

10:1 *Called unto Him*- Implying they were not always with Him. But there seems an intended contrast between calling them to Him, and then sending them forth (:5). They were with Him when they were away from Him. It is simply so, that when we witness, the words we speak are in effect the words of Jesus. Our words are His. This is how close we are to Him. And this is why our deportment and manner of life, which is the essential witness, must be in Him. For He is articulated to the world through us. And it explains the paradox of the parallel record in Mk. 3:14, whereby Jesus chose men that they should “be with Him and that He might send them forth to preach”. As they went out to witness, they were with Him, just as He is with us in our witness, to the end of the world [both geographically and in time]. And this solves another Marcan paradox, in Mk. 4:10: “When He was alone, they that were about Him with the twelve asked Him...”. Was He alone, or not? Mark speaks as if when the Lord was away from the crowd and with His true followers, He was “alone”- for He counted them as one body with Him. This was why the Lord told Mary, when she so desperately wanted to be personally with Him, to go and preach to His brethren (Jn. 20:18), just as He had told some of those whom He had healed- for going and preaching Him was in effect being with Him.

*Authority*- This is in the context of the Lord's concern that the crowds were sheep with no shepherd, which I suggested was an allusion to Moses' words of Num. 27:17 (see on 9:36). Moses asks for God to raise up another to do his work, and God gives him Joshua- and is told "You shall invest him with some of your authority" (Num. 27:20). So the Lord is here treating the disciples as if they are His replacement, going out to do His work, just as the later body of Christ are to do. We have in this preaching tour they are sent on some sort of foretaste of the great commission.

*All manner*- Every kind of sickness and disease was to be engaged with by them because they were to be the re-incarnation of Jesus' personal ministry, His body to the world. See on 9:35.

10:2 Note this is not the record of the choosing of the twelve, but rather of their commissioning and being sent out. The list is broken up into pairs, perhaps because they were sent out as six pairs.

*James... John*- Mark adds that James and John were to be the “sons of thunder” (Mk. 3:17), another Rabbinic phrase, used of the young trainee Rabbis who stood at the left and right of the Master of the Synagogue during the Sabbath services (hence the later appeal for confirmation as to whether they would *really* stand at the Master’s right and left in His Kingdom). These uneducated men were to take the place of the learned Scribes whom they had always respected and lived in fear of... truly they were being pushed against the grain. See on 16:19.

10:3 *The publican*- The Gospel records were transcripts by the evangelists of their personal preaching of the Gospel. Matthew adds in the list of the disciples that he was “the publican” (Mt. 10:3). And throughout, there are little hints at his own unworthiness- in his own presentation of the Gospel to others.

*Bartholomew*- Apparently the same as Nathanael, also mentioned with Philip in Jn. 1:46-51.

10:4 *The Canaanite*- Not 'from Canaan' but a *kananites*, a zealot. We see the wide range of men the Lord called into His band; Matthew the tax collector would've been seen as a traitor, whereas the zealots were at the other end of the political spectrum. The way the 12 didn't break up as a group after living together under extreme psychological conditions is a testament to the unifying power of the person of Jesus. The composition of the Lord's body is the same today, including "all [types of] men". Sadly denominationalism and churchianity has led to churches often being clusters of believers having the same socio-economic, racial and personality type positions, rather than being conglomerations of literally all types of t, of whatever accent and formation.

*Iscariot*- Perhaps 'man of Kerioth.' Kerioth was a small village in Judea (Josh 15:25). Judas would therefore have been the only Judean. It could be that 'Iscariot' is from *sicarius*, 'dagger-man' or 'assassin'. This would suggest that Judas belonged to what was reckoned to be the most far right of the various resistance groups, the Sicarii (the partisans, cp. Acts 21:38). Again we see the wide range of people the Lord was calling together in order to weld them into one body in Him.

10:5 *Sent forth*- Literally, apostled them. Whoever is sent forth is apostled, and the great commission sends forth all believers.

*Go not*- Given Judaism's strong opposition to Jesus and His teaching, did the Lord foresee they would be tempted to go to the Gentiles? He surely wanted them to replicate His ministry as exactly as possible- and He was sent at that stage to Israel and not to the Gentiles.

10:6 *Rather*- The construction 'Not this but rather that' could mean 'Focus more on that than this', i.e. focus upon the Jews. It was not necessarily a total prohibition on preaching to Gentiles. For similar constructions see Jn. 17:9 and 1 Cor. 1:17.

*The lost sheep*- It's hard to tell whether the Lord meant that all Israel were lost sheep, or whether He meant that the apostles were to go to the lost sheep within Israel- to the spiritually marginalized whom He too had targeted. For the sense of the commission is that they were to replicate His ministry, as if they were Him to the world around them. He was personally sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Mt. 15:24) and He asks them to do just the same. His mission was theirs, and it is ours. As He was sent out by the Father, so He sends us out; we're all in that sense 'apostles', sent out ones. The Lord's parables about *His* searching for the lost sheep until He found it were to be understood by the apostles as now applying to *them*. And we understand from His words here that He considered that lost sheep to be Israel. The search until it was found would then be an appropriate figure for the Lord's never ending search for Israel, a love which He can never give up over the centuries. The allusion is also to Ezekiel 34, which speaks of "the house of Israel" being lost sheep because of their bad shepherds. The Lord doesn't

specifically state that the disciples are now the new shepherds of Israel (see note on 9:37,38). He simply sends them to the lost sheep. It seems they were not ready for full pastoral responsibility, but they were to begin their shepherding. We note that the Lord specifically commissions Peter to "feed My sheep / lambs", and these are here defined as the lost sheep of Israel. Hence Peter's ministry specifically to the Jews. These were the sheep who were now lost because of the Jewish religious leadership. The Lord was sending out the apostles to try to provide what the standard religious leadership didn't, even though they weren't mature enough to be designated as 'shepherds' at that stage; and that is how many of us feel or felt when we first perceived we too are being sent out just as much as they were. Notice that the Lord sent the disciples to the lost sheep as sheep (10:16)- not as shepherds. It is the commonality we have with our audience which is the bridge across which we can engage with them and persuade them. To stress what we have in common on a human level is what sets up the possibility for those 'flash' moments when we really get something of the Gospel across to them.

10:7 *As you go, preach*- The idea could be that they were to 'preach' whilst travelling, not just as set piece deliveries of speeches about the Gospel, but the good news of the Kingdom should come out of them from who they were, "as" they were going. The same word is in the great commission to us, to 'go and preach' (Mt. 28:19). It was a foretaste of the greater worldwide campaign which was to be the way of life for all in Christ.

*The Kingdom*- In the person of Jesus, the essence of the Kingdom came nigh to men (Mt. 10:7; 11:4; 12:28)- and this was why one of His titles is "the Kingdom". The Kingdom of God is about joy, peace and righteousness more than the physicalities of eating and drinking. In this sense the Kingdom was "amongst" first century Israel. The Kingdom of God is not merely a carrot held out to us for good behaviour. It is a reality right now, in so far as God truly becomes our king.

*Is at hand*- Mt. 10:7 and Mk. 6:12 parallel preaching the soon coming of the Kingdom with preaching repentance. The Greek could mean 'Is soon coming', 'Is being brought near' or 'Has come near (already)'. All these meanings were likely intended by the Lord, hence the choice of this wide meaning phrase. The Kingdom was potentially scheduled for establishment 'soon', but Israel's refusal of the Gospel and rejection of the Lord Jesus meant that it was delayed. Mt. 21:34 uses the same phrase to describe how the time of harvest 'drew near'- but the husbandmen refused to give the fruits, and so another program of operation was put into practice. Rom. 13:12, James 5:8 and Heb. 10:25 likewise speak of the day of the second coming drawing nearer by the day. Regardless of whatever delays there may be to the Divine program, we are to live as if "The Lord is at hand" (s.w., Phil. 4:5), as if He is about to come soon. In another sense, by response to the Gospel, the time for the establishment of the Kingdom was being hastened, being 'brought near'. But in a sense, the Kingdom had come near to Israel in that Jesus as King of the Kingdom was the embodiment of Kingdom principles, and He was amongst men at that time. Those who witnessed His Kingdom-like healing miracles had the Kingdom brought near to them (Lk. 10:9). The teaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom was therefore a bringing near of the Kingdom to men. The Lord Jesus, the essence and embodiment of the Kingdom, was there amongst men, and

the apostles were heralding ['preaching'] His presence.

10:8 The sayings of Jesus have been translated back into Aramaic, the language of His day, by C.F. Burney. He was struck by the degree to which they had a rhythmic shape, like many of the prophetic sayings of the Old Testament. Thus a passage like Lk. 7:22 has six two-beat lines followed at the end by a three beat line; the commission to the disciples here in Mt. 10:8 rhymes, both in Aramaic and in Greek. The Lord's prayer is expressed in two-beat lines. The crunch point of the Lord's forgiveness parable in Lk. 15:7, that there is joy in Heaven over one sinner that repents, uses the device of alliteration, i.e. similarly sounding words.

*Heal-* The noun is found once, in Heb. 3:5, where in the context of describing the Lord Jesus He is called "a servant". The acts of healing were done in a servant-like way. This contrasts sharply with the pride associated with many Pentecostal healers. Whatever good we do others, dramatic or not so dramatic, is to be done as an incarnation of the supreme Servant of all, the Lord Jesus. For it is His ministry which we are performing, not ultimately our own.

*Cleanse-* The word also has the sense of moral cleansing. Again the Lord is giving the disciples the work of the priests to do. For it was their job to pronounce lepers cleansed. But He is asking them to do what He Himself had done in Mt. 8:3. His work was to be theirs.

*Raise the dead-* The Greek definitely means 'to awake'. We wonder how many dead people were raised by the apostles, even though the power of resurrection appears to have been granted them here. It's tempting, given the spiritual dimension to the three words chosen here for their work (heal, cleanse, raise), to wonder whether their ministry was intended to be of spiritual service and healing, with physical miracles in second place, although not out of the picture.

*Freely-* Gk. 'without a cause'. The allusion is not to anything monetary, but to the free gift of God's grace to us. The only other occurrence of the Greek phrase 'give freely' is in Rev. 21:6, where we read of the free gift of the water of eternal life to whoever really wants it. There is a connection between us 'freely giving' the Gospel now (Mt. 10:8), and being given 'freely given' salvation at the last day (Rom. 8:32; Rev. 21:6). The freeness of God's gift to us should be reflected in a free spirited giving out of the Gospel to others. Paul's decision not to take money from Corinth (1 Cor. 9:18) was due to his deep, deep meditation on the principle contained in Mt. 10:8; although there were other passages in the Gospels which he knew implied that it was Christ's will that the missionary should be paid (1 Cor. 9:14 = Mt. 10:10). This issue of payment shows how Paul based his life decisions on his understanding of the principles of the Gospels. He did far more than learn those Gospels parrot-fashion. They were in his heart, and influenced the direction of his life.

10:9 *Provide-* The idea of the Greek is to get or acquire, and the hint could be against taking money for their work with people. But the meaning extends into verse 10, and the sense is clearly that they were not to worry about how materially they were going to do their preaching

tour. They were to trust that what was basically necessary would be provided, just as it was for Israel on their wilderness journey. To just go out and preach with nothing behind them was a huge challenge to their faith in the principles of the Sermon on the Mount, which taught to take no anxious thought for food or clothing (Mt. 6:25). And their obedience and success is likewise a great challenge to our own faith- for so often lack of finance and material things is what leaves many good intentions to preach stillborn. But it is the Lord's will that should spread the Gospel, and as a wise old brother of wide missionary experience told me in my youth "I have never seen a preaching initiative fail for lack of funds".

*Nor brass-* Even small coins were not to be considered necessary for the missionary work to finally succeed.

10:10 *Two coats-* Maybe a reference to a double garment. But the similarity with Israel's wilderness journey is clear. No food pouch for the road, no extra clothes or shoes- because as the Father provided those things for Israel, so He would for those who preach His Kingdom.

*Labourer-* The Lord has used the word about how the labourers are "few", meaning both weak and also few in number (9:37,38), and He will go on to speak of how the labourers He uses to reap the harvest are those who have been standing around unused by others because they are maybe old, weak, lazy or have a poor work record (Mt. 20:1,2,8). Clearly the Lord recognized that His labourers would be weak, but He still expects them to be recognized as "worthy" of support as they attempt to do His work.

*Worthy of his food-* The Greek can mean 'rations', as if they were to be as soldiers on duty. They were to believe that their needs would be met. The mechanism for meeting that need was presumably from the things provided by those who would receive them, although the Lord was clear that they wouldn't always get a positive reception (:14). Their faith in the provision of their needs by their audience was therefore tantamount to faith that some at least would respond positively to their message. Note that by the time Paul wrote 1 Tim. 5:18, this phrase was considered as "Scripture", another hint at an early date for the writing down of the Gospel accounts. The context of that verse is of the financial support of teachers of the Gospel. It seems the Lord expected that those who gave their lives to spreading and teaching His word should be supported in doing so. Note that the context here in Mt. 10 is of itinerant preachers being supported; Paul doesn't quote the Lord's words strictly in context, because he applies them to teachers based in one particular church. But this is how we are to interpret Scripture- taking the principles and applying them to our situation locally, even if that situation may differ in some ways from the original situation and context in which the principle was first established or stated.

*Worthy-* There is a strong theme in the NT that none of the Lord's people are ultimately "worthy", but rather unworthy. There will be faults with all preachers. But by reason of their

devotion to the Lord's word and work we are to consider them worthy of support- even if aspects of their wider unworthiness are apparent. Support is not only to be given to those who appear faultless, for none are. The word 'worthy' is used later in Matthew 10. Those who respond to the message are "worthy" (:13); there is a mutuality between the teacher and the convert, they both consider each other 'worthy' in that the righteousness and worthiness of the Lord is imputed to them both. Later in the chapter, the Lord teaches that the 'worthy' are those who take up their cross and follow Him, regardless of loss of family and social standing. Their journeys in the preaching of the Gospel were therefore seen by the Lord as a taking up of the cross and following Him (10:37,38). There is nothing therefore glamorous to missionary work, and that point needs to be well understood especially by young people who jet off to exotic places in the name of Gospel extension work.

According to Mark's record of the Lord's words here, He is picking out the picture of Israel as they were on Passover night, as an illustration of how His disciples should be on their preaching mission. "He called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth... and commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse: but be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats". All this is couched in the language of Israel on Passover night. His next words for them appear to be stating the obvious, unless they allude to Israel remaining at whatever place they reached until the fire and cloud moved them on: "In what place soever ye enter... there abide till you depart from that place" (Mk. 6:8-10). It must be remembered that God intended Israel to be a missionary nation, teaching the surrounding world of His ways by their example of obedience to His law. As Israel left Egypt with the gold and jewels of Egypt, so, Jesus implied, the disciples were to carry the precious things of the Gospel.

10:11 *Enquire who in it is worthy-* The contrast is between the worthy and those who don't accept the Gospel (:13,14). So the worthy would be those who have responded to the Gospel already. The Lord's fame had gone throughout Israel (Mt. 4:24) so the apostles weren't going into totally virgin territory. They were following up on the rumours people had already heard about Jesus. "Worthy" seems a strange term to use for the believers, but maybe already the Lord was teaching the idea of imputed righteousness. Those who had believed in Him were "worthy", and He expected them to likewise consider the preachers of the Gospel to be "worthy" of their support. Belief in Him, therefore, was not without practical demands; it was natural and expected of the Lord that those who had believed in Him should provide materially for His preachers. The first mention of this word for "worthy" in the NT is in Mt. 3:8, where John the Baptist asks his followers to bring forth fruit worthy of repentance. Perhaps 'the worthy' had become a technical term for those who had responded to John's teaching about Jesus, or at least openly confessed faith in Jesus. The mission of the apostles here may have been to follow up on them. This would

mean that the information in Lk. 7:4 that a man was "worthy" of a healing may have implied that he was one of those who had responded to John the Baptist.

*There abide-* To build relationships, to enhance the possibility of a house church developing there later, and to avoid the temptation to shop around for the best accommodation or the wealthiest sympathizers. Luke adds: "Go not from house to house". The Lord at least twice stressed to His disciples that they were not to go preaching from house to house, but rather focus upon one house in a village and make that the centre of their work (Lk. 9:4; 10:7). Clearly His intention was that they built up house groups rather than scattered converts. Perhaps this was alluded to by Paul when he criticized sisters who went spreading gossip "from house to house" (1 Tim. 5:13). He surely had house churches in mind.

10:12 *Salute it-* The Lord empowered the traditional *Shalom* greeting with real meaning when uttered by the apostles on entering a house. The household were offered real peace with God- all they had to do was say yes to it. If they did not, then the opportunity was withdrawn (:13).

*Worthy-* Worthy of Christ (same word in :37,38). None are worthy (Rev. 5:4) except Christ (Rev. 5:9), yet if we are in Him, we are counted worthy. The Greek word is used about those who responded to John the Baptist producing fruit 'worthy of repentance' (Mt. 3:8; Lk. 3:8). It could be that the Lord is using the word in a technical sense, referring to those who had responded to John's preaching.

10:13 *If the house be worthy-* The apostles would have gone to the household because they had heard that it was worthy, or believing in Jesus (see on :11). But the Lord was well aware that there would be those who had a name as believers in Him who actually were not. Even though the household was "worthy" in the sense of having professed faith in Him, they needed to confirm that by accepting the *shalom* offered in Christ's Name. Note that the household was judged as worthy or unworthy. Here we see the beginnings of the house church movement which was so characteristic of early Christianity. We note too the household baptisms mentioned in the NT. One purpose, therefore, of the apostles visiting these households was to find out who had a name as a Christian believer, and to ascertain whether they were indeed believers. The test was whether the household who claimed to be Christian would receive them, the representatives of Jesus, who were as His body to the world. If the household publically professed faith in Jesus, having heard something about Him or maybe learnt from John the Baptist, but refused to accept Christ's brethren and the word of Christ as they taught it- then they were classified as not actually believing at all. This has uncanny parallels with our own day, where many claim publically to be "worthy", to be believers in Jesus personally- but refuse and reject His brethren and are not seriously interested in His words. Herein lies the danger of 'out of church Christianity'. Whatever that means, if it means in reality that we profess a personal allegiance to Jesus but have no time for His people- then it is wrong and a path to rejection by Him. Vague connection with the idea of Jesus and advertising it publically is not enough of itself- if we reject His brethren, then we have rejected Him. This is a sobering challenge to those whose closed table policies lead them to

reject many of His brethren and representatives. There has to be a connection with the use of the same word “worthy” in 10:12- the labourer in the Gospel’s work is “worthy” of being supported. The connection could simply be that the worthiness of the household is proven by whether they consider Christ’s servants likewise ‘worthy’, and whether they treat them accordingly.

*Peace return-* See on 10:12. If the household didn't accept Christ's brethren, then the peace of salvation which He had invested the apostles' greeting with, would be withdrawn. His *shalom*, His peace and fellowship with those who name His Name, is dependent upon whether or not they accept His brethren.

10:14 *Whosoever-* Whichever town, according to :15.

*Receive you nor hear your words-* To receive an apostle personally was to receive his words. As the Lord was the word made flesh, so there should be a continuity, an identity and congruity between the words we preach and us as persons. This means that the receiving of the preachers as persons was connected with receiving their words.

*Shake off the dust-* The disciples were to shake off the dust of their feet against unbelieving Israel (Mt. 10:14; Mk. 6:11; Acts 8:51), in allusion to the Rabbinic teaching that the dust of Gentile lands caused defilement. Israel who rejected the Gospel were thus to be treated as Gentiles. Time and again the prophets describe the judgments to fall upon Israel in the same terms as they speak of the condemnations of the surrounding nations (e.g. Jer. 50:3,13). The message was clear: rejected Israel would be treated as Gentiles. Thus Joel describes the locust invasion of Israel in the language of locusts covering the face of Egypt (Joel 2:2,20 = Ex. 10:14,15,19). Israel’s hardness of heart is explicitly likened to that of Pharaoh (1 Sam. 6:6); as the Egyptians were drowned, so would Israel be (Am. 9:5-8). As Pharaoh’s heart was plagued (Ex. 9:14), so was Israel’s (1 Kings 8:38); as Egypt was a reed, so were Israel (1 Kings 14:15). As Pharaoh-hophra was given into the hand of his enemies, so would Israel be (Jer. 44:30). Even if we are separated from this world externally, we can still act in a worldly way, and share the world's condemnation by being finally "condemned with the world" (1 Cor. 11:32).

10:15 *More tolerable-* There will be degrees of punishment for the rejected at the last day.

*Sodom-* The people from Sodom will appear at the day of judgment. Seeing that knowledge brings responsibility, it follows that somehow those people had had God’s word preached to them, just as the towns of first century Israel had. But by whom? There is no direct record of Abraham or Lot witnessing to them, but it could be that Lot’s righteous living was counted as a witness to them which demanded they too accepted Lot’s righteous lifestyle. Seeing that Melchizedek lived in the area, one wonders whether he may have witnessed to them. In any case, we read only a few incidents from the lives of Bible characters; perhaps Abraham and / or Lot made a major witness to those cities and to the area around them (“*the land of Sodom...*”).

10:16- see on 24:14.



*I send you forth as sheep-* When He uses the metaphor of sending out His sheep in Jn. 10, the Lord makes the point that He leads them forth, going ahead of them. And yet with the sending out of the apostles, He didn't literally go with them nor go a day's journey ahead of them. He went before them in the same way as He goes before us, His sheep of this age- in personal example. As He had gone around Israel preaching, so they were to replicate His ministry. And He is a most unusual shepherd, in that He sends them forth knowing that they are walking right into the wolves. "I send you forth" is actually a quotation from the LXX of Ex. 3:12, where Moses is sent forth to take Israel out of Egypt. Thus the Lord bids His men see themselves as Moses, taking Israel out of Egypt, which becomes a symbol for orthodox Judaism. This subversion of popular Jewish understandings continues throughout this section.

*As sheep-* Bridge building involves us becoming 'as' our target audience- as Paul was a Jew to the Jews and a Gentile to the Gentiles. Thus the Lord tells the disciples to go forth and preach as sheep / lambs; in order to appeal to the lost sheep of Israel (Mt. 10:6). They were to be as sheep to win the sheep.

*In the midst of wolves-* The language suggests they would be totally outnumbered. They were making a brave witness in the teeth of aggressive opposition. Jewish teaching was that Israel was the sheep which was surrounded by 70 wolves, seen as the Gentile nations (*Pesiqta Rabbati* 9:2; *Tanhuma Toldos* 5). The Lord is subverting this idea- the apostate, legalistic, Torah-observant Pharisees were in fact Gentiles in the Lord's eyes, and the true Israel was comprised of the secular, spiritually immature followers of Jesus.

*Wise as serpents-* The Lord may not be using the snake here as a symbol of sin or sinful people. He may simply be alluding to the way that when a snake moves into a new area, it is cautious, uses camouflage to blend in, spies out opportunities, doesn't act hastily and doesn't immediately go for what looks the easiest target. These kinds of characteristics were absolutely necessary for the apostles to emulate in their work. The Lord was not a fan of mass rallies and high profile publicity, rather did He prefer to work as quietly as possible and as deeply as possible with individuals; and He wanted His preachers to do the same. Yet again, as with "in the midst of wolves", the Lord is alluding to an understanding then common within Judaism; in this case, to *Shiyr hashirim Rabba*, fol. 16: "The holy blessed God said to the Israelites, Ye shall be toward me as upright as the doves; but, toward the Gentiles, as cunning as serpents". The Lord is saying that the Jewish religious leadership, with all their hatred of Gentiles, were to be treated as Gentiles- for this is who they were. And again, the true Israel are the Lord's bungling, hesitant, misunderstanding followers and preachers.

*Harmless as doves-* Doves and snakes are not aggressive and move away from conflict- whereas wolves are aggressive. Perhaps that is the Lord's point- be wise, prudent, but not aggressive, and retreat from confrontation.

10:17 *Beware of men*- As in 10:16, this is an appeal to not be like sheep in their naivety. The apostles were going to suffer, ultimately. Therefore, they should beware of trusting men too quickly, because the aggression towards them was going to be far greater than they imagined. The apostles likely didn't think that the Jewish religious leadership were as bad as the Lord knew them to be, and they were initially too concerned not to upset them (Mt. 15:12). The "men" of whom they were to "beware" were surely the Pharisees, because elsewhere the Lord teaches the disciples to "beware" of them (Mt. 7:15; 16:6,11,12; Lk. 20:46); and He goes on in this verse to speak of "*their* synagogues", showing that "men" are in fact the Jewish religious leadership.

*Councils*- Their Sanhedrin. The language of 'handing over', Sanhedrin and scourging is all relevant to the sufferings of the Lord Jesus. He is teaching here that the preaching of His Gospel is an incarnation of Himself, and will result in our suffering the essence of His own sufferings and death. To go out on the road of missionary witness is to walk the path of the cross. It's not anything glamorous- if done properly as He intended.

*Scourge*- Scourging was usually only practiced for blasphemy or breaching public order. Maybe we are to read this in the context of the Lord asking His preachers to be as snakes and doves, to not be provocative and not seek to create public showdowns with the Jewish leadership. Perhaps the Lord foresaw that some of His men would fail in this, and suffer accordingly. Or perhaps He foresaw how belief in Him as God's Son would be classified as the ultimate blasphemy. And yet synagogues could only scourge those who were members. The Lord foresaw that His preachers would remain within the synagogue system rather than leave it totally. The fact Paul was scourged in synagogues (2 Cor. 11:25) shows that in being a Jew to the Jews, he opted to remain within the synagogue system. This fact shows that the Lord Jesus didn't intend His people to formally break with the synagogue system, even though it was apostate in doctrine and practice. This indicates that there was absolutely no sense within Him of 'guilt by association' nor a demand for His people to leave apostate systems- they were to remain there until they were cast out of the synagogues (Jn. 16:2) (1).

10:18 *A testimony*- The Lord wanted to give even kings and rulers the chance of repentance. The legal language suggests that a court case was going on- in the court of Heaven, situations on earth are tried, and the witness of the apostles at their earthly court cases against *them* was used in the court case *against the rulers* which was going on in Heaven.

*Against them*- The "men" of :17, the Jews; for there is a contrast made between "them" and "the Gentiles". In :14 the Lord has taught to shake off the dust of their feet as a "witness against" the unbelieving Jews (this is added in the parallel records in Mk. 6:11 and Lk. 9:5).

*The Gentiles*- Yet the commission told the apostles to *not* go to the Gentiles. The Lord speaks in this wider sense because He wanted them to realize that what He was asking them to do on their brief preaching tour was to be understood by them, even then, as programmatic and prophetic of their (and our) later witness to the entire world, as required by the great commission. The

implication is that the “men” of :17 are the ones who will lead to the disciples being persecuted by Gentiles; and this indeed is how it worked out, due to a program of Jewish orchestrated opposition to the Gospel’s spreading. The idea of a testimony to or against the Gentiles is to be found in Mt. 24:14, where we find the same two Greek words used in speaking of the preaching of the Gospel as a *testimony* to “the nations” (s.w. “Gentiles”) in the very last days. The spreading of the Gospel to the whole world will likely be facilitated by high profile, well publicized legal cases against the Gospel’s preachers- something perhaps we have yet to see in the last days.

10:19 *They shall deliver you up*- The Jews (the “men” of :17, the “them” of :18) delivering Christian preachers to Gentile powers, after the pattern of what they did to Jesus.

*Take no thought*- A major theme of the Sermon on the Mount; the same word occurs in Mt. 6:25,27,28,31,34. Here the Lord is surely saying that the general principles He had taught there would not have specific fulfillment in time of persecution. Likewise “for My sake” in 10:18 alludes to Mt. 5:11.

*Given you*- The language appropriate to Moses and prophets like Jeremiah is here applied to the Lord's generally secular followers (Ex. 4:10-12; Jer. 1:6-10). He was continually encouraging them to see that ministries which they had never considered possible of realistic emulation were in fact to be their pattern. Time and again, the Lord is saying that His experience under persecution will be ours. For it was *given* Him what to *speak* (Jn. 3:34; 12:49 same words) and He wants us to know that if we preach Him and seek to replicate His ministry in our own, then God likewise will strengthen us as He did His own Son. We note that it was likewise *given* to the apostles what to *speak* in Acts 2:4; 4:29. They misunderstood the great commission- they twisted it to mean that they must preach to all Jews rather than to all the Gentiles; but by grace, God still kept this aspect of the promise to support obedience to the commission given; even if it was misunderstood.