

## **BURN THE SHIPS**

### **"COURAGEOUS WITNESS"**

#### **MATTHEW 10:1-20**

### **This Week's Core Competency**

**Giving Away My Faith** – I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes. Ephesians 6:19-20, *Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, 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.*

Although Matthew records Jesus' Mission Discourse so that his readers might know what Jesus taught about *service*, many of its details do not apply directly to Christ followers today. His instructions reveal basic truths like: disciples are expected to make disciples; the gospel is freely received and should be freely given; don't let material possessions get in the way; "the worker is worthy of his keep;" leverage your relationships with other disciples for mission accomplishment; don't expect it to be easy; and remember the Spirit is with you. But most of us are not traveling evangelists; we make disciples in our own communities. When travel is necessary, we likely pack our bags, stay in hotels, and eat at restaurants. Times have changed.

With regard to making disciples, Matthew does give us an example that we can follow. Bill Hybels

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*I had no way to control the outcome of the party, no way of knowing how the guests would interact, and no way to prepare for the exact conversations that would unfold and what God would choose to do as a result.*

– Bill Hybels

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calls it the "Matthew Party" (*Just Walk Across the Room*, 196-200). He writes: "Back in the early days of Willow, we talked with such frequency about the 'Matthew Party' story in Luke 5 [cf., Mt 9:9-13] that it became part of the fabric of our church culture. Operating with Matthew's intuition for discerning next steps in the lives of seekers became sort of a way of life, and lots of us started throwing Matthew Parties, for want of a better name. They weren't part of a formal, programmatic effort. They were just casual ways to help people who were outside the family of God to get inside the family of God. Willow folks would grab a few people from the office and a few people from church and host a backyard barbeque or a pool party or hang out shooting pool in someone's basement. During the eighties and nineties, we heard of scores of people coming to faith as a result of these parties.

"Over time, my desire to reflect Matthew's remarkable courage kept increasing. I got addicted to sticking my neck out there just as he did, pulling believers and nonbelievers into the same room and trusting God with the results. After a while, although the larger-scale buzz at Willow died down, I was one of those eternal optimists who never stopped believing in the power of the party. I never stopped seeking ways to gather some new-life friends together with some old-life friends just to see what might transpire. I never stopped rejoicing over that particular work of the Holy Spirit in my life, who used the simplicity of throwing a party to craft me into the type of person who better reflects the heart of the Father."

He goes to describe a Matthew Party that he threw after Willow's Christmas Eve service one year. It's worth the price of the book; read it for yourself!

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## For Discussion

Talk about what you think of Bill Hybels' "Matthew Party."

# day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

## Matthew 10:1-20

1 He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.

2 These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; 3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; 4 Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

5 These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. 6 Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. 7 As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near.' 8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. 9 Do not take along any gold or silver or copper in your belts; 10 take no bag for the journey, or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff; for the worker is worth his keep.

11 "Whatever town or village you enter, search for some worthy person there and stay at his house until you leave. 12 As you enter the home, give it your greeting. 13 If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you. 14 If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that home or town. 15 I tell you the truth, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town. 16 I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.

17 "Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues. 18 On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. 19 But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, 20 for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

## EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- \* Circle "authority" in v. 1.
- \* Circle "twelve apostles" in v. 2.
- \* Box "rather" indicating *contrast* in v. 6.
- \* Bracket "lost sheep of Israel" in v. 6.
- \* Highlight "the kingdom of heaven is near" in v. 7.
- \* Underline "sandals or a staff" in v. 10.
- \* Circle "worthy" in v. 11.
- \* Underline "your greeting" in v. 12.
- \* Circle "deserving" in v. 13.
- \* Circle "peace" in v. 13 (2x).
- \* Box "more" and "than" indicating *comparison* in v. 15.
- \* Box "like" and "as" (4x) indicating *comparison* in v. 16.
- \* Circle "their" in v. 17.
- \* Circle "Spirit" in v. 20.

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## day 2

**EXPLORE** – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. Given that *discipleship* is an important theme in Matthew's Gospel, can any legitimate inference be drawn from the bare fact that Jesus "sent out" the Twelve? Explain.
2. What makes you think we *are* or are *not* to do the same things Jesus told the Twelve to do?
3. What do you make of Jesus' instructions regarding what the Twelve were to take with them?
4. Put the meaning of the proverb at the end of verse 10 in your own words.
5. Apostles are to lodge in the house of "some *worthy* person." Who might that be?
6. Jesus refers to "*your* peace" in verse 13. In what sense was it the apostles' peace?
7. Apostles are to "shake the dust off [their] feet" upon leaving any town that does not welcome them or their message. Why?
8. Explain the *comparison* in verse 16.
9. How can you tell that verses 17-20 describe conditions *following* the resurrection?
10. **Discussion:** Discipleship is an important theme in Matthew's Gospel. Talk about what he wants his readers to learn about following Jesus from this passage.

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## day 3

# EXAMINE – an explanation of the message to better understand the meaning of the passage.

Matthew 10 contains Jesus' Mission Discourse, the second major discourse found in Matthew's Gospel. To make sure his readers have the basic information they need to become disciples and to obey Jesus' command to "make disciples" (28:19), Matthew organizes his Gospel around five great discourses containing what Jesus taught. This discourse, contains what Jesus taught the Twelve concerning their *witness*. On the structure of the discourse, one commentator writes: "Because of the nature of its contents, there is no consensus on its structure. Some see two major sections: vv 5b-23 and 24-42 (thus Luz); some three: vv 5b-15, 16-23, and 24-42, each of which ends with a saying introduced with the formula 'truly I say to you' (thus Weaver)" (Donald A. Hagner, *Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 33a, Matthew 1-13*, 262). The presence of the structural marker—"I tell you the truth" (NIV)—in verses 15, 23, and 42, tips the scale in favor of seeing *three* major divisions. One expositor labels them this way: 1) Instructions for past apostles (vv. 1-15); 2) Instructions for future disciples (vv. 16-23; and 3) Instructions for present disciples, vv. 24-42) (Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, 1:38-40).

A couple of issues make interpreting and applying what Jesus tells the Twelve challenging. In the first place, they are *both* disciples *and* apostles; we are disciples but *not* apostles. As apostles they are "special authoritative representatives chosen by Jesus to play a foundational role in the establishment of the church" (Michael J. Wilkins, *NIV Application Commentary: Matthew*, 385). As such they have *authority*, the right (i.e., were authorized) and the power (i.e., received the ability), to do things that other disciples in their day and in ours do not have, e.g., "raise the dead" (v. 7).

In the second place, it appears that Jesus' instructions apply not only to the Twelve in the *present* but also to later disciples in the *future*. According to verses 5b-15, the Twelve are to imitate Jesus by preaching the gospel of the kingdom in Galilee to "the lost sheep of Israel" (v. 6). Jesus' commission "at the historical level, is a statement about the activity of Jesus' disciples during his earthly ministry. Since Jesus' own commission at this stage was to Israel alone (15:24), his disciples were bound by the same restriction. At a second

level, the narrative symbolizes the mission of the post-Easter church, for which the earlier limitation has been annulled by the risen Christ (28:16-20). Matthew thus gives expression to the principle enunciated so firmly by Paul: 'To the Jew first and also to the Greek' (Rom. 1:16)" (Douglas R. A. Hare, *Matthew, Interpretation*, 111). In other words, verses 5b-15 pertain to an *immediate* short-term mission, while verses 16-23 pertain to a *future* long-term mission. Four observations suggest this: 1) Jesus begins using the future tense in verse 17; 2) his disciples witness to Gentiles in verse 18; 3) they suffer intense persecution not experienced during his earthly ministry; and 4) "the appearance of similar warnings in 24:9-13 and Mark 13:9-13, which record Jesus' message of the end times [cf., v. 23], indicates that he is here including warnings about the treatment that missionary disciples will endure until the coming of Jesus at the end of the age" (Wilkins, 392).

After telling them to preach "the kingdom of heaven is near" to "the lost sheep of Israel," Jesus gives them detailed travel instructions (vv. 7b-15). First, they are to preach the good news freely (v. 8). "They are not to accept payment from those to whom they minister, which would otherwise make it a mercenary venture. Jesus gives them their authoritative power as a gift, so they must not take payment for performing miracles" (Wilkins, 390). Second, they are to "travel light" and not acquire extra clothing along the way, because "the worker is worth his keep" (v. 9-10). Other essentials they might need are to be provided by their benefactors. In a nutshell, the disciples are not to profit from their preaching, but their basic needs are to be met. Third, when they arrive in a village they are to lodge with "some worthy person" (v. 11). By this time, there are probably people in most Galilean villages who have seen and heard Jesus. The apostles are to look for willing hosts among his disciples. Fourth, when they enter a home, they are to give it their greeting, "Peace to this house" (v. 12; cf., Lk 10:5). If members of the household welcome their message, the blessing is theirs; if they do not, the blessing is withdrawn. In either case, reception of the *blessing* is tied to the hosts' reception of the apostles' *message*. Finally, for those who refuse to welcome the apostles or listen to their words there

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is only the promise of judgment. Jesus warns them, "It will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment" (v. 15).

Following his detailed travel instructions, Jesus warns future disciples about persecution to come (vv. 16-20). Verse 16 serves as a hinge between his apostles' immediate mission and his disciples' future mission. Jesus is sending his present apostles out "like sheep among wolves." Their Galilean mission demands they be "as cautious as snakes and as gentle as doves" (GNT). The same applies to his future disciples, who are to face harsh persecution from the Jewish community.

According to one commentator, "There is no evidence that the disciples experienced violent persecution during Jesus' life. There is ample proof, however, that angry reactions to the post-Easter message did occur among Jews at various times and places. From Acts we learn that there was sporadic persecution in Palestine and that Paul was frequently attacked in diaspora Jewish communities" (Hare, 113). Jesus' harassed disciples are not to worry about defending themselves, however, because the Spirit from the Father is going to speak through them.

### *The Message of the Passage*

*Jesus' disciples, sent out as his witnesses, are to be cautious and gentle, trusting the Spirit for what to say to their opponents as well as how to say it.*

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you in his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on 3 "living questions" to apply what you have learned this week.

• **Journal your thoughts on the passage:**

–Write about how God is making himself known to you . . .

–Write about how God wants to change you . . .

–Write about how God is calling you to change your world . . .

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# notes **N** STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

- v. 1 **authority** I.e., the right to do something accompanied by the power to actually do it. In this case the right and power to exorcise demons and heal every kind of disease. "He gives them [*exousia*] 'authority,' the very thing he demonstrated about himself in the five preceding chapters (cf. 7:29; 9:6, 8)" (Hagner, 265). His words to the eleven at the very end of the Gospel, which use a divine passive, imply that he has received this authority from the Father (see 28:19).
- v. 2 **twelve apostles** "The term apostle has a significantly different meaning than disciple. The latter designates anyone who has believed in Jesus, while apostle designates one who has been commissioned to be his representative . . . 'Apostle' has narrow and wide meanings in the New Testament. The narrow sense, as here, is the usual meaning, signifying the special authoritative representatives chosen by Jesus to play a foundational role in the establishment of the church. Paul normally used the term to refer to the Twelve, but he includes himself among them as a special apostle to the Gentiles (1 Cor. 15:8-10). The wide sense of 'apostle' derives from the verb *apostello*, 'I send' (e.g., 10:5), and therefore can mean merely 'messenger' (John 13:16), refer to Jesus as 'the apostle and high priest whom we confess' (Heb 3:1), or designate an individual such as Barnabas, Titus, or Epaphroditus [*sic*] within the group of missionaries larger than the Twelve and Paul" (Watkins, 385-86). Lists of the 12 Apostles occur here and in Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:13-16; and Acts 1:13. For a detailed comparison of the lists see: Hagner, 266; Wilkins, 386-88; Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Matthew, 2014 ed., 165-66, [www.soniclight.com](http://www.soniclight.com)).
- v. 6 **lost sheep of** "Jesus begins with a surprising prohibition . . . The mission is apparently restricted to Jewish Galilee, which was surrounded on all sides by Gentile country except to the south, where lay Samaria. The full expression is 'lost sheep of the house of Israel,' which does not denote a certain portion of Israel that is lost but rather the whole lost Israel, which is being called to make a decision about the gospel of the kingdom" (Wilkins, 389).
- v. 7 **kingdom of heaven** "Thus John the Baptist, Jesus, and now the disciples all proclaim the same message" (Hagner, 271). "By this time the people of Israel had had their fill of other kingdoms and rulers dominating them. They wanted a return to the glories of the ancient monarchy under David and Solomon and their descendants. They had had a brief tantalizing experience of semi-independence during the Maccabean revolt and the rule of the Hasmoneans, but that had long ended. Once again another power, Rome, ruled over them. The thirst for independence was strong in Israel. The prophecies of David's house and kingdom enduring forever (2 Sam 7:11-16; 1 Chron 17:23-27) seemed as if they would never be actualized" (132-33). "Jesus sent them to the Jews exclusively to do three things. They would announce the appearance of a Jewish Messiah, announce a Jewish kingdom, and provide signs—to Jews who required them—as proof of divine authorization" (Constable, 168).
- v. 10 **sandals or staff** "In Mark 6:8-9 the Twelve were to take [*airo*] a staff and sandals; the difference may be that in Matthew they are not to acquire [*ktaomai*] these things" (Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 248). "Matthew's version can be read as meaning 'While on your journey do not acquire for yourselves a second pair of sandals or a second staff'" (Hare, 112).
- v. 11 **worthy** "A worthy person would be one who welcomed a representative of Jesus and the kingdom message. He or she would be the opposite of the "dogs" and "pigs" Jesus earlier told His disciples to avoid (7:6). By this time, there were probably people in most Galilean villages who had been in the crowds and observed Jesus. His sympathizers would have been the most willing hosts for His disciples" (Constable, 169).
- v. 12 **your greeting** Cf., "Peace to this house" (Lk 10:5). "To give or return 'peace' meant to  *bless or retract a blessing from an individual or a household*" (Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, NAC, 173). "The peace that the disciples can bestow is not available where the gospel and its messengers are rejected. For the first time in this discourse (cf. 5:10-12), the resistance to the disciples' message is mentioned. This will loom larger as the discourse proceeds" (Hagner, 272).
- v. 16 **shrewd as snakes** "Jesus warns that his disciples that wariness, yet innocence, will be necessary in the future mission" (Wilkins, 392).
- v. 17 **their synagogues** "Matthew's addition of 'their' points to a serious cleavage between the synagogue and Matthew's Jewish-Christian community. The 'sanhedrins' ['local councils'] refers to local judicial bodies within Judaism, not to the Jerusalem Sanhedrin specifically (although that Sanhedrin is of course not excluded)" (Hagner, 277). "The synagogue was not only the place of assembly for worship but also an assembly of justice, where discipline was exercised (cf. John 9:35). Note that it is not 'our' or 'your' synagogues; it is 'their' synagogues. The synagogue belongs to those opposed to Jesus' disciples" (Wilkins, 392).
- v. 20 **Spirit of your Father** I.e., the promised Holy Spirit to be sent by the Father (cf., Jn 7:39; Ac 1:4, 8; 2:33). Jesus had not yet revealed the Spirit's relationship to these men after His departure into heaven (John 14-16). Here He simply assured them of the Spirit's help. Several of the apostles' speeches in Acts reflect this divine provision" (Constable, 171).
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### Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

In 2007, ventriloquist Terry Fator won the one million dollar prize on America's Got Talent. He has mastered the art of puppetry and audiences around the world are amazed by his talent. The puppets Fator uses are just ordinary lifeless dolls until they get into the hands of the master. Then, they spring to life and do what they were made to do. As I was reading this week's text, I was reminded of the ventriloquist and his puppets. And while you and I are certainly not puppets, we are lifeless and purposeless until we come under the control and authority of our Master. When Jesus called the twelve disciples to go out and make disciples, he reminded them they were going in His authority and power. In His name, they could drive out evil spirits and heal the sick. By His authority, they would spread His peace wherever they went. He even told them that when they faced rejection and persecution, not to worry. He would speak through them. Put on a puppet show as a family this week. To add some fun, let everyone create his or her own character! Work together to come up with a story or act out a favorite book. Use this activity to have a family discussion about letting God control our words and actions. He is our ultimate authority and will live and speak through us for His glory!

#### What Does The Bible Say

Read: Read Matthew 10:1-20

1. What did Jesus give his disciples when He called them?
2. What were they called to do?
3. In verse 19, what were they not to worry about?

#### What Do You Think

1. How do you think the disciples felt about being sent out to lead others to Jesus?
2. How do you feel knowing that you have the same responsibility?

#### What R U Going To Do

How are you doing memorizing our passage? We are on the last verse today. Work hard this week to put them all together. What a blessing it is to commit God's Word to memory!

### MEMORY TIME

Core Comp

Giving Away my Faith - I tell others about Jesus to help with God's work.

Memory Verse

Philippians 3:10b-11 - *Becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.*

### KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized CC \_\_\_\_ and Verse \_\_\_\_ . Family completed **Say** \_\_\_\_ **Think** \_\_\_\_ **Do** \_\_\_\_

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_ Parent's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Earn tokens by completing the Bible study portion of this page.  
Questions: Kids@pantego.org

# 30 CORE COMPETENCIES

## 10 CORE BELIEFS

### **Trinity** 2 Corinthians 13:14

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

### **Salvation By Grace** Ephesians 2:8-9

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

### **Authority of the Bible** 2 Timothy 3:16-17

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

### **Personal God** Psalm 121:1-2

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

### **Identity in Christ** John 1:12

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

### **Church** Ephesians 4:15-16

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

### **Humanity** John 3:16

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

### **Compassion** Psalm 82:3-4

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

### **Eternity** John 14:1-4

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

### **Stewardship** 1 Timothy 6:17-19

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

## 10 CORE PRACTICES

### **Worship** Psalm 95:1-7

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

### **Prayer** Psalm 66:16-20

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Bible Study** Hebrews 4:12

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Single-mindedness** Matthew 6:33

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

### **Spiritual Gifts** Romans 12:4-6

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

### **Biblical Community** Acts 2:44-47

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

### **Giving Away My Time** Colossians 3:17

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Money**

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Faith** Ephesians

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Life** Romans 12:1

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

## 10 CORE VIRTUES

### **Joy** John 15:11

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

### **Peace** Philippians 4:6-7

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

### **Faithfulness** Proverbs 3:3-4

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

### **Self-Control** Titus 2:11-13

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

### **Humility** Philippians 2:3, 4

I choose to esteem others above myself.

### **Love** 1 John 4:10-12

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

### **Patience** Proverbs 14:29

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

### **Kindness/Goodness** 1 Thess. 5:15

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

### **Gentleness** Philippians 4:5

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

### **Hope** Hebrews 6:19-20

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

## About the Authors

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**Wendy Hollabaugh** (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



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