



the making of a

Disciple



INSTRUCTIONS FOR FUTURE DISCIPLES

John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the
Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament
Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: W.B. Eerdmans;
Paternoster Press, 2005).



Matthew 10:16 – 23 (NKJV)

¹⁶ “Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

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

¹⁸ You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.

¹⁹ But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak;



Matthew 10:16 – 23 (NKJV)

²⁰ for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

²¹ “Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death.

²² And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved.

²³ When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.



IN MATTHEW 10:16 – 23

- Here the Lord spoke of persecution, but we have no record that the Twelve suffered during their tour.
- Jesus also spoke of a ministry to the Gentiles.
- The Holy Spirit had not been given, yet Jesus talked about the Spirit speaking in them.
- The text indicates worldwide persecution, yet the Apostles were ministering only in their land.
- Finally, it speaks about the return of the Lord, which certainly moves these events into the future.



1. As a disciple, you will be “sent out” to make other disciples.

Matthew 10:16 (NKJV)

“Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

- We must remember Christianity is a missionary faith. Jesus sends us out as “sheep in the midst of wolves”.
- “Sheep in the midst of wolves” emphasizes the committed vulnerability that characterizes the missionaries. Matthew also emphasizes the external threats to be encountered by the missionaries.

“SEND YOU OUT”

ἀποστέλλω, ἐμπέμπω [apostello /ap·os·tel·lo/] v.

¹ to order (one) to go to a place appointed. ² to send away, dismiss.
^{2a} to allow one to depart, that he may be in a state of liberty. ^{2b} to order one to depart, send off.

- It appears that Jesus is sending them as well as this generation into a losing battle, and that is not the case.



GOD “SEND US OUT” INTO BATTLES TO WIN

Psalm 44:4 – 6 (NKJV)

⁴ You are my King, O God; Command victories for Jacob.

⁵ Through You we will push down our enemies; Through Your name we will trample those who rise up against us.

⁶ For I will not trust in my bow, Nor shall my sword save me.

We look vulnerable, but we are not.



2. Be wise and harmless

Matthew 10:16 (NKJV)

“Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

Wise – φρόνιμος [phronimos /fron·ee·mos/] adj. It is to be intelligent, prudent and mindful of one’s interests.



WE NEED GOD'S WISDOM

James 1:5 (NKJV)

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.



- We need God's wisdom to get through life successfully because it's hard to distinguish what is truly right with just our own understanding. We need God's wisdom to help us discern and make good decisions.
- Otherwise, we're just floundering around doing what we think is best (which isn't really best), or doing whatever we want (which is worse).





**Our goal is to win
wherever God sends us.
So we need His wisdom.**

BE HARMLESS

Harmless - ἀκέραιος [akeraios /ak·er·ah·yos/] adj. It is unmixed, pure as in wines or metals. It is the purity of the mind, without a mixture of evil, free from cunningness, innocent, simple.

- **We don't have to be deceitful to win others to Christ.** Our motives should be pure at all times.



Proverbs 15:26 (NKJV)

The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the LORD, But the words of the pure are pleasant.

Proverbs 21:8 (NKJV)

The way of a guilty man is perverse; But as for the pure, his work is right.



- The way of the wicked is opposed to truth and estranged from it. The pure prove themselves as such by their right conduct.
- How we publicly conduct ourselves will display the motives of our hearts to win others for the Kingdom of God.

We should be those who heal and not hurt. We are to be harmless.



3. Be Attentive

Matthew 10:17 – 18 (NKJV)

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

¹⁸ You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.



BEWARE (v. 17)

- **Beware** - προσέχω [*prosecho /pros·ekh·o/*] *v.* It is to turn the mind to, attend to be attentive and apply one's self to. It is to devote thought and effort to.
- “Beware” is a an action verb. It would help if you took notice of your surroundings.
- Everyone is not excited about us ministering Christ, repenting, and God's kingdom.



Ephesians 5: 15 – 17 (NKJV)

¹⁵ See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,

¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

¹⁷ Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.



- In Paul's time, this text meant that Roman persecution was on the way.
- How foolish it is to waste opportunities to win the lost when soon those opportunities might be taken away by the advances of sin in society! If the days were evil when Paul wrote this letter, what is our condition today?



UNDERSTAND (v. 17)

- God has given us a mind. In verse 17, “understand” suggests using our minds to discover and do the will of God.
- Too many Christians believe that discovering God’s will is a mystical experience that rules out clear thinking. But this idea is wrong—and dangerous.



- We discover the will of God as He transforms our mind (Rom. 12:1 – 2), and this transformation is the result of the Word of God, prayer, meditation and worship.
- If God gave you a mind, He expects you to use it. This means that learning His will involves gathering facts, examining them, weighing them and praying for His wisdom.
- God does not want us only to know His will; He wants us to understand His will.

Jesus said be attentive.



4. Do not be anxious

Matthew 10:19 – 22 (NKJV)

¹⁹ But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak;

²⁰ for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

²¹ “Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death.

²² And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved.



DO NOT WORRY

Worry - μεριμνάω [*merimnao /mer·im·nah·o/*] *v.* *It is to be anxious.*
1 a to be troubled with cares. 2 to care for, look out for (a thing).

- Jesus encourages the disciples not to worry when they find themselves persecuted or troubled for being a follower of the Kingdom of God.



God Will Empower the Disciples to Speak Before Rulers (10:18 – 20)

- That this passage speaks of Roman governors in the plural (Judea had only one governor) indicates that Matthew again points beyond the immediate mission of the Twelve to the continuing mission of the church among the nations (28:19).

Matthew 28:19 (NKJV)

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,



The hearings were their testimony.

- God allowed the hearings precisely for a testimony.

Mark 13:10 – 11 (NKJV)

¹⁰ And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations.

¹¹ But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.



God will empower the disciples by the Holy Spirit of prophecy.

- Thus despite the ancient aristocracy's valuing of rhetorical skills, disciples need not be anxious about what they will say.

Luke 21:13 – 15 (NKJV)

13 But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony.

14 Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer;

15 for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist.



Divided Families (10:21 – 22)

- Jesus promises opposition so severe that it will divide even families. The hatred of all on account of Jesus' name will extend even to those in closest relation to us.
- The gospel is offensive to those who reject its demands or whose culture or tradition it challenges. Although Judaism considered betrayal to Gentiles a heinous act.
- In a culture dominated by honor and shame, in which the opinion of family members was paramount, such a threat demanded an incomparably high allegiance to Christ.



Opposition Within Israel (10:23)

- Even in Jewish Palestine, persecution would be so intense that disciples would have no secure refuge until Jesus' return.
- Persecution would cause disciples to flee from one city to another (Mt 10:23; 23:34); this persecution in Israel would not subside fully until the Son of Man's return.
- Their missionary task and its attendant persecution would not be completed until Jesus' return; in the end, however, Israel would repent.





**There is a great investment in
being a disciple, but there is
also a great return.**