

Title: Matthew 10–11

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Session 11

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Abstract

This lecture covers Matthew chapters 10 and 11, focusing on Jesus' multiplication of his ministry through the commissioning and sending of the twelve apostles. Dr. Craig Keener explains the instructions given to the disciples for their mission, emphasizing simplicity, complete dependence on God, and the expectation of severe persecution. The lecture also addresses the doubts of John the Baptist regarding Jesus' works and Jesus' subsequent defense of John's ministry, culminating in warnings to unrepentant cities and an invitation to find true rest under Jesus' gentle yoke.

Outline

I. Setup for the Missionary Discourse (Matthew 9:35–38)

- **A.** Summary of Jesus' activity: healing, teaching, and preaching about the good news of the kingdom (9:35).
- **B.** Motivation: compassion for people like "sheep without a shepherd" (9:36, evoking Ezekiel 34).
- **C.** The need to multiply laborers for the harvest rather than simply adding them (9:37–38).

II. Commissioning of the Twelve Apostles (Matthew 10:1–15)

- **A.** Authorization and delegation of authority over spirits and to heal sickness (10:1).
- **B.** Symbolism of the Twelve: representing the twelve tribes of Israel as a restoration and renewal movement.
- **C.** Historical analysis of disciples' names (Simon Peter, Simon the Zealot, James/Yaakov, Judas Iscariot as "man from Keriath" or "dagger man").

- **D.** Scope of the initial mission: restricted geographically to Galilee and ethnically to the lost sheep of Israel (10:5–6).
- **E.** The lifestyle of simplicity and trust:
 - **1.** Traveling light without extra provisions, copper, or a bag—simpler than Greek Cynic philosophers.
 - **2.** Relying completely on God's provision and the standard ancient customs of Jewish hospitality.
- **F.** Etiquette of greeting (Shalom) and judgment on those who reject the message (shaking dust off feet, worse than Sodom).

III. Predictions and Promises in the Face of Persecution (Matthew 10:16–33)

- **A.** The posture of "sheep among wolves" (10:16): sent into dangerous situations as defenseless agents.
- **B.** Persecution in local courts and synagogues: being beaten with 39 lashes (as experienced historically by Paul).
- **C.** Expansion of scope: testifying before governors and Gentiles (extending beyond Galilee).
- **D.** Family division and betrayal as a reflection of end-time tribulation.
- **E.** Promises and encouragement to preach boldly:
 - **1.** Trusting God's absolute sovereignty (even sparrows are watched, and hairs of the head are numbered).
 - **2.** Eternal vindication: confessing Christ before the Father (paralleling the martyrdom of Stephen in Acts 7).

IV. Demands of Loyalty and Rewards of Discipleship (Matthew 10:34–42)

- **A.** Devotion above family: division of families as hyperbole of supreme loyalty to Jesus.
- **B.** Carrying the cross: the historical reality of carrying the horizontal beam to the site of execution while mocked by a mob.
- **C.** Honoring Christ's agents: receiving a messenger is equivalent to receiving the sender.

- **D.** Hospitality rewarded: receiving prophets and disciples (even with a cup of cold water) yields a guaranteed reward.

V. John the Baptist's Doubt and Jesus' Witness (Matthew 11:1–19)

- **A.** Doubt in prison (Machaerus): why John questioned Jesus' identity when he heard of His miracles (expecting a baptism of fire and immediate judgment).
- **B.** Signs of the Kingdom as fulfillment of Isaiah 35 and 61: blind see, deaf hear, lepers cleansed, dead raised.
- **C.** Jesus' validation of John: "more than a prophet," the Elijah to come (Malachi 3:1) contrasted with the weak reed or Herod Antipas in royal robes.
- **D.** The "spoiled children" parable: rejection of John's asceticism (labeled demon-possessed) and Jesus' eating/drinking (labeled a glutton and drunkard).

VI. Woes on Unrepentant Cities (Matthew 11:20–24)

- **A.** Condemnation of Capernaum, Bethsaida, and Chorazin.
- **B.** Judgment proportional to light received; harsher than Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom (evoking the descent of the King of Babylon to Hades in Isaiah 14).

VII. Jesus as the Divine Mediator of Wisdom (Matthew 11:25–30)

- **A.** Revelation to "infants" (the dependent) rather than the "wise" (the self-reliant).
- **B.** Jesus as the unique and exclusive mediator of the Father.
- **C.** Invitation to take His yoke and find rest:
 - **1.** Contrasted with the legalistic yoke of the Pharisees or the heavy yoke of the Torah.
 - **2.** Fulfillment of Jeremiah 6:16: finding rest for the soul in Jesus' gentle and humble authority.