

## Matt ch 10 vs.27-42

Being as it is the 4<sup>th</sup> of July today though I'm not going to do a topical study I do want to seize the opportunity to say that even though on July 4<sup>th</sup> 1776 the declaration of independence was signed declaring the freedom of the U.S.A. releasing us from all allegiance to the British crown, something that we are very thankful for and rightly celebrate. And even though this nation was founded on godly principals, true freedom is not found in the signing of any document. Nor can true freedom be found in the victory of war, all though again we're very thankful for all the men who have fought for this country so that we might experience life on less of a politically oppressive level, and enjoy openly the rights that God has given us.

Why doesn't true freedom consist of those things? Because you can experience all the rights of a "free" country and still be a slave to something, much worse than physical oppression, and laws that govern you physically. It's called the law of sin and death, and that my friends this entire world is born into and no document, neither any war is going to set you free from that.

And as you read of the life of Samson in Judges you find that 1<sup>st</sup> sin blinds you, then it binds you and then ultimately it grinds you and you find yourself enslaved to sin and nothing you do in and of yourself can break those shackles and truly set you free. How is it then that we're set free from this law of sin and death, because the wages of sin is death not only on a physical level, but it ultimately culminates in spiritual death as well, which means eternal separation from God in eternal torment in outer darkness. Jesus said in John 8:32 "*You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*" Well, (you say) that sounds profound and all but what is truth? That's a good question; Pilate asked the same thing right before he sentenced Jesus to crucifixion.

But had he known Jesus in a personal way he wouldn't have been plagued with that question because Jesus said "*I am the way the truth and the life and no man comes to the Father but by Me*" Jesus Christ was truth incarnate and is still the absolute truth today, absolute truth consists in Jesus Christ and in John 8:34-36 Jesus said: "*Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed*" True freedom is only found in Jesus Christ And if you don't know Jesus in a personal way this morning, you're not truly free, but rather you're a slave to the law of sin and death. And I would encourage you to consider Jesus today that you might experience true freedom, and that on this 4<sup>th</sup> of July you might truly declare your freedom from sin by asking Jesus Christ into your heart that you might know true liberty.

For those of you who do know Jesus I would encourage you to take the time today to reflect on your freedom and not to take away from the men God used to bring freedom to this nation, but I would ask you to reflect on the man that God used to bring you true freedom; freedom from sin and death, the man Christ Jesus. If you're not already turned there I'd like to invite you to open your bibles this morning to Matt ch 10 vs. 27 as we hope to conclude the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter of Matt this morning.

To bring you quickly up to speed, last week we read where Jesus was encouraging His disciples to be wise in their dealings with others, to use discernment concerning dangerous circumstances but not to be forceful or crude, in their avoiding them either, "wise as serpents and gentle as doves." And we spoke of the fact of how you're not necessarily out of God's will just because something unfortunate occurs in your life, or because maybe you've been allowed to go through some sort of physical or emotional suffering?

Why? Because no disciple is above his teacher and no student is above his master. And if the perfect will of God allowed Jesus to be accused of being satanic, beaten beyond the recognition of even being a man, and nailed to a cross, and He is both our teacher and our master, how is it that you or I am above Him? But God is able to take what Satan means for evil and use it for His glory even as He used the gruesome death of His only begotten Son to bring to you and me everlasting life.

Now, our sufferings don't create the means for anyone's salvation, but God can sure use it to lead others to Himself as we point to Jesus Christ as our means of strength, and our hope, and that which keeps us together while the rest of our lives are flying apart and spinning out of control. And when people ask you how you're able to maintain with all that's going on around you and yet you seem to be OK with it all, in the sense that you have this peace and calmness even in the midst of the storm. And you tell them, you know what if it weren't for Jesus Christ in my life there's no way I could make it, but Jesus is so faithful to me, and He leads me through each and every trial and tribulation and has never left me nor forsaken me. And He can do the same thing for you. Because mark my words it rains on the just and unjust alike, but the difference lies in the fact that you have hope that can sustain you, they have none. And as they watch your life they begin to think man I wonder if Jesus can do for me what He's done for them.

God begins to use your trials and your sufferings to lead others to Himself (count it all joy) that God would use a life like yours and life like mine to point hurting and hopeless people to Himself. Let your light so shine, like a beacon pointing others to Jesus that the Father might be glorified.

This morning I want to revert back to Vs. 26 in our text even though I went over it last week, and here He's speaking about not fearing the persecution and the things that will be said concerning His disciples because they've said it about Him, so they'll certainly say it about His followers and persecute His disciples, but it all be exposed ultimately who it was who was truly following God and seeking Him in Spirit and in truth and who it was who were in actuality opposed to the things of God and seeking to thwart His purposes, and so we have the assurance that God will one day vindicate His own. He says in vs. 26,

#### VS 26-27

Now there's a couple of things we want to take note of here. #1 we want to notice where it is that the message comes from that they are to spread. It comes straight from Jesus, they weren't to be out there doing their own thing or using the platform that God had given them to propagate their own agenda, or to get their congregations selling Amway or anything else. They were to speak only that which Jesus had given them to say. The things He had told them in their private times with Him, those things that had ministered to their own hearts, they were to use to minister to others. So #1 the message comes from Jesus and Him alone, in other words it's not something that you or I laboriously evolve in and of our own selves and our own efforts. Now as I said last week we are to be studied up, but it's the Lord who gives the message, as you seek Him, He honors that by giving you insight into His word, it's nothing that you or I have done, Jesus gives the message by the power of the H.S.

So that applies to us in that the things that the Lord is currently ministering to your heart, in your devotion times, in your prayer times, share it with others. The point that He's making here is hold back nothing that's going to be of benefit to others in their walk with Him. Because human nature is the same and if God is ministering to your heart something that is helpful to you it's going to benefit someone else as well. The 2<sup>nd</sup> thing that this vs. draws to our attention is the fact that concealment is to be no part of the life of the disciple of Jesus Christ. The things that He ministers to you in secret you're to proclaim or broadcast publicly.

Now that seems to have the tendency to dissolve all opportunity to be a closet Christian doesn't it. We're not to *conceal* the things Jesus speaks to our hearts; we're to *reveal* the things Jesus speaks to our hearts. There's no such thing as an undercover Christian, you either confess Jesus Christ or you don't, we'll get into that more in a minute, but just know that if you're a disciple of Jesus, you are to openly share the things that He has ministered to you that it might minister to others. God will give you discernment.

I'm not telling you to cast your pearls before swine but by the same token don't use that vs. as a cop out to cover your own shame or embarrassment either, Jesus wasn't ashamed of you and me and He had every right to be, I have nothing to offer the Lord accept a sin infested vessel that if He's willing to use, I'm willing to be used and I'm willing to allow Him to wash me and cleanse me of sin and unrighteousness and conform me to His Image, but I came to Him washed up and desperate, and He received me just as I came, unashamed, He knew what He was getting.

The same is true concerning each and every person that's given their hearts to Him, He receives you just as you are and He knows all about you and the secrets that you have that no one else knows that you wish didn't exist.

But He loves you just the same and He's not ashamed of you; much to the contrary He gave His life for you. And now He bids you to respond to that by not being ashamed of Him but sharing openly what He's done for you and how He's ministering to your heart fresh today.

Now He's already told His disciples that their allegiance to Him could result in their death, and here He's telling them to openly proclaim that allegiance, and no doubt with those type of ramifications facing you, you might be a little fearful, so He immediately encourages them in the proper perspective in vs. 28.

Vs 28

Now we're going to find that openness and fearlessness are woven all through this passage. And what Jesus is doing here is again realigning their eternal perspective. And He's not denying the possibility of death in being a witness to His glory, He's simply saying don't try to preserve this temporal tent at the risk of destroying your soul forever. And He's saying what's the point in fearing man what's the worst he can do to you? Kill your body, but after that He can do no more.

And Jesus is assuring us that the end does not come with the destruction of this body. Kind of like what we talked about a few weeks ago when Jesus raised Jarius' daughter from the dead, He was never denying the reality of her death, only the finality of it. Because the death of this body is not the end, believe me there is a fate worse than death and it's the destruction of the body and soul in hell. Now for those who put their trust in Jesus the death of this body is in a sense a promotion, because as Paul said in 2 Cor 5:8-11 *"We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. (In other words when we're removed from this body we're in the presence of Christ, so he went on to say) Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;"* He's teaching this same principal that Jesus is teaching here.

Prov 29:25 says, *“The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe”* Ps 118:6 *The LORD is on my side ;I will not fear.*  
*What can man do to me? Isa 54:17 says, ” No weapon formed against you shall prosper, And every tongue which rises against you in judgment you shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, And their righteousness is from Me,” Says the LORD.*

Don't fear those who can destroy the body, their weapons won't prosper against you, sure they may take your body but they have no power over your soul. Fear Him who has authority over both the body and the soul and can destroy them both in hell. And He's not talking about Satan here, he can't destroy your soul in hell, because contrary to what he'd like you to believe, he's not the ruler of hell, he's the chief prisoner. And he is going to suffer right along with everyone else who's rejected the love and grace of God. And to further prove that Jesus isn't in reference to Satan here I challenge you to find one place in the bible where believers are told to fear Satan. Christians are never told to fear the devil, only to resist him, and at that he will flee.

But we're told over and over again of the fear of the Lord. How that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge and the beginning of wisdom. So don't fear man, his power over you is very limited, fear Him whose power is limitless and who holds your eternal destiny in His hands, fear God.

29-31

In other words there isn't anything that's going to happen to you apart from the Father's sovereign will. And Jesus points to some of the most seemingly insignificant of His creation, sparrows that were sold for ½ cent a piece. And He says not one of them falls to the ground apart from the sovereign will of God. And the point that He's making is a clear one and that is that apart from God allowing it, not even the most insignificant of events can occur, and none of it escapes His attention.

If He's that concerned over sparrows how much more is He keeping close watch over and concerned about those whom He's made in His own image. He knows more about you than you know about yourself. How many hairs are on your head? (Now some make it easier on the Lord than others) But God knows. And what difference does it make? That I'm aware of none. But God has complete knowledge of even the most minute of details about you and nothing is going to happen to you but that He isn't aware of it and allowing it.

And the word “numbered” is in the perfect tense which seems to point to the fact that, that number stays on record, and it points to Gods continuing interest in the smallest details of our lives.

Now, from vs.26-31 Jesus tells His disciples 3xs not to fear, and that’s why I started at vs. 26 because I wanted to point out this 3-fold command not to fear. And we see it in vs.26, 28, and 31 and the emphasis is wholehearted allegiance to Jesus Christ regardless of the cost. And the reasons we’re not to fear according to Jesus is because #1 God will vindicate His own, #2 Our enemies can only kill the body but have no authority over the soul, and #3 Nothings going to happen to you apart from God allowing it and being aware of it. In other words don’t fear God’s in control. And if you stay true to Him until the end having confessed Him with your mouth and your life we read in vs.

32-33

Now the word confess here according to the vines means "To confess by way of admitting oneself guilty of what one is accused of, the result of inward conviction," 1 (c) "to declare openly by way of speaking out freely, such confession being the effect of deep conviction of facts,

(From Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright (c) 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

In other words when it comes time to lay it on the line you won’t deny your relationship to Jesus Christ because you can’t deny the fact that He’s made Him self real to you in a personal way. It’s one thing to see Jesus as a neat teacher or even the Messiah, but it’s quite another to profess yourself to be His follower in the face of hostile opposition, like the young girl in Littleton Colorado who was martyred because she confessed Jesus Christ looking down the barrel of a gun. Her life confessed Jesus Christ not only in lip service but when the chips were down she stood her ground for Jesus and don’t you know she heard well done good and faithful servant enter in to the joy of your Lord.

Jesus says here (repeat whoever...)

Vs 33

Now this isn’t in reference that time you failed to be bold and didn’t stand up for Jesus when you knew that you should’ve. I Don’t want you to freak out and think your going to hell if you haven’t stood up each time as you should’ve although I wouldn’t encourage you to take chances either but rather pray for boldness in time of need. But you remember Peter denied the Lord 3 times and went on to be restored and radically used by God.

So this isn't really in reference to a moment of denial so much as it is a life in its entirety living in such a way that denies Christ regardless of what your mouth says. And Jesus knows your heart. It doesn't matter if you set in church your whole life if your life doesn't confess Jesus, but rather denies Him, than your not making it. And you can fool me that's not that hard. But God knows, and He's the one we will all give an account to so I'd encourage you not to play church, be serious about your relationship with Jesus, if you've been going through the motions with no passion for God; repent and get right that you might be confessed before God the Father and present faultless before Him Having been cleansed in the blood of His Son Jesus Christ

#### Vs 34-36

Do not think I came to bring peace, but a sword. The gospel of Jesus Christ can unify the worst of enemies; it can bring together a tax collector and a zealot. But it can also divide the best of friends and even the family unit. And it all depends on the way each individual responds to the message of the Gospel. If you receive you'll be unified with the family of God, if you reject it, you'll be divided by your own choice. So the gospel will divide mankind into 1 of 2 categories; those who are apart of the kingdom of God and those who are of the world. You're either in the kingdom of light or the kingdom of darkness and that's determined by your response to the gospel.

Many times that division comes with in a family unit, maybe a child will receive Jesus Christ (child meaning young adult) and the father doesn't, he continues to rebel in the kingdom of darkness. And suddenly there's this difference in convictions and because of that many times a contention will arise that will ultimately lead to a severance. There have been circumstances where parents have actually had funerals for their son or daughter after they've received Jesus into their hearts because no son or daughter of theirs would dare rebel against them and follow Jesus and they disown them and consider them dead. And it's tragic but it happens, count the cost because many times (read vs. 36)

Jesus is speaking here out of personal experience because at this particular time Jesus' own brothers were against Him. They thought He was out of His mind and if you read Mark ch. 3 there in vs. 21 where it says His friends or His own heard about this they went to lay hold of Him because they said He was out of His mind. It's talking about His own brothers. The NIV and the Revised Standard Version both translate it family. And later on down around Vs 33 you see where they tried to get Him to come outside because they wanted to take Him back home instead of letting Him minister to the people because they thought that He was mentally disturbed. So He knew what it was like to be divided from His own family.

Vs 37

Now He's not saying not to love your mom and dad or your children, but what He is saying is that He has to take the ultimate priority over anyone else in your life. And that your love for Him has to be supreme.

Vs 38

What does it mean to take up the cross and follow Christ? Well you'll have to be here for our studies in ch 16 we'll discuss it there.

Vs 39

There's riddle for you what does that mean? We'll hit that as well in ch 16

Vs40-42

This is the authority that Jesus gives His disciples, you stand to represent Him therefore we should seek to be an accurate reflection of Him. And the basic point here is that anything that you do as unto the Lord doesn't go unnoticed by God, and He's going to reward you accordingly. Heb 6:10 tells us, "*For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister.*" When you minister to one of Jesus' disciples no matter who they are, they may forget, But God never forgets and if you do it with a heart as unto the Lord He's going to reward you for it.

Because what you do to the least of His servants you do to Him. Now real quick that also carries with it some accountability because to slander a servant of the Lord is to slander Him, but to Minister to a servant of Jesus is to minister to Him. So let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.