

The Depth of God's Power Matthew 10:1, 5a, 24-31

I want to start this sermon with a reminder that Jesus tells us that among the great things we shall see when the hand of God is at work in people's lives, we will also see Satan at work seeking to prevent the call of Christ from going forth. He has sealed his fate and he cannot stand the idea of others being blest in the name of Jesus. He cannot stand the idea of someone putting their eternal hope and trust in Christ. Satan's philosophy states that if he cannot be happy in Christ, no one else should be either. Folks that is why Satan works so hard to tear us down. It's not as much us he is after, it is Jesus. Jesus said it himself in verses 24 and 25. So what is it then we should do? Jesus levels with us and says that this won't be easy. Serving him will not always result in everyone agreeing with us, and at times, staunch disagreements may take place. One way to keep out of the line of fire would be to disown Jesus and give the Devil what he wants, but we shouldn't, we can't, and won't trade this hope, love, and joy we found in Jesus. What do we do???... We are to do as Jesus says in verse 26, "Don't be afraid of those who come against you because of me."

When God calls us, he often calls us against the odds, particularly when the odds are stacked up against us. He calls us despite what may be popular in the world. He calls us despite what may be popular among our friends. He calls us despite what may be popular among our families, maybe even our husbands and wives. He may even be calling us despite what is popular or acceptable within ourselves. We feel his call. We feel him speaking to us. We feel his tug, but it seems like there is so much standing in our way. Maybe we have a past that is trying to catch up with us. Maybe there is some sort of pain that is in need of being reconciled that you feel is working against you. Maybe you even feel as if you are not good enough for God. If you feel these things, come to Jesus. These thoughts are of the Devil. Jesus loves you and he wants you right where you are. He wants your bad past, your problems, and your failures. Why? Because he can take them from you.

In the Old Testament, God told his people of the wrong in their lives. He often identified their evildoings, but then he would stop and tell them plainly that he would forget it all if they would just come to him, such is the case in Isaiah 1:18. In the New Testament, Jesus said in John 6:37 (NIV), "Everyone whom the Father gives me will come to me, and the one who comes to me I will never send away." God wants us to come to Jesus just as we are. Come to his care, his safety. With him, he tells us not to be afraid despite what may be stacked up

against us because we bear the name of Jesus. We wouldn't trade him and what he has done for us for anything, or what anyone may do to us. When we go out into the world for Jesus, bearing his name, people will plot against us, they will speak out against us, they will even put us down, but Jesus reminds us that what is done in darkness, what is sinful, will eventually be brought to light. This echoes the words of Moses when he told the Israelites that our "sins will find us out" (Numbers 32:23). That God knows what we do.

In the finance world there is a term, "balanced books." When you balance your books, you seek to reconcile your gains against your losses. You see, not only do we want this in our finances, but we also want this in our lives. We want our gains to out-weigh our losses, or to least have them balance out. We want the books of our lives to be balanced, reconciled. Jesus tells us that these people who speak out against us, who seek to harm us because of Jesus cannot harm our souls, but they may cause problems in our lives. They may put us down for what we believe. In some areas of the world, people are in fear for their lives for the call of Christ. When their life is at stake, what causes them to press on? What can cause us to press on???... The fact that God will balance our books. We should not be afraid of those who can cause us trouble here, but rather of the one who can seal our fate forever. People may try to take our faith from us, but God will certainly take care of them on our behalf if we press on in Jesus' name.

When we go in Jesus' name, God takes notice. Jesus reminds us how special we are to God. In God's eyes, we are more important than the sparrows that God's takes special care of, making sure they have everything they need. If he cares so for them, don't you know that he cares more for you and me? Jesus tells us in Matthew 11:28 (NIV), "Come to me, all you who are weary and [heavy laden], and I will give you rest." When you go for Jesus, if there is much at stake among your friends, let Jesus help bear your burdens. If there is much at stake among your family, let Jesus help bear your burdens. If there is much at stake in your soul and you are battling against yourself, your past, come to Jesus. Let him take your pain, let him take your fears, and trust God to balance the books of your life. Remember, when we go for Jesus into the world he has promised to take care of his children, to make right those things that are wrong. Deuteronomy 31:6 (NIV) tells us to, "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you." Despite the hardships we may face, those that we are facing, do you trust God to balance your books? Rest today in the depths of God's power in your life.