or even financial gain from the use of this power, it belongs to God. If we take it for ourselves, it is a sign that we have ceased serving God and started serving ourselves.
  2. The **second** thing I want to point out is that God gave Jesus the right to pass this power on to others. To our knowledge, however, neither the disciples nor anyone since has been given the right to pass it on. Therefore, though those who receive this power can use it, they cannot bestow it on anyone else – that is God's doing, and God's alone.
  3. The **third** thing I want to point out is that Jesus gave this authority to all twelve disciples, including Judas Iscariot, who He knew was not a sincere-minded, God-fearing disciple, but rather the one who would ultimately betray Him (**John 6:64**).
- B. [2] Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The **first**, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; [3] Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; [4] Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed Him.
1. Before talking about each disciple, I want to point out that Matthew infers a hierarchy within the ranks of the disciples by beginning with Peter and ending with Judas. Also, when I use the word "Tradition" in relation to a particular disciple, it means that the information that follows is thought to be true, but it cannot be proven.
  2. **Peter** – was a fisherman, and an older brother to Andrew. He became the leader of the Church in Jerusalem, was known for walking on water and denying Christ three times, was one of the three members of Jesus' closest disciples – or inner circle, was with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, and was put to death by crucifixion – though he asked to be crucified upside down. Peter's name appears 159 times in the NT, which is far more than any of the other disciples. He is the only disciple the scriptures affirm was married (**Luke 4:38**).
  3. **Andrew** – was a fisherman, the brother of Peter, and a disciple of John the Baptist before following Jesus. He was crucified.
  4. **James** – was a fisherman, an older brother to John, and one of the three members of Jesus' closest disciples – or inner circle. He was with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. Jesus referred to James and his brother John as the "sons of thunder." James was the first of the

twelve apostles to be martyred – being put to death by King Herod (Acts 12:1-2).

5. **John** – was a fisherman, and a younger brother to James. He was one of the three members of Jesus’ closest disciples, was with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, wrote the Gospel of John, 1,2,3 John, and the book of Revelation, and inferred he was the disciple whom Jesus loved. While on the cross, Jesus entrusted John with the care of His mother.
  - a. According to Foxe's Book of Martyrs, John was arrested in Ephesus and sent to Rome, where he was thrown into a cauldron of boiling oil. He miraculously escaped injury. Domitian (*doh MISH uhn*) then banished him to the Isle of Patmos, where he wrote the Book of Revelation. Nerva, the successor of Domitian, recalled John from Patmos, and allowed him to return to Ephesus. He was the only apostle to escape a violent death.
6. **Philip** – All we know about Philip is that he brought Nathanael to Jesus. Tradition says that Philip took the gospel to Asia Minor, and it was there that he was first stoned and then crucified.
7. **Bartholomew** – it is believed he was also called Nathanael. Tradition says he was a missionary in Armenia, that he translated the Gospel of Matthew into Hindi, and that he was first beaten, then crucified, and finally beheaded in Armenia.
8. **Thomas** – was also known as “doubting Thomas.” Tradition says he took the gospel to India and was martyred there.
9. **Matthew** – also called Levi. He was a tax collector. Tradition says most of Matthew’s ministry was in Africa, including modern-day Ethiopia and Egypt, and that an African king had him killed with a spear.
10. **James** the son of Alphaeus (*al FEE uhs*), is also known as James the younger, because he was younger than James, the brother of John. Tradition says he went to Persia (*Iran*) with the gospel and was martyred there.
11. **Thaddaeus** – also known as Judas – the son of James. Tradition says he was either crucified or clubbed to death at Edessa.
12. **Simon the Zealot** – Tradition says he first went to Africa and then as far north as Britain, where he was martyred (*probably crucified*).
13. **Judas Iscariot** – According to **John 12:6 & 13:29**, Judas was the groups treasurer, and as such, he pilfered money for personal use. As you know, Judas betrayed Jesus for 30 silver coins by identifying Him in the Garden of Gethsemane. When Judas saw that Jesus was

condemned to death, he felt remorse, and tried to return the coins to the chief priests and elders – apparently as a sign of repentance. When they scoffed at him, he threw the money into the temple sanctuary and went and hanged himself.

14. As you can see from this list, the disciples paid a dear price for serving as the ambassadors of the gospel, just as did the apostle Paul. Jesus warned them about this before sending them out.
  - a. **Matthew 10:17**, “Beware of men, for they will hand you over to the courts and scourge you in their synagogues.”
  - b. **Vs 22**, “You will be hated by all because of My name.”
  - c. **Vs 25**, “If they have called the head of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign the members of his household!”
15. It is true that righteousness has its rewards, but it is also true that righteousness has its enemies – from those who govern to those in your own home.
  - a. But why does righteousness have its enemies when it seeks what is right and just for all?
    - (1) Because righteousness exposes evil for the evil that it is – and evil wants to look good because that is one significant way it gains and maintains acceptance and approval.
    - (2) Because righteousness puts limits on how far we can go in going our own way and doing our own thing. Therefore, since it is the nature of evil to grow, limits are evil’s enemy.
    - (3) Because righteousness calls us to love those around us, and to care about how our behavior affects them – whereas evil, in even its mildest forms, cares first and foremost about self with little or no concern about its effects on others.
  - b. However, righteousness is the only path that protects the good of all, and provides love for all, justice for all, peace for all, and hope for a good future for all. Therefore, it is strange that something so good should have so many enemies and be so powerfully – and at times even cruelly – opposed.
- C. [5] These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them: “Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; [6] but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. [7] And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ [8] Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. Freely you received, freely give. [9] Do not acquire gold, or silver, or copper for your money belts, [10] or a bag for your journey, or even two coats, or sandals, or a staff; for the worker is worthy of his support. [11] And whatever city or village you

enter, inquire who is worthy in it, and stay at his house until you leave that city. [12] As you enter the house, give it your greeting. [13] If the house is worthy, give it your blessing of peace. But if it is not worthy, take back your blessing of peace. [14] Whoever does not receive you, nor heed your words, as you go out of that house or that city, shake the dust off your feet. [15] Truly I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city.”

1. On this occasion, Jesus directed His disciples to **go only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel**.
  - a. I can think of two reasons for this, though there may be more.
    - (1) **First**, the Israelites were God’s chosen people. He was their Father and they were His children, and as such, they were the first to receive God’s blessings – such as Abraham, Moses, the Law, the prophets, and now Jesus and His teachings.
    - (2) **Second**, God made it clear that He would judge His own people, first. Therefore, before judging them, Jesus was giving them the opportunity to repent and change their ways. As Paul wrote in **Romans 2:9-10**, “There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, [10] but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”
  - b. Yet, we know that Jesus ministered to Gentiles, and before ascending into Heaven, He commissioned His disciples for world-wide evangelism and discipleship (**Matthew 28:19-20**). Therefore, we can rightly conclude that this exclusive directive was unique, and not meant to be applied beyond that time.
2. The disciples were to proclaim that **the kingdom of heaven is at hand** (*has come near*). On earth, the kingdom of heaven is a spiritual or mystical kingdom. In eternity, it is both spiritual and physical. On earth, God’s kingdom is near to everyone, but it is only entered by those who receive the gospel of this kingdom and respond accordingly. Since few seem to search for it, we have been given the responsibility of bringing the gospel of the kingdom to those around us.
3. **Freely you received, freely give**. The message and the power to do miracles comes from God and is given to us without cost – as is our salvation from the penalty, power, and practice of sin. In turn, we are to freely give to others what God has freely given us – be it love, compassion, mercy, provision, protection, the gospel of salvation, the way of godliness, and miracles – if we have been given the power to do miracles.

4. Jesus said, **Do not acquire . . . because the worker is worthy of his support.** Two thoughts:
  - a. Serving God by seeking the good of others – from evangelism to discipleship to meeting physical needs – is to be for their benefit, not ours. Ministry is not intended for our financial or material enrichment, or for the acquisition of power or social standing. Let us look to God to provide, though He most often uses people as the means of meeting our needs (**Matthew 6:33**).
  - b. It is interesting to note that though this was Jesus' method of support for His disciples, the church, from its earliest days sent financial support to Paul and others who took the gospel to areas of the world beyond Israel, and we follow this same practice today.
5. **Whatever city or village you enter, inquire who is worthy in it, and stay at his house . . . give it your blessing of peace.** The worthy person or family would be someone who willingly shows you hospitality – in spite of your message – and who treats you kindly during your stay with them. Jesus said that if you find such a home, bless it and remain there for the duration of your stay.
6. **But if it is not worthy, take back your blessing of peace.** Should the hospitable family reject the gospel and turn against you and your work, withdraw your blessing of peace – for they have rejected the God of peace, the Prince of peace, and the way of peace.
7. **Shake the dust off your feet** – as a sign that you have spoken and served, yet because you and your message were rejected, you are now free of responsibility and are acknowledging their willful unbelief and rejection of God and the gospel.
8. **It will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city.** Sodom and Gomorrah are examples of such extreme evil that they were worthy of annihilation. Yet Jesus is saying that because these two cities did not hear or see what Israel was hearing and seeing at the time of Christ, their judgment at the end of the world will be less harsh and more merciful than what the unbelieving Jews of Jesus' day will experience. (**Note: Matthew 11:20-24**) To whom much is given, much is required.

### III. Conclusion

- A. Righteousness and evangelism have their rewards and their costs. Hearing the gospel and seeing God's works carries a responsibility to respond accordingly. Failure to do so will bring a harsher judgement than those who have not heard the gospel and truth of God's word will experience.