

Matthew 10G

- I've good news and bad news...the good news is we've reached the sixth and final point in our outline of Chapter 10
 - Today we study the section I've labeled *The Cost of the Kingdom Program*
 - This section runs from v.17 through the end of the chapter
 - Which leads me to the bad news...I'm going to teach 26 verses tonight
 - But don't worry, we will address it in large sections
 - Last week we studied part 5, the mindset Jesus said we will need to serve in the Kingdom Program
 - As we bring the Gospel to others, we enter a world where the enemy had the advantage
 - Like a wolf, the devil and his demons work behind the scenes to disrupt our progress and discourage our interest
 - So Jesus told us to become as wise as our enemy, learning his ways so we can anticipate them and work around them
 - And at the same time, learn how to work in harmony with the Spirit of God – without sinning
 - Combining shrewdness and innocence to defeat the enemy's schemes and maintain a Christ-pleasing witness
- Jesus' advice will keep us in the game and position us for success, as the Lord appoints
 - But let's be honest...as I said last week, Jesus is also warning His disciples that we will suffer losses on this spiritual battlefield
 - The more invested we become in the Kingdom Program, the more we invite the enemy's wrath
 - So it's time for us to consider, are we prepared for the cost of serving Jesus?
 - Elsewhere in Luke 14, Jesus says that wisdom is calculating the cost of an endeavor before entering into the work

- So it's time we pulled out our calculators, because serving in the Kingdom Program will cost us something
 - At the very least, the Kingdom Program will take time away from other things we might prefer to do with our time
 - It may take us away from our family at times
 - It will almost certainly impact our personal finances
 - And in the most extreme cases, it may cost us our earthly life
- So in the last section of this chapter, Jesus explains to His disciples the cost of serving Him in the Kingdom Program

Matt. 10:17 “But beware of men, for they will hand you over to the courts and scourge you in their synagogues;

Matt. 10:18 and you will even be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.

Matt. 10:19 “But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you are to say; for it will be given you in that hour what you are to say.

Matt. 10:20 “For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

Matt. 10:21 “Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death.

Matt. 10:22 “You will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved.

Matt. 10:23 “But whenever they persecute you in one city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel until the Son of Man comes.

- In our first section, Jesus issues a series of stark warnings to His apostles
 - And perhaps most interestingly, notice Jesus doesn't offer them solutions on how to avoid the trouble in the first place
 - Which is rather odd, from our point of view, since we tend to think that the purpose of a warning is to help us avoid trouble
 - But Jesus simply tells us His apostles how to endure the trouble
 - Remember, last week we learned from James that a trial is an opportunity to bank future joy in the Kingdom

- He told us to count trials as joy knowing that as we endure a trial, we gain spiritual strength and eternal reward
- And that's the overriding theme of this final section of the Kingdom Program
- The Lord is calling us to count the cost of serving Him and be prepared to pay that cost because we stand to gain far more than we will lose
- Jesus starts in vs.17-23 with two warnings given specifically to His apostles
 - His first warning is in vs.17-18 and the second warning is in vs.21-22
 - First, Jesus says His apostles would be handed over to courts to be whipped in synagogues and hauled before kings
 - And obviously, Jesus is referring to the early days of the church
 - As the Gospel began to take hold in Judea, the Jewish Pharisees initially ignored the movement
 - But as the movement gained momentum, the mood among Israel's religious leaders changed
 - They began to vigorously oppose the leaders of the church
 - They assumed that if they persecuted Peter, James and John, the movement would fall apart
 - Instead, Jesus says in v.18 that the Lord had planned this persecution as a means of bringing a testimony of the Gospel to the Gentiles
 - Opposition to the gospel by the Jewish authorities in Jerusalem, and the rest of Judea, led to a seismic shift in the early church
 - Persecution of the apostles dispersed the early leaders into the diaspora and there they began to teach Gentiles about Jesus
 - And that's what the Lord intended, which is why He permitted persecution to begin
- Notice the Lord tells the apostles not to worry about how to deal with the coming persecution
 - Instead, leave it to the Lord to handle it

- In vs.19-20, Jesus says that when they were standing before synagogue trials and kings, they would receive instructions in the moment
- The Spirit would speak to their minds, giving them words to say that would accomplish God's purposes
- Elsewhere, Jesus goes a step further and forbids His disciples from even planning ahead for these situations

Luke 21:12 "But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for My name's sake.

Luke 21:13 "It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony.

Luke 21:14 "So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves;

Luke 21:15 for I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute.

- Jesus says just enter into those moments with the faith to know I will ensure that my purpose is fulfilled
- So Jesus warns the apostles that the Kingdom program will be opposed by powerful institutions
 - Yet the Lord would use that opposition to bring Himself glory and to grow the church
 - That promise was fulfilled soon after Jesus left the earth, as the apostles confronted opposition in Jerusalem as told in Acts 4

Acts 4:5 On the next day, their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem;

Acts 4:6 and Annas the high priest was there, and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of high-priestly descent.

Acts 4:7 When they had placed them in the center, they began to inquire, "By what power, or in what name, have you done this?"

Acts 4:8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers and elders of the people,

Acts 4:9 if we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made well,

Acts 4:10 let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead – by this name this man stands here before you in good health.

[Acts 4:11](#) "He is the STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED by you, THE BUILDERS, but WHICH BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone.

[Acts 4:12](#) "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

[Acts 4:13](#) Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus.

[Acts 4:14](#) And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply.

- Obviously, the Lord continues to use government and religious opposition to strengthen and spread the church
 - In fact, it's been said that the church is always at its strongest when persecution is greatest
 - And the church is always at its weakest when its safety and comfort are greatest
- Jesus' second warning in vs.21-22 moves from societal opposition to personal opposition
 - He says not only will governments and authorities oppose you but so will those who know you best, including your own families
 - Brothers would betray brothers, parents and children would be set against one another
 - We don't have a record of such a thing happening in the book of Acts
 - But Jesus probably wasn't speaking of a specific situation
 - Notice Jesus switched from second person plural to third person in that verse
 - Jesus is speaking in generalities about how bad opposition to the Kingdom program will eventually become for His disciples
 - It's one thing for the world to oppose you, but it's another thing when your own friends or family turn against you
 - And that has happened many times in the history of the Church
 - In the first century and during times like the Reformation

- And it continues to be a threat for believers in certain places today
- But then notice in v.22 Jesus switches back to the second person plural to say the apostles would be universally hated for their work
 - That was the cost those men paid for serving Jesus in the Kingdom Program
 - Early church fathers report that virtually all the apostles were martyred
 - And even before that, they spent many years on the run, evading their enemies
 - The apostles were hated by everyone in Judaism outside the church, which meant their entire culture opposed them
 - You wouldn't wish the apostles' experiences on your worst enemy
- Given the costs of serving Him, Jesus offers the apostles two consolations
 - First, He says the one who endures to the end shall be saved
 - Jesus is not speaking about receiving eternal life, because that would be saying salvation was earned through works
 - And we know that's not what the Bible teaches, so we have to think more deeply about Jesus' choice of words
 - The Greek word translated "end" is literally the word for tribute, as in an accolade or the finishing tape used to mark the end of a race
 - So Jesus is saying the disciples who endure these trials to the end of his race will be saved
 - That takes us in the direction of eternal rewards for serving Christ
 - And in that context, the Greek word for saved has several shades of meaning, including preserved or maintained
 - So a paraphrase of this verse could read "the one who endures until the end of his race will see his reward preserved"
 - It's the same idea we saw in James last week...count it joy when you endure trials knowing endurance brings reward

- Secondly, because of opposition Jesus says in v.23 that the apostles should keep moving, don't stay in one place too long
 - Specifically, Jesus says move through the towns, villages and cities of Israel
 - Obviously He was speaking to these men concerning their ministry to Israel in that day
 - And He even adds that they would not reach every Jew with the Gospel message until the Messiah sets up His kingdom
- In other words, Jesus says the proper response to persecution is simply to take our message to the next place
 - And in that way, persecution serves God's purpose by scattering His messengers to reach more people
 - And this pattern of movement will continue until the Lord returns, in such that not even all the Jews will be reached until the end
 - Because until the Kingdom becomes a place on earth, the Kingdom Program of recruiting citizens will continue
- So here's what Jesus says to His apostles (and indirectly to us) regarding the cost of serving Him in the Kingdom Program
 - You will be opposed in your Kingdom Program work, both by authorities and individuals and even by members of your own family
 - You may find yourself in difficult, threatening situations before powerful people, but let Me do the talking
 - And you may be hated by the world, even by your own family, but if so, go find new friends and new family
 - But whatever you do, don't stop serving the Kingdom Program... endure until the end knowing you will be preserving your reward
 - Jesus' advice is entirely different than the world's advice for how to face these kinds of situations
 - The world (and too often the church) tries to tell us we need to escape difficulty, stop the trial and ease the discomfort

- When we face opposition, they say we need to back off, be more tolerant, seek compromise
- Others advise to leave the situation, quit the church, take a vacation, take a pill
- After all, God wants you to be happy, so certainly we shouldn't have to feel sad emotions, endure discomfort, face persecution
- But that's not Jesus' advice...He merely says be forewarned and let's endure it together, turning it to our advantage
 - We're learning that the Lord's highest priority for us isn't our personal safety or our freedom from suffering
 - Therefore, we can't make our goal in this life to be avoiding trouble either
 - In fact, if we strive to be like Jesus, we will know suffering

[Matt. 10:24](#) "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master.

[Matt. 10:25](#) "It is enough for the disciple that he become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called the head of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign the members of his household!

- Jesus says a disciple is not above the teacher or a slave above the master, which is a basis principle of rank and authority
 - A person who falls under the authority of a superior can never possess more privilege or authority than their superior possesses
 - A disciple falls under the authority of a teacher so a disciple can never have greater authority than the teacher
 - A slave falls under the authority of a master so that slave can never possess more authority than the master
 - In v.25 Jesus says the highest goal for any disciple or slave is merely equalling the teacher or master
 - So knowing Jesus is our Teacher and Master, His life sets the bar for our life
 - If we follow in His footsteps, we can expect no better treatment than He received

- At the end of v.25 Jesus asks, if the head of the household was labeled Beelzebul how much more will the members of that household be maligned?
- The name Beelzebul is a title of Satan meaning Lord of Flies, and Hebrews 3 tells us that the head of the house of God is Christ
- So If Jesus had to endure comparisons to Satan as He preached the Gospel, what should we who are less than Christ expect to receive?
 - Do we suppose that we can preach the Gospel and avoid persecution when our Lord received it?
 - Jesus isn't saying we *will* suffer the same things He did
 - But if the Father allowed Satan to murder His Son for our good, then nothing is off the table for us
- No, the Father's highest priority for His disciples is not our earthly happiness... it's our eternal holiness
 - And the proof of that is seen in Jesus, Who we are to follow as His disciple

Heb. 12:2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

- So Jesus is asking us to understand what is coming, to count the cost before serving Him in this program
 - Because if happiness is our highest priority in this life, then we shouldn't get engaged in the Kingdom Program
 - The enemy will only need to push on us a little to cause us to give up or change our message
- And if that's how our service goes, then we risk shaming Christ...
 - Better that we never get engaged than to begin a work that casts shame upon Christ
 - So Jesus puts us on notice...serve in this program and we will experience some degree of persecution and suffering

2Tim. 3:12 Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

- Now at this point, I'm guessing it might be really difficult to sign anyone up for a mission trip...Jesus has just said there will be a cost
 - But obviously, He doesn't want that truth to keep us from the work, so He follows with two arguments for why we should persevere
 - First, Jesus reminds us of God's sovereignty over all of it

Matt. 10:26 "Therefore do not fear them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known.

Matt. 10:27 "What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops.

Matt. 10:28 "Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Matt. 10:29 "Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father.

Matt. 10:30 "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Matt. 10:31 "So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows.

Matt. 10:32 "Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven.

Matt. 10:33 "But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.

- Earlier, Jesus said beware men, but now He adds do not fear them
 - Fear is a sin, because it's a manifestation of a lack of faith in God's power and a lack of trust in the Lord's good purposes
 - And Jesus begins by reminding us of God's sovereignty
 - He says there is nothing concealed that won't be known or secret that won't be revealed
 - In short, Jesus is saying that the truth we've been given to share with the world will be known by all eventually
 - In the end, Jesus will conquer Satan, the Kingdom Program will prevail and all opposition will cease
 - So don't fear the battles in the meantime
 - Have you ever recorded a football game or a basketball game on your DVR and then watched it after you already knew how it ends?

- Perhaps somewhere in the game, your favorite team is losing and it looks like there is no chance they can pull it out
- But because you know the final score, you're not nervous, you're not worried
- In fact, you enjoy watching how the tide turned and how they found a way to get the win in the end
- That's how it should feel to work for Christ in the Kingdom Program
 - Some days may feel like it's late in the fourth quarter and the home team is way behind and there's no way to win
 - But you know how this game ends, so there is no need to fear
 - Which is why Jesus says proclaim the Gospel from the rooftops, without worrying about what the world of the enemy thinks
 - No matter what comes to you, the good guys win
- But then you will say to Jesus, yes I know YOU win in the end, but in the meantime I don't want to suffer personal losses
 - To which Jesus says in v.28, you're worrying about the wrong thing
 - You may not have noticed, but everyone dies somehow, some day...the death rate for human beings is 100%
 - So unless you're banking on the Rapture, you aren't getting out of this world alive
 - So don't spend your life worrying about your death and how to avoid it
 - Instead, Jesus says concern yourself with what happens after you die
 - Jesus is not saying we could be sent to hell...He's simply making a point by comparison
 - He's saying if we shrink back from the Kingdom Program because we fear personal loss, we're worrying about the wrong thing
 - We ought to be far more concerned with the eternal consequences of our decisions than we are with preserving our earthly life

- Instead, trust your earthly circumstances to God – He has a plan for us all and cares for us intimately
 - In vs.29-31 Jesus says you are so precious to Christ and to His Kingdom Program that He knows exactly how many hairs are on your head
 - Moreover, the Lord is watching events on earth so closely that not even a worthless sparrow dies without God's active involvement
 - Think about that...how many countless birds die each day (to say nothing of every other animal)...
 - Yet Jesus says the Father has ordained each death at a certain time and place, just as He wills
- Knowing we are far more valuable to Christ and knowing our Father is in control of everything, we become free to focus on eternal things instead
 - And here's the eternal perspective on the Kingdom Program

Matt. 10:32 "Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven.

Matt. 10:33 "But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.

Matt. 10:34 "Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.

Matt. 10:35 "For I came to SET A MAN AGAINST HIS FATHER, AND A DAUGHTER AGAINST HER MOTHER, AND A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER-IN-LAW;

Matt. 10:36 and A MAN'S ENEMIES WILL BE THE MEMBERS OF HIS HOUSEHOLD.

Matt. 10:37 "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

Matt. 10:38 "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.

Matt. 10:39 "He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.

Matt. 10:40 "He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.

Matt. 10:41 "He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

[Matt. 10:42](#) "And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward."

- First, having eyes for eternity recognizes the awesome privilege we've been given by God to participate in the Kingdom Program
 - We have been called by God to proclaim a message with the power to grant men and women eternal life
 - Jesus says those who confess Christ in response to our message will be acknowledged by God and those who don't, will not
 - Is there any more noble, meaningful, awesome way to spend your life on earth than in the pursuit of those moments?
 - You share a simple message, and depending on the response, you get to watch someone's eternal future change before you
 - Secondly, having eyes for eternity recognizes that this message will invite conflict with the world
 - But we're not afraid of that conflict, and we don't see conflict over the Gospel as a problem that we need to solve
 - We simply work in wise and innocent ways to navigate the minefields the enemy places before us, knowing opposition is inevitable
 - Because if we love harmony more than Jesus, even harmony in our families, than we are not worthy to follow Him into that work
 - We can't serve Him because the opposition will stop us or else we will change the message to avoid the opposition
 - Notice in v.39, Jesus says the one who foolishly tries to hold on to what they have here in this life will lose it in the end
 - But the one who lets those things go to serve Christ will find good things waiting in a life to come in the Kingdom
- Finally, eyes for eternity knows that our Father cares for us and will shepherd us and care for our needs even in the face of trials
 - In v.40 Jesus assures us that as someone receives our message, they are receiving Christ, and if they receive Christ, they receive the Father

- What Jesus is saying is you will not go out alone...the Father will go with you and will work through you
- From time to time we will experience success
- Preach the Gospel often enough, and you will be rewarded with hearts that accept your message
- And when you see that response, the Father is right there too... encouraging you and reminding you He is working through you
- In fact, the Lord honors all His workers equally and according to the same standard
 - When someone receives a prophet (a messenger) or a righteousness man (a godly Christian) in the name of Jesus, they will be rewarded
 - The reward isn't salvation itself, for that comes by grace only
- The Lord is promising that those we bring to faith will share in the same inheritance that He has made available to all saints
 - Receiving the same message means sharing in the same inheritance in the Kingdom
 - It's as if you carry a winning lottery card with you everywhere you go, ready to hand to anyone who would accept your message
- And in the final verse, the Lord adds that even the smallest act of kindness done in the name of the Kingdom, in the name of a disciple, gives opportunity for the Lord to reward us
 - The point couldn't be clearer today...there is a cost to the Kingdom program
 - But it's so small and meaningless
 - It only requires that we give up things of this world...things destined to burn up or die anyway
 - But serving Christ brings opportunity for eternal gain
 - Such that even the smallest gesture of service to Christ in furthering that program will bring eternal reward
 - So what do you have to lose?

[Eph. 2:5](#) even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

[Eph. 2:6](#) and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

[Eph. 2:7](#) so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.