



Matthew 10:1-42

SNAKES AND DOVES

The sending forth of the disciples upon their first preaching tour has been the favorite pretext of misguided fanatics through the centuries. Time and again, some erratic soul has taken these commands literally and endeavored to practice them even to the point of the sandals and staff. They overlook the very first statement of our Lord in Matthew's account—that this mission was purely local and temporary, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel... But it is also true that in Matthew's account, further on in our Lord's discourse (vv. 16-23), He seems to go beyond the immediate application, giving a prophecy about the trials and persecutions which they would undergo following His ascension. There we have an application that stretches through all the Gospel ages. —Vance Havner (1901-86)

The Five Major Discourses of Jesus in Matthew:

1. The Sermon on the Mount (5:1-7:29)
2. The Mission of the Disciples (10:1-42)
3. The Parables of the Kingdom (13:1-53)
4. The Instruction of the Disciples (18:1-19:2)
5. The Prophecy of the End Times (24:1-25:46)

In Matthew 5-9, Jesus has demonstrated His Messianic authority in both word and deed. Now He sends out His twelve disciples, with His authority, to proclaim the message of the kingdom of heaven.

The mission of the disciples is only to *the lost sheep of the house of Israel* (10:6). The Messiah, the King of the Jews, has come to offer the promised Davidic kingdom to Israel (cf. 2 Sam. 7:1-29; Psalm 89:30-37). The disciples' message is the same as John the Baptist (3:2) and Jesus (4:17)—*The kingdom of heaven has drawn near!*

Because Matthew 10 is a specific mission with a specific purpose at a specific time, some aspects of Jesus' instruction do not directly apply to us today. However, there are principles in Jesus' message that transcend the occasion and are applicable to us today.

1. **We are called to a ministry of _____ with Jesus** (10:1, 18, 22, 24-25, 32-33, 38-39, 40-42).

2. **We are called to a ministry of _____ with others** (10:2-4; cf. Mark 6:7, Luke 10:1).

Before Jesus sent out His ambassadors, He preached an "ordination sermon" to encourage and prepare them. In this sermon, the King had something to say to all of His servants—past, present, and future. Unless we recognize this fact, the message of this chapter will seem hopelessly confused. —Warren Wiersbe

The main feature of this list is its diversity. Jesus chose His disciples from a variety of backgrounds and life experiences. About all they had in common was that none of them were privileged or from backgrounds of high status. —David Guzik

Apostle. Greek, *apostolos*, "a delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders" (Thayer).

It is worthy of notice that those who were Christ's apostles were first his disciples; to intimate, that men must be first taught of God, before they be sent of God. —Adam Clarke (1762-1832)

The apostolic number represents the twelve tribes of Israel; and for practical purposes the twelve form...a sufficient jury and a competent company of witnesses. —Charles H. Spurgeon

3. We are called to a ministry of _____ (10:1, 8).

Jesus empowered His twelve apostles with the “signs of an apostle” (2 Cor. 12:12) to authenticate their message (Heb. 2:3-4). God still heals today but not through “special apostles” with special power. As believers, we are to minister compassionately to others and pray for their healing (physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually).

4. We are called to a ministry of _____ (10:8-10).

5. We are called to a ministry of _____ (10:11-16).



Wise
Grk, *phronimos*
“prudent, one with wise, quick perception”

Innocent
Grk, *akeraios*
“unmixed (motives), pure, free from deceit.”



6. We are called to a ministry of _____ (10:17-39).

In 10:17-39, Jesus goes beyond preparing His twelve disciples for their current mission and describes the challenges that His disciples will face after His death, up until the day that He returns to earth.

The Sources of Opposition (10:17-18; 21-22; 34-36)

The Reason for Opposition (10:18; 22)

The Response to Opposition:

- Do not _____.
- Be _____.
- Put Christ _____.

7. We are called to a ministry of _____ (10:40-42).

Whether one is an apostle, prophet, righteous one, or a “little one” makes no difference. If we represent Jesus Christ, we are His. Those who persecute us persecute Him (cf. Acts 9:4). Those who receive us receive Him. And those in Christ we support, we share in the reward.

Heal. Greek, *therapeuo*, “to serve others; to cure, care for, restore to health” (Vine).

The disciples need the cunning of snakes without the venom.
—R. T. France

Shrewdness and integrity form a crucial combination not often found in the Christian church. In fact, we more often invert the two, proving to be as guilty as serpents and as stupid as doves.
—Craig L. Blomberg

The sparrow does not have to fall from a height, or die, but merely stumble as it hops along 'on the ground,' and God knows and cares! How much more is He concerned when one of His children stumbles and falls!
—Our Daily Bread (Oct 2016)

The Lord is not referring to a temporary denial of Him under pressure...but to that kind of denial that is habitual and final.
—William MacDonald

When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.
—Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Jesus makes the entire position of men in the world to come, whether for blessing or woe, to depend upon their relationship to and attitude toward him in this present world. Is this a claim which any mere man might have made?
—N. B. Stonehouse

Life affords but few opportunities of doing great services for others; but there is scarcely an hour of the day that does not afford us an opportunity of performing some little, it may be unnoticed, kindness.
—Dwight L. Moody