

Dr. Craig Keener, Matthew, Session 11, Matthew 10-11

Podcast Audio Overview

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All right. So are you ready to dive deep? Let's do it. Always ready for a good deep dive.

Okay. Excellent. So we are going deep into the gospel of Matthew today, chapters 10 and 11 to be specific.

And we're going to be using Dr. Craig Keener's lectures as our guide. Sounds good. And really, I mean, picture this: Jesus sending his disciples on their first mission.

It's like, wow, this is a big deal. Absolutely. It's such a pivotal moment, isn't it? Keep up.

This is where the rubber meets the road, you know? Right. Exactly. It's like, all right, you've been learning from me.

You've been watching me. Right. Now it's your turn to go and do it.

Yeah. Put it into practice. So he sends out the 12 apostles.

And this is something that Keener points out. And it's like, how can you miss this? This directly mirrors the 12 tribes of Israel. That's right.

I mean, come on. That can't be a coincidence. Definitely not.

It's a deliberate echo, I think, a way of connecting Jesus's mission to the history of Israel. Right. Yeah.

Like the new Israel, this new covenant. Yeah. So it seems that at this point, Jesus's mission is really focused on the Jewish people.

Yeah. I would say that's accurate. At least initially, his primary audience is his own people.

Okay. That makes sense. Yeah.

But now what are they supposed to do? I know they're preaching the good news, but what else is involved in this mission? Oh, there's a lot more to it than just preaching. Yeah. They're also given the authority to heal the sick.

Okay. To cast out demons. It's like, wow.

Yeah. No kidding. It's a lot of responsibility.

It is. And power too. I mean, that's a huge responsibility.

Huge responsibility. Yeah. But one of the things that really jumped out to me is the instruction to travel simply.

Right. Relying on God's provision and the generosity of others. It's this beautiful picture of radical trust, right? Yeah.

Absolutely. Yeah. And it's not a new idea either.

Yeah. We see this throughout history, right? Yeah. With prophets in the Old Testament.

Even some groups like the Essenes. Yes. And this is where I love how Kiener brings in these historical connections and cultural insights.

Yeah. He's great at that. He even shares his own story of trusting God's provision, supporting a child in Kolkata.

Wow. Pursuing his PhD when he didn't know how he'd make ends meet. Yeah.

That's stepping out in faith, for sure. It's powerful because it makes it real. It's not just some abstract theological concept.

Right. It's like, okay, this is how it can actually play out in a person's life. Exactly.

And it's so inspiring because it makes you think, what's possible when you really step out in faith? Totally. I mean, we all have those moments where we're like, okay, God, I need you to come through here. Oh, yeah.

For sure. And sometimes it's scary, right? But there's also this incredible sense of peace when you know that you're not in control. Right.

That you're trusting in something bigger than yourself. Right. Like, I'm letting go, and I'm trusting that you're going to catch me.

Exactly. And you know, another thing that Kiener highlights is some of the cultural nuances that we might miss otherwise. Uh-huh.

Like, how even greetings carried weight. Yeah. They weren't just like, hey, what's up? Right, right.

They were this expression of blessing and prayer. Yeah.

It's like each interaction carried spiritual significance. Right. And then even something as simple as shaking dust off your feet.

That was huge. Yeah. It was a symbolic act.

It signified a rejection of those who had refused God's message. It's like, okay, I'm wiping my hands clean of this. Right.

Moving on. Yeah. It's like a spiritual cleansing in a way.

Right. A way of separating yourself from that negativity. Exactly.

Yeah. And it also served as a warning to those who were rejecting the message, you know? Yeah. Like, hey, you're missing out on something really important here.

Yeah. Exactly. Now, Jesus, he doesn't sugarcoat things for his disciples, does he? No.

Not at all. He's like, hey, listen. Persecution is coming.

Yeah. He's very upfront about the challenges they're going to face. He even uses this really vivid image of sheep among wolves.

Right. It's a stark picture of vulnerability, isn't it? It is. It's like, wow, this is serious stuff.

Yeah. It's not a game. This is the real deal.

Right. And it makes you think about all the believers throughout history who have faced persecution and suffered for their faith. Absolutely.

It's a reminder that following Jesus often comes at a cost. Absolutely. And Jesus goes on to describe what this persecution might look like, right? Yeah.

Being brought before local courts, synagogues, even physical beatings. Right. And this is where those historical details that Keener brings in are so helpful.

Yeah. He really paints a picture of what that would have been like. Yeah.

He talks about the severity of those beatings, referencing Paul's own experiences, for example. It's brutal to think about. Yeah.

It wasn't just a slap on the wrist. No. Definitely not.

It makes you realize that following Jesus was not for the faint of heart. Yeah. It took real courage and conviction.

But even in the midst of these warnings, there's this incredible message of hope. Right. And reassurance from Jesus.

Absolutely. It's like he's saying, I know things are going to get tough, but don't worry. I've got you.

Yeah. There's this sense of God's protection and care that runs throughout this passage. Yes.

He talks about how God cares for the sparrows, how the hairs on our heads are numbered. It's such a beautiful image, isn't it? It is. It's like, wow, you are seen, you are known, and you are loved.

Exactly. And it contrasts so strongly with that ancient Greek idea of fate being arbitrary and capricious. Right.

Like it's all just random chance. Yeah. This blind, uncaring force that controls everything.

But Jesus is presenting a very different picture here. It's a God who is intimately involved, who cares for his creation. A God who has a plan and a purpose for our lives.

Exactly. And that's such a comforting thought. Absolutely.

It gives us hope in the midst of all the chaos and uncertainty of life. Right. Because we know that we're not alone.

Exactly. That we're not just wandering aimlessly. Yeah.

We're held in God's loving hands. Exactly. And that brings us to a pretty powerful story.

The Keener brings up the story of Stephen from Acts chapter 7. Oh, yes. I remember him. Yeah.

He was stoned to death for his faith. Yeah. It's a heartbreaking story, but it's also an incredibly inspiring one.

It is. It's like, wow, this is what it means to stand firm in your beliefs, even when it costs you everything, even in the face of death.

Exactly. And Stephen, he's a powerful example of someone who lived out what Jesus was talking about. Right.

Absolutely. He was willing to lay down his life for the sake of the gospel. And it makes you think, what would I be willing to endure for my faith? It's a challenging question, but an important one to ask ourselves, I think.

Yeah, definitely. Now, this next teaching from Jesus, it can be a bit hard to swallow. Oh, yeah.

He says that following him requires unwavering devotion, putting him above all else. Even family. Yes.

Even family ties. He says anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. I mean, at first glance, that sounds pretty extreme.

It does, right? Yeah. But Keener helps us understand the cultural context here. Remember, back then, families typically lived together.

So division within a family was a profound mark of suffering. Okay. So Jesus isn't saying we should abandon our families.

No, not at all. It's more about recognizing where our ultimate allegiance lies. Right.

Our primary loyalty is to Christ. And our love for him should shape and inform every other relationship in our lives. Yeah.

It's about putting him first and letting everything else flow from that. Okay. That makes a lot more sense.

Yeah. But still, it's a challenging concept, right? It is, because family is so important. Yeah.

It's a foundational part of our lives. But Jesus is calling us to something even deeper, to a love that transcends all earthly ties. To a love that's rooted in eternity.

Exactly. And to really drive this point home, he talks about the need to carry the cross. Right.

Which, of course, for his audience was not a metaphor. No, definitely not. It was a very real and brutal image.

Absolutely. The cross represented suffering, shame, and death. Right.

So he's not talking about just enduring minor inconveniences here. No. He's talking about a radical willingness to lay down our lives for the sake of the gospel.

It's like a complete surrender, a complete selflessness. Exactly. And that brings us to another fascinating insight from Keener.

All right. He talks about how the way we treat someone reflects on the one who sent them. Oh, yeah.

Like, don't shoot the messenger. Right. Exactly.

It's like the way you treat someone reflects on the person or authority they represent. Okay. So in this case, the messenger is anyone representing Christ.

Exactly. So if we mistreat them, it's not just a reflection on them. It's a reflection on Jesus himself.

And this was especially important in the context of hospitality, which was a huge deal back then. Okay. Yeah.

Tell me more about that. Well, offering hospitality to a stranger was like a cultural obligation, and it could last for weeks. Wow.

That's serious hospitality. It was. And it was a way of showing honor and respect to the person and their family.

So it wasn't just like, hey, come in for a cup of tea. No, it was a much bigger commitment than that. Okay.

So how does this tie into treating people well? Well, Keener points out that in Matthew 25, Jesus talks about how showing kindness to those in need is essentially like showing kindness to him. Wow. That's powerful.

So even something as simple as offering someone a meal or a place to stay can be an act of worship. Exactly. It's about seeing Christ in those around us.

Right. And treating them accordingly. Yeah.

With love, compassion, and respect. And you know, it makes you think about how we treat people who are different from us, especially those who might represent a different faith or belief system. Yeah.

It's a challenge for all of us, I think. Definitely. But now, here's where things take a really interesting turn.

Okay. Remember John the Baptist? Yeah. The one who boldly proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah.

The one who baptized Jesus. Right. Well, he's in prison now, facing his own mortality.

Yeah. And he starts to have doubts. He does.

He does. Wow. That's surprising.

It is. And he sends his disciples to Jesus with this question. Are you really the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else? Wow.

So even John the Baptist had moments of doubt. Apparently so. It's kind of shocking, isn't it? It is.

But it's also incredibly humanizing. It is. It's like, okay, even the greatest figures of faith, they struggle sometimes.

Yeah. They have moments of questioning and uncertainty. And it makes me feel a little bit better about my own doubts, honestly.

I think it's a comfort to know that we're not alone in that. Right. Exactly.

We're all on this journey together. Yeah. And we're all going to have those moments where we're like, wait a minute, is this real? Yeah.

And those doubts, they can be scary, but they can also be an opportunity for growth, right? Absolutely. They can force us to examine our beliefs more closely, to dig deeper into our faith. To really wrestle with the tough questions.

Yeah. And to ultimately come out stronger on the other side. Okay.

So how does Jesus respond to John's doubts? Well, instead of giving a direct answer, he points to the evidence. He says, the blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. It's like he's saying, John, look around.

The kingdom is breaking in, even if it doesn't look exactly how you imagined it. Right. It's like the proof is in the pudding.

Exactly. And Kiener points out that these miracles, they're not just random acts of power. No, they're deliberate.

They echo prophecies from Isaiah, particularly chapters 35 and 61, which talk about the coming Messianic age. So they're pointing to something bigger. Yes.

They're signs of the kingdom of God breaking into the world. And the fact that the good news is being preached to the poor, that also aligns with Isaiah's prophecies, doesn't it? It does. It highlights God's heart for the marginalized and oppressed.

Yeah. It's like he's turning the world's values upside down. Exactly.

He's saying that the last shall be first, and the first shall be last. And that the kingdom of God is not just about future glory, but also about bringing hope and restoration to those who are hurting right now. Yeah.

It's about justice and righteousness. Exactly. It's about making things right in the here and now.

And it's about offering a glimpse of the future when all things will be made new. Okay. So this is a powerful message.

It is. But not everyone is receptive to it, right? Unfortunately, no. And we see this in the next section where Jesus laments over the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum.

Right. Those were the cities where he had performed many miracles. Right.

But the people remained unrepentant. It's almost like their familiarity with Jesus bred contempt. Yeah.

It's a strange phenomenon, isn't it? It is. You'd think that seeing miracles firsthand would lead to faith. You would.

But sometimes it has the opposite effect. Right. And it makes you wonder if we can become so accustomed to the presence of God in our lives that we take it for granted.

Yeah. Or maybe we start to think we have him figured out. Right.

Like we've got God all figured out. And that's a dangerous place to be. Definitely.

Because it can lead to apathy and complacency. Exactly. Yeah.

And Jesus warns these cities that their judgment will be greater than that of Sodom. Wow. That's a serious statement.

It is. Sodom was known for its wickedness and immorality. Right.

So for Jesus to say that these cities would be judged more harshly, it's a stark reminder that rejecting God's truth has serious consequences. Absolutely. And Kiener also points out the significance of Jesus' words to Capernaum.

What's that? He says, will you be exalted to heaven? No, you will be brought down to Hades. And Kiener connects this phrase to Isaiah 14, which describes the downfall of the

king of Babylon who tried to exalt himself above God. It's a powerful image of how pride and arrogance ultimately lead to destruction.

Right. Whereas humility and surrender to God lead to true exaltation. Exactly.

And then we come to one of the most beautiful and comforting passages in this whole section. What's that? Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. What a beautiful invitation.

It is. It's an invitation to find true peace and fulfillment in a relationship with Jesus. And it's such a contrast to the legalistic approach of the Pharisees, who focused on outward obedience and adherence to rules.

Oh, we're all about trying to earn God's favor. Exactly. But Jesus is offering something completely different.

It's like he's saying, it's not about what you do. It's about who you are in me. Yeah, it's about surrendering to his love and grace.

And Kiener connects this passage to Jeremiah 6.16, where God calls his people to turn to the right way and find rest for their souls. It's a beautiful reminder that Jesus's message wasn't entirely new. He was building on the foundation of the Old Testament.

Revealing the true meaning of God's law. Exactly. And inviting people into a deeper, more intimate relationship with him.

And that's what it's all about, isn't it? Absolutely. It's about relationship, not religion. About grace, not works.

And about finding true rest in the arms of our Savior. And that's a pretty good place to leave it for now. I agree.

We've covered a lot of ground. We have. But we're just getting started.

There's so much more to explore. So much more. So make sure to join us for part two.

Yeah, we'll be diving even deeper into these chapters. We'll see you then. Sounds good.

Welcome back to the Deep Dive. All right, so we're picking up where we left off, talking about Jesus's invitation to find rest in him. Right.

Such a powerful concept, right? So powerful. Yeah. And Kiener points out that this passage actually foreshadows the conflict that's going to unfold between Jesus and the Pharisees in the coming chapters.

Yeah, it's like a taste of what's to come. Yeah, because they have very different understandings of what it means to find true rest. Oh, yeah.

Totally different worldviews. The Pharisees, they were all about outward obedience, following the rules to a T. Like checking all the boxes. Exactly.

But Jesus, he's pointing to something way deeper. A heart transformation. Right.

A change from the inside out. It's not about just doing the right things. It's about being the right kind of person.

Exactly. It's about having a heart that's aligned with God's will. And that's where true freedom comes from, right? Absolutely.

Because when you're trying to earn God's favor through your own efforts, you're always going to be striving. You're always going to be falling short. You're never going to measure up.

Exactly. But when you surrender to God's grace, when you rest in his love, that's where true peace and joy are found. Okay.

So it makes you think, what kind of rest am I pursuing? Yeah, good question. Is it the kind that comes from checking off all the boxes, achieving outward success? Or is it the kind that comes from surrendering to God? Yeah, finding your identity in him. That's the real question, right? Because that's where true rest is found.

Now, shifting gears a bit, let's talk about another challenging teaching from this section. Okay. Jesus warns his disciples about persecution.

Yeah, he's very upfront about the challenges they're going to face. He doesn't sugarcoat it at all. No, not at all.

And Keener, he really paints a vivid picture of what that persecution might have looked like. He does, doesn't he? It's like you're right there with them. He talks about the local courts, often held in synagogues.

Right, where they could be brought before hostile authorities. And the possibility of beatings. Oh, yeah, the beatings.

He even mentions the specific type of whip that was used, a strap of calf leather with interwoven thongs. Wow. That's brutal.

It makes you cringe just thinking about it. It does. It's like, how could they do that to another human being? It really highlights the cost of discipleship, right? Absolutely.

It shows that following Jesus wasn't for the faint of heart. Definitely not. You had to be willing to put everything on the line.

Your reputation, your comfort, even your life. Exactly. And that's something that's still true for believers in many parts of the world today.

Sadly, yes. Persecution is still a reality for many Christians around the world. It's a stark reminder that following Jesus is not always easy.

It's not a walk in the park, that's for sure. But even in the midst of these warnings about persecution, there's also this threat of God's care and provision. It's like he's saying, I know it's going to be tough, but I'm with you every step of the way.

Exactly. He reminds them that not even a sparrow falls to the ground apart from the Father's will. He talks about how the hairs on their heads are numbered.

Such a comforting thought, isn't it? So comforting. It's like, God knows me. He sees me.

He cares about me. Yeah. And it contrasts so strongly with that ancient Greek idea of fate.

Right. Where everything is just random chance. Yeah.

Like we're just at the mercy of some blind, impersonal force. But Jesus is saying, no, there's a loving God who is in control, who has a plan for your life. It's a completely different worldview.

A worldview that gives us hope and security. Absolutely. Even in the midst of suffering and uncertainty.

And you know, Keener also sheds light on another interesting cultural practice. Okay. What's that? Remember how Jesus told his disciples to shake the dust off their feet? Yeah.

If a town rejected their message. It seemed kind of symbolic, but I wasn't sure what the significance was. Well, Keener explains that it was a way of signifying that the town had refused God's offer of salvation.

Okay. And would be treated as profane or unclean. So it's like, I'm wiping my hands clean of this.

I'm moving on. Right. It's a powerful way of disassociating yourself from a place that has rejected God's truth.

And it makes you think, are there times in our lives when we need to shake the dust off our feet? Yeah. That's a good question to ponder. Are there relationships or situations that are dragging us down spiritually? Yeah.

Maybe we need to create some distance to protect our hearts and stay true to our convictions. Right. Sometimes shaking the dust off our feet can be a way of honoring God and staying on the path he has for us.

Okay. Now here's a passage that can be tough to swallow. What's that? Jesus says, anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me.

Yeah. That one always makes people squirm a bit. It does, doesn't it? It sounds so harsh.

Like family is supposed to be everything. But again, Keener helps us understand the cultural context. Okay.

Back then, families typically lived together. So division within a family was a significant sign of suffering. So it wasn't just like, oh, we had a fight, and now we're not talking.

No, it was a much bigger deal than that. Okay. So Jesus isn't saying we should neglect our families or treat them poorly.

No, not at all. It's more about recognizing where our ultimate allegiance lies. That our primary loyalty is to Christ.

Exactly. And that our love for him should shape and inform all our other relationships. So it's not about loving our families less.

It's about loving Jesus more. Right. It's about putting him first and letting everything else flow from that.

Okay. I'm starting to see the bigger picture here. Me too.

It's like all these pieces are starting to fit together. To further drive this point home about radical commitment, Jesus talks about the need to carry the cross. Yeah.

That's not just a metaphor. It's a call to action. Right.

And in our culture, we often use that phrase pretty casually. Oh, yeah. All the time.

Like, ugh, I've got to carry this cross today. But Kena reminds us that for Jesus' audience, the cross was a brutal reality. Absolutely.

It represented a horrific and agonizing death. It was a symbol of shame and suffering. So when Jesus called his disciples to carry the cross, he wasn't talking about enduring minor inconveniences.

No. He was talking about a radical willingness to lay down their lives for the gospel. A willingness to embrace suffering and even death if necessary.

Wow. That's intense. It is.

It's a call to die to ourselves, to our selfish ambition. Our desire for comfort and security. Exactly.

And to embrace a life of sacrifice and surrender. Knowing that true fulfillment is found in following Christ. No matter the cost.

That sounds kind of heavy. It can be. But it's also incredibly liberating.

Oh. How so? Because when we surrender to Christ, we're freed from the burden of trying to control our lives to make everything perfect. We can rest in his love and grace, knowing that he's with us every step of the way.

So it's not about escaping hardship. It's about finding peace in the midst of it. Right.

It's about knowing that we're not alone, that we have a God who loves us and is working all things for our good. Okay. Now I'm starting to see how all of this ties back into that theme of finding true rest in Christ.

Yeah. It's like it's all coming full circle, isn't it? It is. It's not about avoiding suffering.

It's about facing it with God by our side. Exactly. It's about finding peace and contentment, even when things are tough.

Okay. Now, Kiener also highlights another principle that speaks to that idea of trusting God in difficulty. What's that? He talks about how the way we treat someone reflects on the one who sent them.

Right. Like, don't shoot the messenger. Exactly.

And in this case, the messenger is anyone who represents Christ. So how we treat them reflects on Jesus himself. Exactly.

And Kiener points out that this principle was especially important in the context of hospitality. Yeah. Hospitality was a huge deal back then.

Like a cultural obligation. It could last for weeks. Wow.

Okay. So tell me more about that. Well, offering hospitality to a stranger was a way of showing honor and respect to the person and their family.

Okay. It was a way of saying, you are welcome here; you are safe here. So it wasn't just about providing food and shelter.

It was about extending love and acceptance. Right. It was about treating the person as a valued guest.

And Kiener says that in Matthew 25, Jesus connects this idea of hospitality to our relationship with him. He does. He says that when we show kindness to those in need, it's like we're doing it to him.

So even something as simple as offering someone a meal or a place to stay can be an act of worship. Absolutely. It's about seeing Christ in those around us.

And treating them accordingly. With love, compassion, and respect. It's a challenge for all of us, I think.

Yeah, especially in today's world where it's so easy to focus on ourselves and our own needs. But Jesus, he calls us to something higher. To a love that extends beyond our comfort zones.

To a love that sees the image of God in every person we meet. Exactly. Yeah.

And that's a love that can truly change the world. Okay, now let's talk about John the Baptist again. Okay.

Remember how he sent his disciples to ask Jesus, are you really the one? Yeah. It's such an intriguing episode. It is.

And Kiener, he throws some fascinating parallels between John's doubts and the kind of skepticism we see today. Interesting. So, like, how so? Well, it's easy to dismiss miracles and the supernatural because it doesn't fit into our modern worldview.

Right. Our scientific worldview. Exactly.

We tend to rely on empirical evidence and logical explanations. And if something can't be explained within those parameters, we often write it off as impossible or improbable. But what if we're missing something? That's a good question.

What if our limited understanding of the universe is preventing us from seeing the fullness of God's power at work? It's like we've built these boxes around our faith, and anything that falls outside those boxes is automatically deemed unacceptable. But maybe God doesn't fit in our boxes. Maybe not.

Maybe his ways are higher than our ways. Right. His thoughts are higher than our thoughts.

And maybe the realm of the supernatural is more real than we dare to imagine. Yeah. It makes you think about John the Baptist and his doubts.

Yeah. What was he really struggling with? Maybe he had a preconceived notion of what the Messiah would be like. Okay.

And when Jesus didn't fit that mold, he started to question everything. It's possible. And you know, it's interesting how Jesus responds to John's question.

He doesn't get defensive, does he? No. He doesn't try to prove himself or argue with John. Instead, he points to the evidence.

Right. He says, the blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. It's like he's saying, John, look around.

The kingdom is breaking in, even if it doesn't look exactly how you expected it to. And Keener points out that these specific miracles, they're not random. Okay.

They echo prophecies from Isaiah. Yeah. You mentioned that earlier.

Right. Particularly Isaiah 35 and 61, which speak of the coming messianic age. So these miracles, they're more than just isolated acts of power.

Exactly. They're signs pointing to something bigger. To the fulfillment of God's promises.

Right. The inauguration of his kingdom. And the fact that the good news is being proclaimed to the poor also aligns with Isaiah's prophecies.

It does. It shows that God's heart is for the marginalized and oppressed. Yeah.

He's turning the world's values upside down. And the kingdom of God is not just about future glory. Right.

It's also about bringing hope and restoration to those who are hurting right now. Yeah. It's about justice and righteousness.

About making things right in the here and now. And offering a glimpse of the future when all things will be made new. But it's not always easy to accept that love, is it? Unfortunately not.

And Jesus laments over the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum. The cities where he performed many miracles. Yeah.

But the people there, they remained unrepentant. It's like their familiarity with Jesus had bred contempt. Yeah.

It's strange how that can happen. It is. You'd think that seeing miracles firsthand would lead to faith.

You would think so. Yeah. But sometimes it has the opposite effect.

It makes you wonder if we can become so accustomed to God's presence in our lives. Yeah. That we take it for granted.

Right. Like we get so used to his blessings. Yeah.

That we forget to be grateful. Or maybe we start to think we have God all figured out. Ooh, yeah.

That's a dangerous place to be. Definitely. Because it can lead to pride and complacency.

And ultimately to a rejection of God's truth. And that's what happened in those cities, wasn't it? It seems that way. Yeah.

And Jesus warns them that their judgment will be greater than that of Sodom. Wow. Sodom.

That's a pretty serious comparison. It is. Sodom was known for its wickedness and immorality.

Right. So for Jesus to say that these cities would be judged more harshly. Yeah.

It's a sobering thought. It is. And it makes you think, what does it mean to truly repent and turn to God? It's a question we all need to ask ourselves, I think.

Absolutely. And Keener, he also points out the significance of Jesus' words to Capernaum. What's that? He says, will you be exalted to heaven? No.

You will be brought down to Hades. And Keener connects that phrase to Isaiah 14, which describes the downfall of the king of Babylon. The king who tried to exalt himself above God.

Exactly. So it's a powerful image of how pride and arrogance ultimately lead to destruction. Yeah.

Whereas humility and surrender to God lead to true exaltation. Okay. So we've talked about the cost of discipleship.

Yeah. The challenges of following Jesus. But we've also seen the incredible love and compassion of God.

Right. His willingness to forgive and restore. His invitation to find true rest in him.

And that's really what it's all about, isn't it? Absolutely. It's about surrendering our lives to the one who loves us most. And finding true peace and fulfillment in him.

And that's something we can all experience, no matter who we are or where we come from. Right. Because God's grace is available to everyone.

It's a gift freely given. And all we have to do is receive it. All right.

Welcome back to the show. Back again. Ready to wrap this up.

Okay. So we're diving into the last section of this deep dive into Matthew chapters 10 and 11. Yeah.

Always hard to believe we're already at the end, you know? It does go by fast, doesn't it? Yeah. I feel like we've just scratched the surface, though. Yeah.

There's always more to unpack, right? So much to explore. Absolutely. But before we jump into the final section, maybe let's just take a moment to recap.

Okay. What are some of the things that have really stood out to you so far? Oh, man. Where do you even begin? I think that contrast between the expectations surrounding Jesus and the reality of his ministry, you know? Right.

It doesn't always line up with what people were expecting. And we see that with John the Baptist, too. Yeah.

He's proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah, but then he starts having those doubts when Jesus isn't acting how he thought he would. Right. Like, is this really what the Messiah is supposed to be like? Yeah.

Exactly. Like, it makes you think about our own expectations of Jesus, you know? Oh, for sure. Are we trying to fit him into a box? Right.

Or are we open to being surprised by how he works in the world? And in our own lives, too. Yeah. Exactly.

Because sometimes he shows up in ways that we just don't expect. Totally. And I think that's a good reminder to approach our faith with a lot of humility.

Oh, yeah. Absolutely. Like, recognizing that God's ways are often higher than our ways.

I mean, who are we to try to put God in a box? I love those cultural insights that Keener shared, too. Oh, yeah. Me, too.

Like, that whole thing about shaking the dust off your feet. I know. It's like, what does that even mean? Exactly.

But Keener, he really brings it to life, you know? He does. It's like suddenly you're seeing these passages with fresh eyes. Yeah.

And you realize that there's so much more to them than you initially thought. And that whole thing about prioritizing Jesus above family. Oh, man.

That one's tough, right? It is. But Keener helps us to understand, like, okay, this is the cultural context. Yeah.

It wasn't as harsh as it might sound to our modern ears. Right. It was a different time and a different culture.

But still, it's a challenging teaching. It is. Because family is so important.

So important. But Jesus is calling us to a love that is even deeper than that. A love that transcends all earthly ties.

A love that is rooted in eternity. And that's a pretty high calling. It is.

But it's also an incredibly beautiful one. And I think another really important takeaway from these chapters is that call to radical commitment. Right.

And sacrifice. Jesus. He doesn't sugarcoat things for his followers.

No. He's very upfront about the challenges they're going to face. He tells them straight up, you're going to face persecution, rejection, hardship.

And that's still true today for many believers around the world. Absolutely. It's like, following Jesus, it's not just about attending church on Sundays.

No. It's not about just checking off the boxes. Right.

It's about a complete surrender to his will and purpose. It's a way of life. A life that is often marked by sacrifice.

Yeah. Laying down our own desires and ambitions. Even our own comfort and security.

For the sake of the gospel. But it's not all sacrifice and hardship. No.

Definitely not. Because remember that beautiful invitation that we talked about? Oh, you mean, come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Yes.

It's like, in the midst of all the challenges, there's also this incredible promise. It's like a beacon of hope. Yeah.

Exactly. It's like Jesus is saying, I know it's tough, but I'm here for you. And he offers us something that we could never find on our own.

True rest. Deep abiding rest for our souls. Okay.

So let's talk more about this idea of rest. Okay. Because honestly, in our culture, it's often associated with laziness or inactivity.

Oh yeah, for sure. Like, it's something we squeeze into our busy schedules if we have time. Or we feel guilty about it.

Like, we should be doing more. But Jesus is offering something way more than just physical relaxation. Right.

It's not just about taking a nap or going on vacation. It's about this soul-deep rest that comes from knowing that we are loved. Accepted.

We're given by God. And that rest, it doesn't depend on our circumstances or achievements. Right.

It's not something we have to earn. It's a gift. Freely given by Jesus.

And it's available to everyone. And Keener points out that this rest is also about taking on Jesus's yoke. Okay, now that sounds a little less relaxing.

I know, right? It's like, wait a minute. Who wants to wear a yoke? Especially when we're talking about rest. But a yoke, back then, it was a wooden frame that joined two oxen together so they could plow a field.

Okay. So it was about teamwork. Shared responsibility.

So when Jesus talks about taking on his yoke, he's inviting us to partner with him. Yeah, to share in his work. And he promises that his yoke is easy and his burden is light.

But how can that be? I mean, the work of ministry, serving others, fighting for justice. Yeah, all of that. It can be really challenging and demanding.

So how can it be easy? Well, I think the key is that we're not doing it alone. Right. We're yoked with Jesus.

Yeah, we're walking alongside him, relying on his strength. And when we do that, we find that even the heaviest burdens become lighter. Like he's carrying the weight with us.

Exactly. It's not that the work itself becomes easier. It's that we have someone to help us carry the load.

Someone who's always there for us. Someone who never grows tired or weary. And as we walk with Jesus, as we learn from him, we find that his ways are truly life-giving.

We find that true freedom comes from surrendering to his leadership. And that's the beauty of the rest that he offers. It's not about escaping the challenges of life.

No, it's about finding peace and contentment in the midst of those challenges. Knowing that we're not alone. That we have a God who loves us and is walking with us every step of the way.

And you know, this theme of rest, it ties in so beautifully with the last passage we're looking at today. Oh, tell me more about that. It's where Jesus describes himself as gentle and humble in heart.

Oh, I love that passage. Yeah. It's such a tender and beautiful image of Jesus.

It is. And so different from how some people view God. Yeah, that harsh, demanding, judgmental God.

But Jesus, he's not a tyrant. No, he's a loving savior. He's not trying to control us through fear and intimidation.

Right. He's inviting us to come to him freely. To lay down our burdens.

To find rest for our souls. And that rest, it's available to everyone. To the weary, the broken, the lost.

No matter who you are or what you've done. Jesus welcomes you with open arms. All you have to do is come to him.

And receive his gift of grace. Well, I don't know about you, but I feel like my soul has been refreshed. Me too.

It's amazing how these ancient words can still speak to us so powerfully today, isn't it? It is. I'm so grateful for the opportunity to have this conversation with you. Me too.

To dive deep into these scriptures and to discover new insights and applications for our lives. It's been a real blessing. It has.

And I hope that our listeners have been encouraged and challenged as well. Yes, I hope they've been inspired to go deeper in their own faith journey. To seek out that true rest that Jesus offers.

And to share his love and grace with the world. Absolutely. So, thank you for listening to The Deep Dive.

Until next time. We'll see you then.