

Challenges

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One is to do what God commands in His Word, tell others the messages from God's Word, feed oneself spiritually, have a relationship with the Lord, and do what the Lord lays on one's heart to do for Him. These tasks may seem simple to some, but they can cause great grief when one decides to do them.

Matthew 10 is primarily about the disciples that Jesus hand-picked. Those men were to reach the Jews with God's truths. They were warned that telling others what they had learned from Christ would not be easy.

Although it was addressed to the disciples, who were reaching the people of Israel, they faced much that we, as we try to live and do right, can also expect to encounter. That may include persecution and resistance.

Here is what may be encountered by those striving to be a good Christian and be obedient to God's commandments even today:

- ♦ Many will not receive the Scriptural messages. Not everyone will jump for joy when told what the Word of God says. We probably were not excited the first time we heard the truths from God's

Word, either.

"And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet."

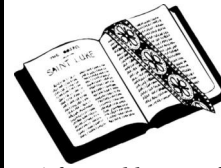
Matthew 10:14

- ♦ There will be problems from the "religious." Not everyone who has a "form of godliness" is a Christian. It was a religious group that tried the hardest to silence Christ. They did not want anyone exposing that their "religion" was contrary to what was taught in God's Word (Matthew 10:16-17). Many of the "religious" today also do not want to hear the truth. They choose to believe only their traditions, doctrines, and interpretations of Scripture.
- ♦ The secular government may also oppose efforts to tell the world about God's way of living. Many government officials think their rules and laws are what the world needs. They do not understand how a good Christian life can provide man's needs and solve many of his problems. They were among Christ's greatest opponents and can still be a roadblock

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Watch Out

Bill Brinkworth

The most important things a person should be wary of is not being saved, spending eternity in Hell, and eventually ending up in the Lake of Fire. Trusting Jesus' death on the cross to rescue one's lost soul will keep one from a tormenting eternity. One is then "born again" into the family of God and becomes a Christian.

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3

As Christians, we need not fear much. But, the Bible cautions us of many spiritual circumstances we should be wary of. They include to:

Beware, as God warned

Israel, that worldly things and blessings from God may make one forget that it was God's hand on your life that allowed you to receive those things.

"And houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full; 12 Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage." Deuteronomy 6:11-12

"And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Luke 12:15

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When one gets saved, they are expected to serve the Lord who saved them. No one is to sit and lazily soak up God's goodness.

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Beware of disobeying what God has laid on your heart, as many Old Testament believers were cautioned. Manoah was reminded of some of God's commandments and warned against breaking them. We should also be careful not to violate what God has forbidden.

"And the angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the woman let her beware. Beware 14 She may not eat of any thing that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing: all that I commanded her let her observe."

Judges 13:13-14

Beware of going against God's emissary, including pastors or ministry leaders, as Old Testament saints were warned.

"... yet would I not put forth mine hand against the king's son: for in our hearing the king charged thee and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Beware that none touch the young man Absalom."

II Samuel 18:12

Beware of false biblical teachings. They may seem innocent, but they can destroy one's life, testimony, and fellowship with God.

"Beware of false prophets,

which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." Matthew 7:15

Beware of ministry leaders who serve for their own gain, pride, or other wrong reasons. *"And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces," Mark 12:38*

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for many serving the Lord today.

- ♦ There may be conflicts in a family when a member gets saved and lives differently than He did before (Matthew 10:21).
- ♦ A Christian may be hated for how he lives (Matthew 10:22). It is incredible how the world "understands" and tolerates criminals and those in outright sin, but those who are living right often get more criticism and hatred than those purposely doing wrong. Perhaps the godly example convicts and troubles their consciences. The only way they can silence their nagging guilt is to get rid of the messenger rather than change themselves!

It was difficult for these men to stand and live for Christ. Today, it is also difficult

to live as the Bible commands. That may be why so many do not live righteously. They quit when things get tough. Do not quit! Do right no matter what others say or do!

Another Jesus

Bill Brinkworth

One of Paul's concerns for the church at Corinth was that it would fall for false teachings (II Corinthians 11:3). He was troubled that someone would preach "another Jesus" (II Corinthians 11:4).

The preacher knew there was only one Jesus. His sarcastic remark was meant to alert the Corinthians to be wary of anyone preaching anything other than what Paul had taught them. Paul taught them the truth, undefiled and often directly from God.

Even then, others were corrupting the truth. Those teaching their ideas and not what the Word of God said were not of God (II Corinthians 11:13-14).

Paul warned the church that those teachers were motivated by Satan (II Corinthians 11:14). They may have sounded or even looked "Christian"; however, their purpose was not to glorify God but to separate and weaken the believers.

Satan's ploy in that way is still going strong today. He does not have much imagination. Perhaps the enemy of God figures that if it worked in Paul's day, it will also work to-

day. Unfortunately, that thinking is correct.

Today, people often give the preacher more credence than God's Word. They are often more interested in whether he is articulate, educated, or friendly than if he is true to the teaching of God's Word. In many cases, they would leave the church if he preached everything the Bible says. That is why so many preachers watch what they preach.

Too many will not preach against adultery, false bibles, Hell, and sin because they don't want to offend anyone. It's a shame, because one purpose of preaching the truth is to "offend" people into not sinning.

After preaching a watered-down philosophy, it is not far-fetched to preach "another Jesus." The clues that this is going on are often, "the Bible doesn't mean...", "the Bible was mistranslated, and it doesn't really say...", or even "Jesus meant..."

What Paul warned the early church about is still a frightening reality today. Beware of teachers who do not preach all the truths from God's Word.

"The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; anything else is a lie!"

— Author Unknown

"Following God's directions is the only way to get safely home." — Author Unknown