

What I tell You in Darkness

Matthew 10:9 – 11:6

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~ The last leg of our Spiritual Safari ended in the darkness of a precious spiritual jewel mine. When light breaks forth we see the Kingdom at hand. Jesus could say the Kingdom was at hand at that time because He was right there with them in their midst. That's what the phrase means. I hope you didn't miss that because it's easy to miss and if THAT jewel is not found in your crown you will not be spiritually rich or powerful at all. You'll be an ordinary, regular, run of the mill crown wearer if you don't have this unique and exotic stone designating superiority and greatness. Some people are certainly stuck down in the mine. They're stumbling around trying in futility to eek out something precious and meaningful by speaking in tongues and healing people – and it's all wood, hay and stubble from our perspective today. They're not coming with us on safari from here, friends, I promise you that. They stopped reading a LONG time ago - because they're going to die stuck in the darkness of said spiritual jewel mine – metaphorically speaking.

Well, we're not going to stay here to try to help them, either - because Jesus sends the apostles out now – and we're going with them! If you haven't read our previous safari report I highly suggest you go back and do so now. I hope you will see how beautiful this Biblical account really is. If you have read all of Genesis and Guidelines on safari then you have read seventy-four reports; approximately a quarter million words. What that translates into is roughly a five-hundred-page novels worth of Genesis alone – and we still have a LONG way to go. Jesus has more than adequately demonstrated His power and authority to furnish the dynamic that empowers our ethics to live the Christian life. If that does not make sense to you then all is well – just go back to the Guidelines and read all the way to catch up, and you should understand. How else can you understand? I'm afraid you can't, my friend, if you're not willing to come to God His way you're not coming to God today – or ever – again! You may just want to write that down. Is the Bible supernatural? – You bet it is! ~

Jesus commissions His apostles in this section of Scripture to go out to the lost house of Israel - but they are specifically told to stay away from the Gentiles. We considered what that means to us today in our previous report. We saw how sign gifts were given to these men at this time for a very definite reason: credibility. They did not have a leather-bound New Testament Bible to preach from. Sign gifts gave them credibility. You do have a nice New Testament Bible from which everyone can be on the same page in the same language. This is part of the deduction that forms our reasonable conclusion that the sign gifts are not for today. If you can heal the sick then you can raise the dead because Jesus gave all four sign gifts as one package. I challenged one of these fakes one time by offering to drive him to a hospital. Of course, that's where they really need him; specifically in the morgue. See, this man wasn't interested in going outside of the place where he could receive an offering. That's when Jesus says....

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9 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses,

~ By contrast, when Jesus sends them out the next time, He says, "when I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And the apostles said, nothing. Then said Jesus unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one." Luke chapter twenty-two verse thirty-five. You see, friends, if you don't know who's speaking to whom about what at what time and in what context in the Word of God then you will be hopelessly confused. This type of sound doctrine will not make sense to you. These truths CANNOT be opened to your understanding unless the Spirit of God moves upon you. Until you will ask the Lord to open your eyes, you may comprehend portions of this report, but you will take away no spiritual remembrance of the Lord Jesus Christ....

10 Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.

11 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

12 And when ye come into an house, salute it.

~ This may be more applicable than we think it is today because there are many fine people who will take you in and feed you if you are truly doing the Lords works. Overall, if you can stay where there is a whole lot of privacy I would not object to staying in homes. You REALLY better double check if you are IN the Spirit of God before you make that move, though. The people you reside amongst had better be men and women of God, too, or the arrangement may end in irreparable catastrophe. This is a very different age we live in today as opposed to the time in which we are studying, naturally. What we are studying is a specific three-year period in the life of Jesus where He taught His disciples. I trust we can all agree on this in the light of that context....

13 And if the house and the people in the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

14 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.

~ Most well-meaning Christians have assumed a highly confused role in Christendom today. They have no earthly idea what they are doing; and some display their astounding Biblical illiteracy to very large congregations. I hear verse fourteen piously thrown out at the end of a religious argument with an acidic attitude resulting from a person not being able to defend whatever points they were trying to make. It's sheer hypocrisy to invoke this as a means of ending exhortation in the Word of God. None of us have ever left a town and shaken the dust off of our feet. To say we have done it in a spiritual context is to over-spiritualize the meaning of this account and miss it completely. These instructions are given to particular men for a particular reason at a particular time and place....

15 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.

16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

~ Previously, we were given the instructions concerning material things; but here, we have the tenets of truth that comprise the very principles that the apostles are commanded to live by; and these are for time and eternity, by the way. The real dangers in modern Christendom occur when saints attempt to implement one of those but not the other. I know people who are wise as serpents - but they sure aren't as harmless as a dove. They're as mean as mother bears and will tear your legs off if they get at you. Others are just gullible; they're harmless - but they're also unwise, and some are actually just plain stupid. Interestingly, a serpent is dangerous but the dove lives in danger. A proper, careful and correct balance is critical if we are to attain to any meaningful semblance of a complete Christian life....

17 But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

18 And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

19 But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

20 For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

~ Have you ever been scourged in a synagogue? I haven't; but I have been spiritually flogged in a good Bible believing church – more than once! Jesus knew the hour would come when they would arrest Him. He told them not to make preparation for anything, really. Jesus knew these apostles would be severely persecuted and oppressed; He is attempting to prepare them for what they are to do in that hour as He also tells them not to worry about what the Holy Spirit shall say through them. God should control you, too, friend; just like this - not like a zombie robot but like a son and daughter. His law should be written on your heart and His Word should be ever in your mouth....

21 And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.

~ Jesus coming into the world at this time did not bring peace on earth; and it did not unite mankind. Jesus, at this time, brought sharp divisions! He still divides today. Jesus will soon say, "think not that I have come to bring peace but the sword of division." What's the sword? The Sword is the Word of God! This is all foolishness to those who perish – but they are already dead! We that are saved have the power of God in us right NOW. Within the human family, when one member gets saved and the other doesn't, you're likely to have the division of a non-speaking long-term relationship real fast....

22 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

~ Jesus repeats this in the Olivet Discourse of Matthew chapter twenty-four at verse thirteen. The difference is: here, we are looking at an application to His three-year ministry on earth. There, we will have application made concerning the Great Tribulation period. As we know, that period only lasts a maximum of seven years. Well, what do we have to endure to be saved is the Bible question. My question is: who CAN endure? Revelation teaches that God stops the entirety of the forces of nature and evil AND of good – and seals a certain amount of people. Who will endure that? – Those that He sealed from the beginning, of course. Irrespective of the time period, the sheep that are His are going to make it through to the other side alive. That is our promise. That is our hope. Those who are His will be recognized by the fact that they endured to the end.

A preacher who honestly preached the Gospel but quits and then goes out and gets drunk: is he saved? I don't know! We're going to have to wait to get that answer from God! I do know the pigs will be found in the pig pen and the prodigal son made it home to the Father's house. Alright, we have had an extremely confusing day on safari so we're keeping this one short. We'll come back to this again and again and again. It seems like we find a

lot of sons in the pig pens and a lot of pigs up in the Father's house today. Peter says the sow that was washed returns to her wallowing again. You can wash a pig and brush its teeth and put a nice pink ribbon on it and guess what? It will head straight for the mud. Sometimes a sheep gets stuck in the mud, too. We have a wonderful Shepherd that gets us out of the mud; but we can't get ourselves out. Jesus comes down and gets us – and cleans us up...

23 But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

~ Let's be smart and understand here that the Lord Jesus means Israel: as in - over there - in that land. This is NOT Orlando, FL - or any other place. 'Till the Son of Man be come' - okay – it's difficult for us to conceive in our thinking how He covered this land of Israel. Israel had a real division in it, too, at this time. ALL you had to do in Israel is ask one hundred people who they thought the Lord Jesus was and you would get at least ninety-seven different answers. The Lord Jesus still happens to grace the cover of the most controversial book in the world - ever! So, let's look forward to how we can represent the Lord Jesus Christ; because He must come first in our lives....

24 The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.

25 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?

26 Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

~ Friends, your life is going to be turned wrong side out one day – as will mine – as will the lives of the lost man, also. Trust me on that. It is appointed unto man once to die, but after that, the judgment. When Christ takes a look at your inward space it had better appear as good as your outer space - because that's precisely where you'll be at that moment –

with Him! If the sin question in your life is not settled then your outer space will become outer darkness. That's terrifying for the lost – but, for the child of God, that is when the Lord Jesus shall say to them....

27 What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye openly and outwardly.

28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

29 Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered because Jesus knows you better than your mother:

31 Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

32 Whosoever therefore shall not be a fool to deny Jesus but confess Him before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

36 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

~ Verse thirty-four should be the moniker on the letterhead of the United Nations today. Candidly, their whole philosophy is absurd; it has proven a failure and yet man clings to it as if it works. Well, it doesn't work - and it NEVER has; according to the Word of God, that is. Have you found the Bible

to hold true so far in our safari? I have. Does the truth cry out at every tree we rest under? This that was true two thousand years ago is true today, my beloved. We are more up to date than next month's magazines. Unless you have committed your life to Christ, however – having truly paid a price by selling everything and giving it to the poor to follow Him - well, I wouldn't talk too loud about your commitment to Him. Peter says Christ is the one Who is faithful and, friends, that is the wonder of it all - just a friendly word of advice as we move along now....

37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

40 He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

41 He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

~ I would have liked to have heard the way He said, 'not worthy of Me!' – Which WORDS do you think He emphasized in verse thirty-eight? Many of us are not worthy of the Lord Jesus Christ. He's not going to throw us overboard – He may even heal us - but He may not use us! He only uses those who are really committed to Him and that should put YOU on HIGH alert! Verse thirty-nine brings us one of the many paradoxes that follow the Lord Jesus; and we'll do well to understand it properly. We close out chapter ten by noting it is our reward we are working for – NOT salvation.

We don't work for salvation and that's why we cannot lose our salvation. We may, however, not have any reward in Heaven because we didn't do anything meaningful for God while we were here on earth. I think that makes you a spiritual beggar in Heaven? – I don't know but I don't want to be that person. Let's also keep in mind that Jesus is only speaking to those who are His own here.

Alright, those words bring us to a chapter of abject rejection. We need to help others get the Word of God out. We literally turn the corner here in the ministry of the Lord Jesus as He sends His apostles forth to proclaim His arrival. Well, the people utterly dismiss and reject the apostles. Even John the Baptist gets a little disturbed here. He's been in prison since chapter four - so he's been there seven chapters. I don't care how you date it - that's a long time. John is expecting the prison doors to swing open at any moment and for Jesus to deliver him because John thinks the Lord Jesus is going to take the throne in Israel at that time! John had legitimate questions; and the question in verse three is certainly fair. We know it's a correct question because ALL questions are appropriate and proper with God! He will convict your mind if you get out of bounds with Him, friends. I have no compunction about saying that. John assumed that Jesus would have taken the throne by now - so he's deeply troubled. He is questioning what he believes, why he believes it, and what he has been teaching – and rightly so....

XI

1 And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.

2 Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples,

3 And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?

4 Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see:

5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

~ This astoundingly beautiful answer that Jesus sent back to John the Baptist can only be understood in light of the credentials that the Old Testament prophets said the Messiah would have. Well, Jesus has them. Isaiah says again and again these things in verse five will be His credentials! John recognizes the authority of Jesus. Let's end this Christmas Day leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God with His Own Words, shall we? They're certainly appropriate today. Jesus says....

6 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me ~

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