

Matthew 10:5a, 21-33 ESV

# Important Instructions from Jesus

Services: Sunday, 6/25 at 8:00 & 10:45 + Monday, 6/26 at 7 PM

Church Year: 3<sup>rd</sup> Sun. after Pentecost / 2<sup>nd</sup> Sun. after Trinity – 2017

**Introduction**: Dear friends in Christ: What is really important? **Not** me, **not** this building, and **not** even this congregation; instead, *these things are really important*: ➔ God – *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*, ➔ God’s Word, ➔ the finished work of Jesus, and ➔ God’s work – *by the Spirit* – through Word and Sacrament to **bring** us to Christ and **keep** us in Christ!

In this sermon we are going to hear important instructions that Jesus gave to His twelve disciples (apostles) *just before He sent them out* (<sup>5</sup> **These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them...**); some of those instructions we heard last week, now we jump ahead to **Matthew 10:21**:

1. **Regarding Persecution**: Jesus knew the goal of persecution – *to destroy the mission of His disciples*; therefore, He told them ➔ what to expect, ➔ how to proceed, and ➔ how to remain encouraged!
  - a. <sup>21</sup> **“Brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death,** <sup>22</sup> **and you will be hated by all for my name’s sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.”** // We tend to trust those who are closest to us; for Jesus, the closest was John – *who cared for Jesus’ mother*; then, Peter, James,

and John – *the inner circle*; then, the twelve – *one of which betrayed Jesus!* With Jesus' words, He described **close blood relationships**: †brother to brother, †father to child, and †children to parents. We tend to trust such people, but Jesus warned that *even they will betray you – and even to death!* So why should we endure such things and keep trusting in Jesus? Because **“the one who endures to the end will be saved.”**

- b. <sup>23</sup> **“When they persecute you in one town [literally, in this city], flee to the next [literally, to another, a different one], for truly, I say to you, you will not have gone through all the towns [literally, cities] of Israel before the Son of Man comes.”** // Jesus just communicated two things: **(1) It's okay to flee!** If we are killed, *then we are silenced*; therefore, it's okay to flee to another place in order to keep proclaiming the good news that *Christ has come and heaven is open through Him!* **(2) You have time, so get going, but, before you are done, I will come!** In other words, I will bring judgment upon Jerusalem and the nation; Jesus did so, starting in AD 66, *which led to the great destruction in AD 70.*

2. **Regarding Disciples:** Disciples are **people who learn from Jesus**, *so let us absorb all of His teachings!*

- a. <sup>24</sup> **“A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. <sup>25</sup> It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master.”** // Since Jesus is **THE CHRIST**, let us, **as faithful learners**, grow more and more to

become *like Him* in **what we know**, **what we believe**, **what we say**, and **how we show love to God and others!**

- b. **“If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household.”** // Beelzebul in the OT means **“Baal is prince”** (2 Kings 1:2, TLSB note). In the NT Jesus’ opponents called Him that name to *associate Him with Satan*. Since Jesus was so mistreated, *we should expect even more as ones who are saved through Jesus’ finished work!*

3. **Regarding Confession:** Confession is to **say what we believe!** Since fear can silence us, *Jesus addressed it!*
- a. <sup>26</sup> **“So have no fear of them** [*of those who call you Beelzebul*], **for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known.** <sup>27</sup> **What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered** [*literally, in the ear*], **proclaim on the housetops.** <sup>28</sup> **And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell** [*a place for the punishment of the wicked*].” // None of us want to be **called names**, **harmed physically**, or **killed**; since fear of such things tries to quiet us, *Jesus told us to “have no fear.”* Jesus also talked of **two fears**: **(1)** people destroying what is temporary and **(2)** God destroying what is eternal. **Lenski** put it this way: **“To lose the body is to lose little, to lose the soul is to lose all”** (410).

- i. <sup>29</sup> **“Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father.”** // Though sparrows seem unimportant, *God knows them; even more, God knows us!*
- ii. <sup>30</sup> **“But even the hairs of your head are all numbered** [*literally, all having been numbered*].” // God not only knows *how many*, but has given each one a number; *certainly He deeply cares about us!*
- iii. <sup>31</sup> **“Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.”** // Sparrows are of value to God; we, *His holy children in Christ*, are **much more valuable!**
- b. <sup>32</sup> **“So everyone who acknowledges** [*literally, confesses, professes*] **me before men, I also will acknowledge** [*confess, profess*] **before my Father who is in heaven,** <sup>33</sup> **but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.”** // To confess “before men” is to *publicly* associate ourselves with the Christ – *regarding ✓ what we say and ✓ what we do!* Since we are **eternally** blessed through Jesus’  
 ♦living, ♦suffering, and ♦dying, *let us fearlessly confess Him before others!*

**Conclusion:** Let us pray: Dear Holy Spirit, keep ♦filling us, ♦causing us to rejoice in Jesus, and ♦moving us to confess Him in word and deed! In Jesus’ name, we pray!