

## Matthew 10:34-39

*Read Matthew 10:1 - 11:1*

I don't want to go through the whole of Matthew chapter 10, I just want to concentrate on a few verses towards the end. But before we do that we need to set the scene.

In this chapter, Christ chooses his twelve disciples and sends them out two by two around the local villages. Many people think these instructions to His disciples are for us today, but I don't think so. I think they were specifically for that particular evangelistic campaign. And I've got two reasons for saying that:

Firstly, they were instructed NOT to go to the Gentiles or Samaritans, but only to Jews:

Matthew 10:5-6

*These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*

耶稣差这十二个人去，吩咐他们说：外邦人的路，你们不要走；撒玛利亚人的城，你们不要进；[6]宁可往以色列家迷失的羊那里去。

But we're commanded to take the gospel to the whole world:

Mark 16:15

*Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

你们往普天下去，传福音给万民（万民：原文是凡受造的）听。

Now, you could argue that that instruction was also only given to the disciples, but I think it's reasonable in that case to apply it to ourselves, because we're told that the gospel will go to the whole world before Christ comes again:

Matthew 24:14

*And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*

这天国的福音要传遍天下，对万民作见证，然後末期才来到。

None of the disciples made it to China, or Australia, or England. So it's reasonable to assume that subsequent generations are to carry on that work of going to the whole world. But the instruction here to go to Jews only, was surely just for the disciples then.

And the other reason I think these instructions were only for that particular campaign, is that the disciples were given power to do miraculous things:

Matthew 10:1

*And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.*

耶稣叫了十二个门徒来，给他们权柄，能赶逐污鬼，并医治各样的病症。

Matthew 10:7-8

*And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.*

随走随传，说天国近了！医治病人，叫死人复活，叫长大？疯的洁净，把鬼赶出去。你们白白的得来，也要白白的舍去。

I don't know about you, but apart from preaching, "*The kingdom of heaven is at hand*," I can't do any of that. Which again implies this was only for the disciples at the time.

But, having said that, some things in this chapter we can apply to ourselves.

Matthew 10:16-17

*Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;....*

我差你们去，如同羊进入狼群；所以你们要灵巧像蛇，驯良像鸽子。你们要防备人；因为他们要把你们交给公会，也要在会堂里鞭打你们，....

We're sheep in the midst of wolves. We ought to be wise about how evil men can be, because we were wolves once. We should now be peaceable and harmless as doves. The warning to "*beware of men*" is just as relevant today as ever.

And the warning they'll be delivered up to councils and synagogues isn't just for the disciples either, because the warning is repeated in Matthew 24, and Mark 13 which are about the end times. So these things we can apply to ourselves.

Then we come to these verses, which are more relevant to our subject today:

Matthew 10:21-22

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

弟兄要把弟兄，父亲要把儿子，送到死地；儿女要与父母为敌，害死他们；并且你们要为我的名被众人恨恶。惟有忍耐到底的必然得救。

I particularly want to look at verses 34 to 39, but here's a kind of introduction. We need to understand that Christians will be hated of all men for Christ's name's sake. Why is that?

John 15:18-19

*If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*

世人若恨你们，你们知道（或作：该知道），恨你们以先已经恨我了。你们若属世界，世界必爱属自己的；只因你们不属世界，乃是我从世界中拣选了你们，所以世界就恨你们。

The world hated Christ, so the world is going to hate His followers too. In fact Christ was hated so much, He was put to death. But why did the world hate Christ so much?

John 7:7

*The world cannot hate you [referring to Christians before conversion]; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.*

世人不能恨你们，却是恨我，因为我指证他们所做的是恶的。

Christ told the world its ways are evil. And He calls all men, even today, that they need to change and repent of their sins. But men love their sins too much to give them up:

John 3:19

*And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

光来到世间，世人因自己的行为是恶的，不爱光，倒爱黑暗，定他们的罪就是在此。

Men naturally hate Christ. And if we tell men today that their ways are evil, they'll hate us too. But the fact is, the ways of the world **are** evil. We can't pretend they're not. All men want to do is to please themselves. They couldn't really care less about anyone else, as long as they're happy, that's all that matters. What a waste of time. Do something useful. We're born with such self-centred natures. And we can't get out of it. That's why we need Jesus Christ, this man that they hate so much. He died on the cross to save all those who would come to Him from the consequences of their sin. We can try as much as we like to get away from our sin, but we can't do it, and we don't want to do it either. But...

John 3:17-18

*For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

因为神差他的儿子降世，不是要定世人的罪（或作：审判世人；下同），乃是要叫世人因他得救。信他的人，不被定罪；不信的人，罪已经定了，因为他不信神独生子的名。

God sent a Saviour. If we believe on Him, we can be saved from the consequence of our sins. That's the simple Christian message. It's so easy, but the world generally doesn't want to know. And it's not just the message they don't like. They don't like the way Christians are different from them, and they'll hate anything they don't understand.

Those who truly believe in Jesus Christ will be changed from the inside. They become altogether different from what they were:

2 Corinthians 5:17

*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

若有人在基督里，他就是新造的人，旧事已过，都变成新的了。

That really annoys people. We're not like them any more. Because we no longer want to live for ourselves. We want to live for God. They just won't be able to understand that.

Galatians 2:20

*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

我已经与基督同钉十字架，现在活着的不再是我，乃是基督在我里面活着；并且我如今在肉身活着，是因信神的儿子而活；他是爱我，为我舍己。

So the world will hate us, because we're no longer like them. That's the introduction. Now let's come to the text I want to look at, beginning in v.34:

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

你们不要想我来是叫地上太平；我来并不是叫地上太平，乃是叫地上动刀兵。

Most people are going to be surprised by that statement. Did Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, really say that? What about those Christmas cards we get:

Luke 2:14

*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.*

在至高之处荣耀归与神！在地上平安归与他所喜悦的人

Surely, Jesus Christ came to bring peace. Well, He did. We can now have peace with God, thanks to Christ's coming and dying on a cross. Our sins, which separate us from God, can be forgiven. But to avail ourselves of that peace, we must give them up. We must come to Him, believe on Him, and trust in Him to change us. If we never do that, we're still bound to our sinful nature. And we'll be judged justly for that.

So Christ did come to bring peace. Peace between God and man, because without Him we're alienated from God. There are only two types of people in the world: Those who come to Christ and are saved from the consequences of their sins, and those who don't and aren't. That's what Christ meant when He said He came not to send peace, but a sword. Or, as the equivalent passage in Luke puts it, He brings division:

Luke 12:51

*Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:*

你们以为我来，是叫地上太平麼？我告诉你们，不是，乃是叫人分争。

Christ didn't deliberately come to bring division, He came to bring peace, peace between God and man. But because people reject Him, a division occurs. The division is a consequence of men rejecting Christ. They're the actual cause of the division not Christ.

*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.*

因为我来是叫人与父亲生疏，女儿与母亲生疏，媳妇与婆婆生疏。

The equivalent passage in Luke continues:

Luke 12:52-53

*For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.*

从今以後，一家五个人将要分争：三个人和两个人相争，两个人和三个人相争；父亲和儿子相争，儿子和父亲相争；母亲和女儿相争，女儿和母亲相争；婆婆和媳妇相争，媳妇和婆婆相争。

And this is actually a quote from the prophet Micah:

Micah 7:5-7

*Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom. For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house. Therefore I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me.*

不要倚赖邻舍；不要信靠密友。要守住你的口；不要向你怀中的妻提说。因为，儿子藐视父亲；女儿抗拒母亲；媳妇抗拒婆婆；人的仇敌就是自己家里的人。至於我，我要仰望耶和华，要等候那救我的神；我的神必应允我。

If we're going to be hated of all men for Christ's name's sake, that's sadly going to include our unconverted relatives. We can't get away from it.

You might say, my unconverted relatives don't hate me. They might think I'm strange because I go to church, but they don't actually hate me. Well, good. We don't go looking for trouble. We're peaceable people. But, there is a problem in that, if we get on too well with our own family, the temptation will be that we begin to grow cold towards the things of God. If we have truly been changed in our hearts by Jesus Christ, there will be a real difference between us and unconverted family members. Christ will "set a man at variance against his father," and so on. There will be things in their lives we don't approve of.

We'll always want more than anything for our family members to know Jesus Christ for themselves. Because without Him, they're going to be judged on account of their own sin. But our own families will be the hardest people to convince of the truth. And you might say, that's because they're the closest people to us, so they know what we're really like. And there's some truth in that. But even the sinless Christ, who never had any faults, had this problem with the people from the town He grew up in, Nazareth:

Matthew 13:54-58

*And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things? And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house. And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.*

来到自己的家乡，在会堂里教训人，甚至他们都希奇，说：这人从那里有这等智慧和异能呢？这不是木匠的儿子么？他母亲不是叫马利亚么？他弟兄们不是叫雅各、约西、西门、犹大么？他妹妹们不是都在我们这里么？这人从那里有这一切的事呢？他们就厌弃他（厌弃他：原文是因他跌倒）。耶稣对他们说：大凡先知，除了本地本家之外，没有不被人尊敬的。耶稣因为他们不信，就在那里不多行异能了。

When Christ was growing up, He must have been so different from everybody else. The citizens of Nazareth must have noticed it, but still didn't understand who He really was.

Joseph and Mary themselves were a godly couple. And after Christ was born, we're told they had at least six more children, four more brothers and a plurality of sisters. And we're also told that the brothers, while He was alive at least, didn't believe in Him.

John 7:5

*For neither did his brethren believe in him.* 因为连他的弟兄说这话，是因为不信他

Even Christ Himself came from a divided family. That couldn't have been because they saw what He was really like underneath. God forbid! He was sinless. So, this division is caused by more than just that our family knowing what we're really like.

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

人的仇敌就是自己家里的人。

Every family on earth will be divided into those who believe and those who don't. That's inevitable. But we're told here they will be our "foes." And that's because Christ said:

Matthew 12:30

*He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.*

不与我相合的，就是敌我的；不同我收聚的，就是分散的。

Many times, our families will be good to us after we've become a Christian. They'll probably think it's just a phase we're going through. But, no matter how kind they are to us, they're still on the other side. They're the ones who need to change. They need Christ.

But there are also many families who will absolutely hate the fact we've been converted. I met a murderer once. While he was in prison, in Strangeways, he was converted. After he got out of prison, he went back to his parents and told them the good news that he'd now become a Christian and that his old life of violence was over, and they threw him out of the house. They'd rather have a murderer living with them than a Christian.

Not so long ago, we visited a Muslim part of China. We were talking with the elder of the local church, and my wife asked if they had many Muslim converts in the congregation. He told us that they wouldn't be able to come and worship openly. There was a congregation of converted Muslims in the town, but they had to meet in secret. Most muslim converts would have to move to another city, because the families were so powerful. They'd be killed if they knew where they were. As long as they toed the line behind the family, the clan, they'd be well looked after. So it must take a lot of faith to renounce all that and challenge the family and tell them they're wrong.

And then we hear stories here of ex-Jehovah's Witnesses being disfellowshipped and shunned by their families. In all these cases, we remember:

Psalm 27:10

*When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.*

我父母离弃我，耶和華必收留我。

Those who are thrown out of their families, tend to become the strongest Christians, because they've lost the most by becoming a Christian. They put most of us to shame.

So, whatever our situation, however antagonistic or otherwise our families are towards us, how should we deal with them? Should we be antagonistic back? No, of course not.

Romans 12:21

*Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*

你不可为恶所胜，反要以善胜恶。

We can start at the fifth Commandment:

Exodus 20:12

*Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*

当孝敬父母，使你的日子在耶和華—你神所赐你的地上得以长久。

And Paul's letter to the Ephesians expands on this:

Ephesians 6:1-4

*Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou*

*mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*

你们作儿女的，要在主里听从父母，这是理所当然的。要孝敬父母，使你得福，在世长寿。这是第一条带应许的诫命。你们作父亲的，不要惹儿女的气，只要照着主的教训和警戒养育他们。

We should always honour our parents no matter what. But there's a difference between honouring and obeying. We should normally obey them as well. But if they try to force us to sin, like try to get us to deny our faith, we have to say, "No." That's the only case when we shouldn't obey them. And if that means we get thrown out of the house, so be it. We should still honour them, even if we can't physically be with them.

And then, as our parents grow old, we may have to look after them. Quite often, old people can be very difficult, especially if they've lived their whole lives in sin. We're called, if we can, to care about them, to provide for our families:

1 Timothy 5:8

*But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.*

人若不看顾亲属，就是背了真道，比不信的人还不好，不看顾自己家里的人，更是如此。

And then, talking of split families, what about unequally yoked marriages? If we marry, we're called to marry only in the Lord. But many people either make terrible mistakes or are converted after marriage. So the Bible gives us instructions for these situations too:

1 Peter 3:1-4

*Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.*

你们作妻子的要顺服自己的丈夫；这样，若有不信从道理的丈夫，他们虽然不听道，也可以因妻子的品行被感化过来；这正是因看见你们有贞洁的品行和敬畏的心。你们不要以外面的辮头发，戴金饰，穿美衣为妆饰，只要以里面存着长久温柔、安静的心为妆饰；这在神面前是极宝贵的。

The believing partner must show their difference, not by arguing all the time, but by their lives. And we could extend this to our dealings with all family members. We show the difference by our life, our "*meek and quiet spirit.*" We're Christ's witness to them.

*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.*

爱父母过於爱我的，不配作我的门徒；爱儿女过於爱我的，不配作我的门徒；

In the end, we'll have to choose between Christ or our family. If ever our family tries to force us to sin, we have to make a stand, we can't avoid it. Otherwise we're making them more important in our lives than Christ. And in that case, we won't be worthy of Him.

There's an interesting verse in Luke:

Luke 14:26

*If any man come to me, and **hate** not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.*

人到我这里来，若不爱我胜过爱自己的父母、妻子、儿女、弟兄、姐妹，和自己的性命，就不能作我的门徒。

Here's another surprising verse in the Bible. Is the God of love really telling us to hate our family members? Well, "hate" is the same as loving less. If a man says to his wife, "I love you, but I love you less than that other woman over there," he's not really loving his wife at all, he's hating her. Who'd put up with that? We've got a Biblical example to show this:

Genesis 29:30-31

*And he went in also unto Rachel, and **he loved also Rachel more than Leah**, and served with him yet seven other years. And when the Lord saw that **Leah was hated**, he opened her womb: but Rachel was barren.*

雅各也与拉结同房，并且爱拉结胜似爱利亚，於是又服事了拉班七年。耶和華見利亚失宠，就使他生育，拉结却不生育。

Matthew 6:24

*No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other.*

一个人不能事奉两个主；不是恶这个，爱那个，就是重这个，轻那个。

When we talk about hatred, we assume it means being nasty, but that's not what we mean at all. We're never to be nasty to anybody. But we must hate them in the sense of loving Christ more. We can love them in the sense of helping them whenever we can, but we can never approve of their sinful behaviour. We must love Christ more, because He was sinless. He's not like our unconverted family members. He is altogether lovely.

So, when the crunch comes, and it will, do we love our family members more than Christ, their sins and all, or do we forsake our families, always preferring to follow Christ? We've got a new family now. Our real family consists of all those who know Christ. Our blood family is no longer our real family, unless they repent and come to Him themselves.

Mark 10:29-30

*There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now*

*in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.*

我实在告诉你们，人为我和福音撇下房屋，或是弟兄、姐妹、父母、儿女、田地，没有不在今世得百倍的，就是房屋、弟兄、姐妹、母亲、儿女、田地，并且要受逼迫，在来世必得永生。

We've got a new family in this world, albeit with persecutions, and in the world to come we'll have eternal life. Now that doesn't mean we have to physically separate from our blood families, unless we're forced to. We can still care about them, but they're not our true family any more, because they won't understand us. The only people who'll really understand us are all those who've also experienced Christ as we have. These are the ones we can truly tell all our concerns to. Our unconverted blood family have no idea how to help us because they don't know Christ. So we should never take advice from them.

And to go back to Luke 14:26, where it talks about hating our family. Notice it says we must hate our *own life also*. Anyone who comes to Christ, starts to see more and more his own sin. And we hate it. We're converted people, we've been changed from the inside, yet we still see sin within us. And it's far more hateful to us than any sin we see in anybody else. Because it's ours, and we should have forsaken it all, and we haven't.

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

[38] 不背着他的十字架跟从我的，也不配作我的门徒。

We all have crosses to bear, whether it's an unbelieving partner, a dysfunctional family, or rebellious family member. But the greatest cross we have to bear is ourselves. We can't change anyone else. We can tell them to change. We can point them to Christ. But we can't actually change them, only Christ can, because He's the only one who can change hearts. But we can help ourselves, by allowing ourselves to be changed by Christ.

We need to start hating ourselves more, by mortifying the flesh, putting to death the deeds of the body, and producing fruit, which we can now do thanks to the Holy Spirit.

Psychologists today tell us we all need more self-esteem, we need to love ourselves more, but that's not true. The problem is, we love ourselves too much. Me, me, me, my problems, my problems, my life, my life. That's all we can talk about. The problem with us is that we don't hate ourselves enough. We're by nature such terribly selfish creatures. That's why we need to be changed from the inside, and only Christ can do that.

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

[39] 得着生命的，将要丧失生命；为我丧失生命的，将要得着生命。

Are we finding our life in this world, or losing it? Is all we think about here and now, in this world? What can I do now, where can I go on holiday next? What exciting thing can I watch on TV tonight? Me, me, me. Is all we think about, our own activities, our own desires? If it is, we're finding our life in this world, and if we carry on, we'll lose our lives in the end. Wasting the life God gave us in this world will be punished in the next.

So, how can we avoid that and find life in the next world? We must lose it here. And we must lose it for Christ's sake.

We can't do that ourselves, we're too self-centred for that. But if we call on Christ, He can change us. If we don't want to be changed because we like our selfish life too much, He's not going to listen. But, if we really do want to be changed, to get out of this mess, this selfish, sinful life, then He will hear our prayer and He will change us for ever.

That's what we all need. We will have opposition, not least from unconverted family members. We may even get thrown out of our families for good. We might lose everything in this world. But it'll be worth every bit of it. And we can say, with the apostle Paul:

Philippians 3:8-11

*But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.*

不但如此，我也将万事当作有损的，因我以认识我主基督耶稣为至宝。我为他已经丢弃万事，看作粪土，为要得着基督；并且得以在他里面，不是有自己因律法而得的义，乃是有信基督的义，就是因信神而来的义，使我认识基督，晓得他复活的大能，并且晓得和他一同受苦，效法他的死，或者我也得以从死里复活。

May every one of us come to know Jesus Christ for ourselves, and truly get victory over our sin.