

Matthew 10:40-42 The Communion of Discipleship

We are finishing up Matthew 10. Verses 40 to 42 is our focus, but we want to bring in summary form all that we have studied in these important texts. Matthew chapter 10. These are probably the most important pieces of Scripture that you and I will study together. The most important pieces of Scripture that our fellowship, our church, and the extended fellowship of believers that listen with us and study with us, need to study together. Chapter 10 of Matthew has to do with discipleship.

We have a conflict here in America in that Christianity comes in various forms. There is the religious form and then there is the relationship form. Jesus, when He came, He called people to become His disciple. He never called people to become Christians. He never called people to become church members. He called everyone to be His disciple. The word *disciple* means *to learn*. So when Jesus calls you to Himself, you then belong to Him, and then He teaches you. Under His discipline, He teaches you about Himself and His ways.

So we saw in verses 1 through 4, the calling of the twelve apostles from out of the disciples.

Verses 5 through 15, the commissioning of these twelve to have them go out in Christ's authority to preach in His name.

And then in verses 16 to 23, the conditions by which they are going to find themselves as they go out and minister the gospel. He says you are going to find that you are going out as sheep in the midst of wolves. You are going to find yourself among people who are going to be against you and reject you, not just because you are a Christian but because of your identification with Christ.

And then in verses 24 through 33, he then describes the characteristics of discipleship. He said in verse 24, **A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his lord.** If I am learning from Jesus Christ, I am going to become like my teacher, Jesus. I can expect - and this is what Jesus said, "You can expect the world to treat you like it treated Me." I am going to become like Him.

Therefore, He says in verse 26 of this chapter, that the greatest thing that you are going to find in your life in your struggle is fear. You are going to fear that if you identify with Christ, and follow Christ, and obey Him, you are going to fear how people are going to respond to you. You are going to fear they are going to reject you. You are also going to fear the consequences. What happens if you lose your job and they find out that you now belong to Christ and that you follow Christ? What happens with your family and your friends if they find out that you are not just a religious person, you now belong to Jesus Christ? His Spirit now lives in you and guides and governs your life. Therefore, Jesus said, do not fear, but rather fear God, the one that you belong to now. He is the one that you should fear over all over the other people and all of the other things.

Verses 32 and 33 has to do with the confession and this is of utmost importance. Jesus said, **Therefore everyone** - not just the twelve apostles, everyone, anyone - **who will confess Me before men, I Myself will confess in him before My Father, who is in heaven. But whoever should deny Me before men, I Myself also will deny him before My Father, who is in heaven.** To either confess Christ or to deny Christ has to do with my entrance into heaven. See, it is not about religion. You can believe the right doctrine out of the Bible about Jesus Christ. You can go to church every single time church meets. You can sing all the songs and believe all the things that you are supposed to believe and still not be saved. You can be involved in this religious system and have no personal relationship with Jesus Christ. That is what He is saying here. When He says, **everyone who confesses Me**, the word *confess* is not acknowledging Him, or confessing what He did for us. It means *identification with*. So when it comes to the various decisions of life and people want you to do things, your identification is with Christ, "No, I have to do with the Lord wants me to do." Jesus said, "That is confessing me before men."

When they bring you up. And He told the apostles, they are going to bring you up in front of the Roman government officials; they are going to bring you up in front of the Jewish religious leaders; they are going to beat you. And your identification must be Christ. You must suffer for Christ's sake because you are there because of Christ. You cannot back down now. You cannot compromise. You cannot say, "Okay, I will never do that again. I don't want to get you guys all upset." Identify with Me.

But if you deny Me. The word *deny* means *to reject*. It does not mean I deny Jesus existed, it means I reject Him. When I am in various situations, do I reject obedience to Christ? Do I reject identifying with Him or do I identify with Him? Do I take my stand with Him? That's what Jesus is talking about.

Now in Matthew chapter 7, which is interesting information just for our study, Matthew chapter 7 verse 21, Jesus said, "Not everyone who calls me, 'Lord, Lord' is going to get into heaven. Because in the day of judgment there will be people who come to me and say, 'Lord, did we not do many things in Your name?' But I am going to say to them, 'Depart from Me, I never knew you.'" See, it is knowing Him. It is not participating in a religious system in His name, or religiously for Him, it is knowing Him personally. That is what it means to be born again. That is what it means to receive Christ. His Spirit literally comes into you and you have a personal relationship now with the living Spirit of Christ.

But notice, it is Him knowing us. So that when I stand before Him, He is not going to test me on whether I know the Bible. He is not going to look in a book and see, "Let me check your church attendance before I decide to let you into heaven or not." He is going to say, "Do I know you?" And just as much importance, "Do you know me?"

"Well, sure, I heard about You two-thousand years ago. I got this book that talks about You. Sure, I have heard about You."

"Do you know me?"

Every Easter we go through this. The celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, that was two-thousand years ago. Do you realize that means He is alive today and He is here right now? It is not believing on a Jesus from two-thousand years ago. It is believing in a Jesus that lives today, a living Christ. I have a living relationship with Him. Sometimes I think this old physical body is going to explode sometimes, He is just so active. Other times, it is a little quiet. I think He does that just so I can sleep, maybe get some rest.

This is what His presentation is all about. Listen to this...

In verses 34 through 39 we talked about the cost of discipleship. The perception of the ministry of Jesus Christ. Jesus said, **Do not think that I came to bring peace upon the earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword.** This is Jesus talking. Religion is a humanitarian based Christianity - we have to unite everybody humanly. Families, neighbors, we have to bring everybody together and be unified together. Jesus said, **I came with a sword.**

He says, **For I came to divide a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a bride against her mother in law.** That does not sound like unity to me but it is. You see, Jesus is saying this is not religion, this is not about human, this is about spiritual. Because once you come to Christ and belong to Christ you have His Spirit living in you, which is different than the spirit of all the rest the people in your family, or your friends, or your neighbors.

Every human being is under the influence of one of two spirits: either the Spirit of Jesus Christ or the spirit of Satan, who is the god of this world. So the moment that I received Jesus Christ, I became removed from darkness into light, and I became a member of the family of God that lives under the influence of the Spirit of God. See Jesus knows this. He knows that when He comes and He calls people to Himself, He is dividing that person from everybody else, because everybody else is under the influence of a different spirit.

To the point that, we saw from II Corinthians chapter 6 verses 14 through 18 that God says, **Be separated and come out from them.** Light cannot have fellowship with darkness. You are now the temple of the living God. So come out, and be separate, and be one of My people, says the Lord.

But we also know that there are two kinds of families. We saw from Matthew chapter 12 verses 46 through 50 that Jesus was teaching and his mother and his brothers and sisters. Yes, he did have step brothers and sisters. They were standing outside, sent a messenger in saying, "Your mother and your brothers and sisters want to talk to You." And Jesus spread His arm out and said, "See these people? Those who do the will of My Father, these are my mother and my brothers and my sisters." That is a new family. He was not denying his own family. He says, "You are My family. You are coming from the Father."

Verse 36, **And the enemies of a man would be those of his own household.** The word *enemy* means *hostile*. People are not so much hostile if you stay religious. But if you actively have an active relationship with Jesus Christ and you are seeking to obey Him, you will find people will be hostile against you in your own household. Now *hostile* does not mean *anger*.

Satan is very deceptive. He can use people who are friendly, and smile, and put their arm around you and say, "Everything is okay, no problem." There is no problem except that their nice personality influence that you love so much, and you love to be around them has an spiritual influence over you, and takes you away from Christ, and takes you away from the things of Christ.

So last week we saw from the verses 37 through 39 the conditions of discipleship. Listen to this, verse 37, **The one loving father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and the one loving son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.** First of all, Jesus did not say, "You should not love your mother and father and son and daughter and brother and sister." He did not say that. He says, *the one loving mother and father more than Me*, it is priority.

We saw perspective. You have to get the right perspective of the message of Jesus here. He divides because of spiritual reasons, not religious reasons. Not human reasons but spiritual reasons. But the priority of Christ is Christ says, "I must have the priority over your life, so that you love Me more than you love anybody or anything else in this life, in this earthly life."

And we saw from Luke chapter 14 verses 26 and 27 what Jesus told the Gentiles was even more severe. He says, **Unless you are hating your mother, and father, brother, sister, husband, wife, lands, houses, and even hating your own life also, you cannot be My disciple.** The word *hate* is a word of comparison. In other words, as I love my mother, and my father, and my son, and my daughter, my love for Christ must be so much more that it looks like I hate everybody else, even though I love them. It cannot even be close. I cannot sit there and flip a coin and say, "Well, am I going to do it the Lord's way? or am I going to do it their way? Flip a coin." No. There is no coin flip. So it is more than me.

And then we left off last week with the main teaching. All of this is very heavy stuff. But the main teaching I want to get across to you today is *what is true love anyway?* Because religiously, which has a humanitarian base to it for its Christianity - religion says, "I cannot obey the Lord because people will get upset and we know that a God of love does not want to make people upset." No, that is not true. They will get upset because you are obeying the Lord. My priority is Christ. If I do not obey Him, He is going to get upset. I should be more concerned about that.

So what is love? I John chapter 5 verse 2. **In this we know that we love the brothers, we love the family of God, if we love God and keep his commandments.** Now, it does not tell me how to love my brethren. **Love God and keep His commandments**, what does that have to do with you?

You see, there is a basic principle in the Bible. And let me read the second Scripture to you, Matthew chapter 22 verses 34 through 40. Remember when the lawyer came to Jesus and said, "What is the greatest commandment?" **And Jesus said, "Love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength; and the second great commandment is this, love your neighbor as yourself."** Very few people have been able to explain what *love your neighbor as yourself* means in that context. Here is what it means. **To love the Lord my God with all of my heart, soul, mind, and strength**, everything I am as a person, I am to love God.

There is nothing left over for anybody else. See, my love for my neighbor is my obedience and love for Christ. It is not what I do for them. That is religion. The best I can do for you - and I have tried over the years to focus in on that and realize it is not doing things your way, unless it is the Lord, and it is not really doing things for you, unless it is Lord. The best thing I can do for you is to love the Lord my God with all of my heart, soul, mind, and strength, and do what He wants me to do. That is the best love I can show you. And you might be saying, "What does that have to do with me?" Everything. It is not what I do for you that is love. It is how I respond to Christ. Now, you might get upset at me surrendering to Christ. That is good, because that is exactly what we are seeing in our text today in verse 40.

Look at look at verses 40 to 42, the communion in discipleship. Jesus said in verse 40, **The one receiving you is receiving Me, and the one receiving Me is receiving the One having sent Me.** Now notice in these components that make up communion and fellowship, that there is a logical progression that goes from me, to Christ, to the Father in heaven.

When I identify with Jesus Christ, when I obey Him, it will cause people to either reject me or to receive me. One or the other. Not because I am a Christian. They are not going to receive me or reject me because I am a Christian, unless I am acting religious. They are not going to receive me or reject me because I am a church member. If I identify with Jesus Christ, they will either receive me or reject me. And what Jesus is saying, **the one receiving you is receiving Me.** You see, it is not me that they are rejecting or receiving, it is Jesus. And it is not just Jesus they are receiving, they are also receiving the Father in heaven, because they are all one. You cannot separate them.

So I am not alone here. It is not my confession - religious confession - and identification. In fact, when I identify with Christ, whatever a person's relationship is with Jesus Christ is how they are going to respond to me. If they are in rebellion to Christ, if they say, "I am not interested in Christ," if I identify with Christ, and make my decisions to obey Him, they are going to respond to me out of their relationship to Christ. And their relationship to Christ, if it is rejecting, if they are not interested, if they are angry, then they are going to reject me. Whatever a person's relationship is with the Lord, that is how they are going to respond.

In Matthew chapter 10 verses 24 and 25 Jesus said, **A disciple is not above his master, nor is the servant above his lord. It is enough (or *sufficient*) for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant be as his lord. If they have called the master of the household the devil, how much more are they going to call them who are of his household?** "If they treated Me this way, how do you think the to treat you any different?"

And in John chapter 13 verse 20 it tells us of another time that Jesus said to the disciples, **Truly I say unto you, he that receives whomever I send is receiving me.** So, if Jesus sends you, if you identify with Him, you are under the leading of His Spirit, then people that receive you receive Christ. **And he that receives Me receives Him that sent Me.** And again, you are lining up with the Father.

In Luke chapter 10 verse 16 Jesus said, **The one who hears you is hearing Me; and he that despises you is despising Me; and he that despises Me despises the One who sent Me.**

And so Jesus in many instances says, "If you are one with Me and under the influence of My Spirit, My words will be your words. What you hear, they are going to hear from you." So it is not personal. When I identify with Jesus Christ and I submit to and surrender to His Spirit, it is His Spirit through me and people are reacting and responding to Christ, not to me. And they might even say, "Well, I do not receive Christ, but I believe in God," and they are in some kind of world religion, "We believe in God." You cannot believe in God and reject Jesus Christ, because Jesus said, **He and the Father in Heaven are one.** So you cannot separate the two.

In John chapter 8 verses 17 through 19 Jesus told the Jews that it is written in the law, that the testimony of two people are true. He says, "The Father testifies of Me and I testify." And they said, "Where is Your Father?" Jesus answered, "You have neither seen Me nor My Father: if you had known Me you should have known My Father also." Because Jesus said, "If you have seen me you have seen the Father."

John chapter 10 verse 31 Jesus said, **I and the Father are one.** You cannot separate them. Just like you cannot separate a true genuine born-again believer from Christ. You cannot separate.

In John chapter 8 verse 42, **Jesus said, If God were your Father you would love Me: for I came out from God; neither did I come of Myself but He sent Me.** You cannot separate us.

And then in verse 41 He says about receiving, **The one receiving a prophet for the sake of the name of a prophet will receive the reward of a prophet; the one receiving a righteous man for the name of a righteous man will receive the reward of a righteous man.** Two people mentioned: the prophet and the righteous man. In Jewish society and religion the prophet is the spokesperson for God. He speaks the word of God. The righteous man is the elder, the one who has wisdom. The one who has lived many years following Torah and the law.

Notice these components. **The one receiving a prophet** (one who speaks the word of God) **for the sake of the name of a prophet**, (notice the literal translation) **will receive the reward of a prophet.** So if you listen to someone bringing God's word, and you receive His word on the status and position as that of the word of God from a prophet, you are going to receive the reward of a prophet. You are going to receive the benefit and reward of God's word that you received from that prophet. If you tell that prophet who has come from God, "You might be might a prophet, and you might be ministering for the sake of a prophet, but I do not receive it, that is just your opinion," you will not receive the benefit and reward that comes from the prophet.

What about the righteous man? **The one receiving a righteous man for the sake of the name of a righteous man, will receive the reward of a righteous man.** And so, by receiving the representative of the character of God - the one with wisdom, and the one who has lived life and experienced the things of God - by receiving what that representative (a righteous man) says, for the status and position of a righteous man that he is, you will receive a righteous man's reward for receiving from that person, what God had to say, and what God had to minister. So He is telling them, "If people reject you, they are going to reject the very benefits and ministry

that God has for them through you." But the one who receives you, not only does he receive you, he receives Christ and he receives everything that the Father has to say and do.

Verse 42, **And whoever should give to drink to one of these little ones.** Matthew chapter 18 tells us *little ones* are young children. So we have gone from leaders - prophets and righteous people - to the young, inexperienced, unlearned, young child. **Whoever should give to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only** - I mean if that is all you do is give somebody, not somebody, give one of these little ones a cup of cold water - **for the sake of the name of a disciple**, again He is talking about not children in general, but children that are disciples, belong to Christ, and disciples of Christ. **Truly I say to you he should never lose his reward.** I do not know if you have caught it, this is kind of the climax of things right now. I know I have gone a little long today. We had communion and plus I talked a little long, but you are going to get a few weeks of rest to recover.

I do not know if you have caught it yet or not, this is relational, not religion. Let me explain to you.

Matthew chapter 25 verses 31 to 46. On judgment day, listen to this, this is on Judgment Day.

31) When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory:

32) And before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from the other, as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats:

This is Judgment Day.

33) And He shall set His sheep on His right hand, but the goats He is going to put on His left.

34) Then shall the King say unto those on His right hand, that would be the sheep, Come, and be blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

That is you and me. We just go right on in. Here is the reason why.

35) For I was hungry, and you fed Me: I was thirsty, and you gave Me to drink: I was a stranger, and you took Me in:

36) I was naked, and you put clothes on Me: I was sick, and you visited Me: I was in prison, and you came to Me.

What? What has that got to do with anything?

37) Then shall the righteous answer and say, Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You? when did we see You thirsty, and give You to drink?

38) When did we see You as a stranger, and take You in? or naked, and clothe You?

39) When did we see You sick, or in prison, and came to You?

When did we do that? I mean, thanks a lot. I mean, we are not questioning. We are going into heaven, right? You do not want to say, "Excuse me, I think you got that wrong. Oh! never mind," you are going to go in. But when did we do that?

40) And the King shall answer and say unto them, Truly I say unto you, inasmuch as you have done it unto one of these least of my brethren, you have done it to me.

Why the brethren? Because Christ is in them. There is a point I am going to make here in a second.

41) Then He shall say to those on His left hand, Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

42) Because I was hungry, and you did not feed Me: I was thirsty, and you did not gave Me to drink:

43) I was a stranger, and you did not take Me in: I was naked, and you did not clothe Me: and I was in prison, and you did not visit Me.

44) Then shall they also answer and say,

Wait a minute! Give us a chance here.

Lord, when did we see You hungry and did not feed you, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and we did not minister to You?

When did those things happen? We were not even aware of them.

45) Then shall He answer them, saying, Truly I say unto you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of these least of these, (pointing to His people) you did not do it to Me.

46) And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into eternal life.

Let me say, first of all, this is not about feeding the poor. The religious are going to take this text and say, "If you want to get into heaven, we need a program that takes in all the poor. Let's distribute clothing to all the people that need clothes. Let's visit the hospitals." That is not what He is saying. The emphasis is for Christ being in people, people are responding to Christ in other people.

Here's the point I want to make. When Jesus Christ lives inside of a person, His people, He is going to create difficult circumstances not good circumstances. He is going to put me in circumstances where I am hungry. Maybe I need clothing. Maybe I need help for the day. Whatever thing. Christ in me is going to create a condition that is going to cause Christ in someone else to respond. And people are going to respond not because they are humanitarians but because - and they might not even know why. He looks like he is thirsty, he might need a drink of water. And you and I would say that is pretty insignificant. But Jesus said, "You just responded to Me, not them." Jesus creates hard circumstance that He is in. Not these circumstances where you see people parading around the street saying, "I know Jesus and I am perfectly healed, and healthy, and I am very wealthy, and rich. I am so happy, I just don't know what to do with myself." That is not Jesus. Jesus identifies with the poor, and the hungry, and those who need clothing. Those who are in prison. Those who are sick. See, we do not have time for those kinds of people in church. They cannot make a successful church, those kinds of people.

So what He is saying again, "When you were here and knew Me you responded to Me in the difficult situations of God's people." You responded and that is the proof that you belong to Christ. Not your doctrine, not your church attendance, but how you respond, not to people, but to Christ in people. How I respond to Christ here and now individually and how I respond to Christ in other people.

James presented the fact, in James chapter 2 verses 15 to 17 he says, "If you are in fellowship as a believer, and there is a believer in your fellowship that is in need, and you totally avoid them, then tell me how you are of the faith?" That just does not add up. You are playing church. You are not responding. That is not faith. Christ's Spirit in you will cause you to respond to the person in need. That is the proof that you belong to Christ. In various situations - whether it is family, friends, or circumstances, the Spirit in me is going to cause me to identify with Christ, no matter what it costs me. And it might cost me everything.

You know that I have told people before when they came to me and said, "I really want to believe in the Lord," and I have told them, "But, you know if you do, you might lose everything and everybody, because then you are going to belong to Christ and everybody else might not accept that. Are you ready for that?" Or you can adopt the religious form of Christianity, and not know the Lord at all, and just be religious about it, and everybody will be happy with you for it. But you will not know Christ and you will not go to heaven.

This is relational. This is about me someday standing in front of Jesus and having Him tell me, "I never knew you," or Him telling me, "I knew you. I saved you. I lived inside of you." Or He will tell me, "All the people that I lived inside of, you totally ignored them." Or He is going to tell me, "Me living in you caused you to respond to me living in others." That is belonging to Christ. That is what the body of Christ is all about. That is what the family of God is all about. It is not religious. It is made up of a bunch of people who have who have individual relationship with Jesus Christ coming together, and taking that relationship with Christ, and interacting together. That is a lot but I am showing you what Jesus is teaching, not what religion says.

These Scriptures that we have gone over for the last three weeks, some churches will not ever touch them, and not ever teach them to people. It would ruin their church. Some people just read through them but will not study them, or present them to their church, because it will ruin their church, and ruin people's religion. If people said, "Wait a minute, identify with Christ in order to get into heaven, where does that fit in? I thought all I had to do was believe." Well, belief is part of it. Receiving Him, surrendering to Him, receiving His Spirit into your life and belonging to Him on a personal level. Seeking Him, obeying Him, following Him, looking for His will. It is all part of our relationship. But He says, "You know what to expect from the world and even everybody around you, if you do that." But you will have the presence and blessing of Christ in the midst of it. As Paul said at the end of Romans chapter 8, **If God is for you, who can be against you?**

I have realized over the years as I have looked back I have been in situations where there have been a lot of people a lot of things going on and I realized that me and the Lord were the majority.

My son and I - when our son lived here, because it was just David and I, and then we had the three girls: we had Patty and we had Sarah and Stephanie. And David and I used to kid the other three ladies and tell them, "There is only two of us, but we are the majority."

Christ and you is the majority. The empowerment, the protection, and the blessing comes when people come against us. We are not left alone. We are blessed because we identify. When He hung on the cross, He identified with us. He now asks us to identify with Him. Hence the end of Matthew chapter 10.

Let's close with prayer.