

Message #36**Matthew 10:26-33**

To be a true disciple of Jesus Christ means one must have a certain courage. There is a verb that shows up four times in these eight verses; it is the verb “fear.” The actual word “fear” is the verb “Phobeo” from which we get our English word “phobia.” The word means to be so frightened that one is put to flight. The word pictures one who is so seized with fear that he flees or moves (G. Abbott-Smith, pp. 471-472).

Now the specific fear being addressed in these verses is a fear that disciples of Christ could potentially have in view of various threats and hatred that was aimed against them. A Jewish disciple could be so afraid of the Jewish religious leaders that they would flee and not carry out their assignment to the nation Israel.

DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST SHOULD NOT SPEND THEIR LIVES FEARING MEN, BUT RATHER SHOULD BE FEARING GOD AND COURAGEOUSLY DOING HIS WILL.

Now as near as I can determine, this section is designed to motivate Christ’s disciples into not being afraid of men, who will try and discredit and persecute them.

REASON #1 – Because of future judgment. **10:26**

God will eventually reveal those who were really right with Him and those who weren’t. No mistreatment is hidden from God. There are those agents of Satan who do things in secret and think no one sees or knows. Nothing is further from the truth. God will eventually uncover every hidden diabolical plot and act against His faithful disciples. As one commentator said, “Truth will ultimately triumph.”

REASON #2 – Because of present responsibilities. **10:27**

These disciples had the responsibility of taking Christ’s teachings, which were given to them in private settings, and communicating them publically. They could not run from these responsibilities just because there were those who were mocking and threatening them. It was their job to proclaim that Jesus is God; that Jesus is the Jewish Messiah and King; that Jesus is the only Savior of the sinner. Jesus had revealed these things to them and their job was to take these great truths to Israel and, ultimately, the whole world.

REASON #3 – Because of proper fear. **10:28**

It is important to point out that both verbs “fear” in this verse are present, middle imperatives. What this means is that the disciple has been given a command (imperative) from God to continually (present tense) fear God, in and of himself (middle voice). The disciple must make a choice, in and of himself, either to spend his life fearing men who have no connection to the soul whatsoever, or fearing God, who controls the destiny of the soul.

I want you to carefully notice from this verse that God will condemn people to hell. This fact is to be feared for it is far worse than any physical death. God will never condemn one of His own children (Rom. 8:1; John 5:24).

REASON #4 – Because of God’s sovereign care. **10:29-31**

Christ’s disciples never need to fear men and run because God is continually on guard for His people. He is aware of everything. He knows when one sparrow falls to the ground and He knows the number of hairs on a person’s head. If God sees the difficulties little sparrows have, He certainly is monitoring you and me. Certainly His disciples who are entrusted with proclaiming His precious Word are far more valuable than sparrows and hair. If God cares for sparrows, will He not care for one who is serving Him? There is a sovereign God who is monitoring the treatment of His faithful disciples.

REASON #5 – Because of Christ’s future confession. **10:32-33**

The word “confess” is one that means to speak the same language, to agree to and say the same thing about Christ that He said about Himself and that God says about Him. One who says the same thing about Jesus Christ as He said about Himself—He is Israel’s King, He is Israel’s Messiah, He is the Savior of the world—will one day be honored by God the Son in front of God the Father. The thing one should fear is this moment when Jesus Christ has to make some public announcement concerning us.

On the other hand, those religious frauds who denied Christ before men—that is they would not tell the truth about who He is—they will receive a negative testimony from Christ. Think of the serious trouble Israel is in right now. Very few rabbis and religious leaders testify concerning the truth about Jesus Christ.

I would hate to be a Mormon or a Jehovah’s Witness. I would hate to be a Moonie or a Pentecostal or a Charismatic who doesn’t deal honestly with the Word of God.

There are two ways that a disciple of Christ may confess Christ—with his lips and by his life.

There are three ways a disciple may deny Christ—by words, silence, and actions.

Those who were faithful to the Lord will receive rewards from the Lord and those who were not will lost them (II Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10).

As a believer, you never want to deny Jesus Christ or the Word of God, even if you must stand all alone. Don’t fear men, but fear God and live your life honoring Him.