



World Christian Fellowship

www.wcflondon.com
wcflondon@gmail.com

Rejecting the unworthy!

Matthew 10:11-15

Matthew 10:5-15, *These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: “Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. ⁶But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ ⁸Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. ⁹Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, ¹⁰nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food. ¹¹“Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out. ¹²And when you go into a household, greet it. ¹³If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. ¹⁵Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!*

Matthew chapter 10 can be divided into three parts.

1. **V 5-15, Tasks of the Apostles.**
2. **V 16-23, Response to their ministry.**
3. **V 24-42, Cost of being a disciple.**

1. **Divine commission.**

V 5, *These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans.*

2. **Objective.**

V 6, *But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*

3. **Clear Message.**

What did Jesus say?

V 7, *And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'*

4. **Miracles to confirm the Apostleship.**

If you go to a doctor, and he gives you a diagnosis, why do you believe that?

Because he is a doctor.

He has got a degree certificate hanging on the wall that says he graduated from a medical school.

These Apostles did not go to any seminary.
They were ordinary people like us!

These Apostles were the very opposite of the existing religious establishment.

They had not been educated in the right place.

They were from Galilee, not Jerusalem.

They didn't belong to the Pharisees or the Sadducees or the Essenes or the zealots or anybody else.

What was the reason to believe them?

There were credentials.

V 8, *“Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely ye have received, freely give.”*

Signs, wonders, and mighty deeds.

The first credential they manifest was compassion and mercy on people in need.

The second credential. Power

The power to raise the dead and the power to invade the kingdom of darkness, the unseen world of the demons, and overcome that kingdom, that's power.

Compassion and power.

5. Unselfishness.

V 8, *“Freely ye have received, freely give.”*

You didn't earn that power.

You didn't gain that power.

You didn't get it by doing to seminary or Bible College.

You didn't get that power by being ordained.

You got that power from God.

What did you pay for your power?

Nothing.

What should you charge you for your power?

Nothing.

Contend faith.

V 9-10, *Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts,¹⁰ nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food.*

You are liable to go somewhere and spend a lot of money getting there, and what if they don't give you anything?

Some time you get more than what you need.

Some time you get nothing.

But the issue is not to set a price.

What our Lord trying to teach these people is to have confident faith.

Do you know what the Jews realized in this time?

They knew this.

This is how the rabbis were. They were never to price anything, they were never to demand anything, they were never to ask a fee, but always the people were to supply their needs.

Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaacov said, "He who receives a rabbi into his house or as his guest and lets him have his enjoyment from his possessions, the Scripture ascribes to him as if he had offered the continual offerings. God's going to bless him because he took care of God's servant.

God's man has never to be over concerned with material things.

But the people of God must see it their duty to support him.

I can't put the price, but it's your responsibility before God to support the one who serves, "*For the worker is worthy of his sustenance.*"

How should you do that?

1 Timothy 5:17-18, *Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially those who labour in the word and doctrine. ¹⁸For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain," and, "The labourer is worthy of his wages."*

Acts 20:34, *Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me.*

1 Thessalonians 2:7, *But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children.*

1 Thessalonians 2:9-11, *For you remember, brethren, our labour and toil; for labouring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. ¹⁰You are witnesses, and God also, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; ¹¹as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children, ¹²that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.*

If you are in full time ministry, then do not increase your lifestyle rather increase your giving to the Lord and poor.

Those who are working in the main line churches treat them as a job which is totally wrong.

Those who are working as a pastor in independent churches thing that all the money received as their income, and they become so wealthy and abuse the system which is also wrong.

When Israel first asked for a king, Samuel warned them how taxing human rulers would be.

1 Samuel 8:11–18, *And he said, “This will be the behaviour of the king who will reign over you: He will take your sons and appoint them for his own chariots and to be his horsemen, and some will run before his chariots. ¹²He will appoint captains over his thousands and captains over his fifties, will set some to plough his ground and reap his harvest, and some to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. ¹³He will take your daughters to be perfumers, cooks, and bakers. ¹⁴And he will take the best of your fields, your vineyards, and your olive groves, and give them to his servants. ¹⁵He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage, and give it to his officers and servants. ¹⁶And he will take your male servants, your female servants, your finest young men, and your donkeys, and put them to his work. ¹⁷He will take a tenth of your sheep. And you will be his servants. ¹⁸And you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the Lord will not hear you in that day.”*

David's son Solomon charged taxes and required his citizens to work to build the temple in Jerusalem.

Solomon built stables and garrisons and public works, and a harem and wealth for himself.

After 7 years of temple construction, he required the work teams to build him a palace — for the next 13 years!

So heavy was Solomon's yoke that it split the kingdom when he died.

1 Kings 12:4, *“Your father made our yoke heavy; now therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father, and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you.”*

1 Kings 12:11, *And now, whereas my father put a heavy yoke on you, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!’ ”*

6. Contentment.

If Jesus was restoring the kingdom, how could he fund it?

Jesus has just appointed His first government officials twelve kingdom emissaries — but how could He fund them?

You are not going to believe what Jesus did. He sent them out with no money, to fend for themselves!

Not only did Jesus' refuse to pay them, but He refused to let them collect money from family and friends for their journey.

He sent them without money, and without spare clothes.
He instructed them to rely on local hospitality.

Maybe that's not such a stretch for the twelve. They have already been doing that as they journeyed with Jesus. Now they have to do it on their own.

V 11, *"Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out.*

"Worthy" doesn't mean wealthy.

What does that mean?

Somebody whose character, somebody whose lifestyle, somebody whose integrity would be a fitting place for you to stay.

Jesus tells His disciples what to do as they approach and enter a city or village from among the House of Israel. Whatever city or village they enter, they are to ask and inquire who is worthy in that town and stay at that person's house until they leave that city.

Hospitality to travellers was an important and cultural value throughout much of the ancient world.

Smaller towns and villages often lacked official accommodations such as inns for its guests, and so many overnight travellers stayed in the house of a local resident.

Travelers were considered vulnerable. It was customary to always accept a traveller as an overnight guest and provide him with a meal and lodging if he asked.

Moses taught that Israel should be hospitable to foreigners who reside with them in their land. The practical implications of Moses's command could easily extend to Jewish strangers traveling from out of town:

Leviticus 19:33-34, *“When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God.”*

Jesus used the value of hospitality as an example describing faithfulness in action and as a kind of measurement at the judgment (**Matthew 25:31-46**).

Matthew 25:40, *“The King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me’”*

Jesus once visited the home of Simon the Pharisee. When Simon silently questioned Jesus’s character because a sinful woman washed His feet, Christ contrasted Simon’s failure to perform this customary duty for guests while the penitent woman went above and beyond to show kindness (**Luke 7:44-48**).

1 Timothy 5:10, *well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints’ feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work.*

Titus 1:8, *but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled,*

Hebrews 13:2, *Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels.*

1 Peter 4:9, *Be hospitable to one another without grumbling.*

A house would develop a reputation for being kind or unkind to its out-of-town guests. This is likely what Jesus meant when He told his disciples to inquire who is worthy in it.

In other words, when you come to a town, ask which houses are hospitable and stay there until you leave the city. It was very practical advice.

It is considered worthy based on how the host/hostess received the apostles and not on the condition of the house itself.

Don't look for luxury!

1 Timothy 6:6, *Now godliness with contentment is great gain.*

V 12, *And when you go into a household, greet it.*

As guests would stay in houses, it was customary for them to give it a blessing of peace. "Peace be upon this House" was how travellers greeted their potential hosts when they approached the house as a sign of respect.

The idea of a greeting of peace being received is that the "shalom" given by the apostle, the wish for those in the house to have total wellbeing in mind, body, and spirit, would be confirmed by their receptiveness to the apostle's message.

This blessing demonstrated their good will to the hosts and was recognized as a promise to do or show no ill-will to their hosts.

V 13, *If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you*

If the house is reputed to be worthy of being hospitable, give it your blessing of peace. And stay there. If the house proved to be worthy of its hospitable reputation, let your blessing of peace stand.

Thank the people of that house for being generous hosts.
Thank God for their kindness.

Ask Him to show that house favour in return for their hospitality.

The principle is that we need to concentrate our efforts on those who respond to the message of the gospel.

2 Timothy 2:2, *And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.*

V 14, And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet.

But if the house turns out to not be worthy of its hospitable reputation, take back your blessing of peace.

Jesus is not saying show them harm and pay them back “an eye for an eye.” But let God deal with them for their unkindness.

If the people of that town are inhospitable or reject the hopeful message you preach, do not take it personally. Don’t hold a grudge. Just shake it off and move on to the next town. God will deal with them.

Our tendency is to think that everyone is that one lost sheep out of the hundred so we should leave the 99 to look for it. We need to remember that the gospel message is also one of judgment. People who are in sin will pay the penalty of that sin unless they repent and receive God’s forgiveness.

Someone may be kind and put you up, but if they do not respond to the gospel there is no basis for the extension of peace, for without a positive response to God’s message of love, there is not peace with God.

Concentrate on the receptive. In your ministry, that's important. You find those places where there's openness and pour your heart into those places.

2 John 1:10-11, *If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; ¹¹for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.*

V 14, *And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet.*

This was a little physical thing the Jews did. Whenever they went into a Gentile country, of course they got covered with dust. When they came back into Israel, they didn't want to bring Gentile dust into Israel, because they believed that Gentile dust would defile things.

So, before they entered Israel, they shook all this dust off them so they wouldn't bring any Gentile dirt back in.

Paul and Barnabas did this when leaving Pisidia of Antioch.

Acts 13:50-51, *But the Jews stirred up the devout and prominent women and the chief men of the city, raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region. ⁵¹But they shook off the dust from their feet against them, and came to Iconium.*

So, Jesus saying that you are going to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. If they don't hear your message, you treat them the way you would treat a Gentile.

Do we just walkway from those who reject the Gospel?

No!

2 Corinthians 5:18-20, *Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. ²⁰Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.*

V 15, *Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!*

Sodom and Gomorrah were towns destroyed by God for their wickedness.

Genesis 19:24-28, *Then the Lord rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the Lord out of the heavens. ²⁵So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.²⁶But his wife looked*

back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. ²⁷And Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the Lord. ²⁸Then he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain; and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land which went up like the smoke of a furnace.

Jesus could mean two things by this remark. He could mean that it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah because those cities have already been judged for their sins, while the cities that refuse them have not been.

Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by rained fire and brimstone. Drowned both those two cities so that they can't even be found today. We have no trace of them left.

They must be under the south end of the Dead Sea because they can't find any trace of them at all.

It was in absolute, utter, total devastating and eternal destruction on those two cities, it will be worse for a house or a city in Galilee that refuses you.

Why?

The town in Galilee or the house in Galilee knew more, heard more than Sodom and Gomorrah did!

When a city with a greater exposure to the truth of God namely the representatives of the Lord Christ Himself, giving them the message and authenticating it with their credentials turns their back on that greater judgement will fall upon them.

The letter to Hebrews where they have been exposed to all the data and all the situation, and they have refused.

Hebrews 6:4-6, *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, ⁵and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.*

It is impossible for them to be renewed to repentance!
Shake the dust and leave.

When you have done your best, and they are unreceptive but contemptuous, don't waste your time. Divine judgment is set on that city and that house. Very severe.

Sodom and Gomorrah were not God's chosen people and were not privy to His covenant commands, while the house of Israel belongs to God.

They know about His kingdom and should be eager to receive it. In either case it seems clear that it is a very bad idea to fail to be hospitable when the opportunity arises.

The same is true of everyone else that hears the good news of Jesus Christ but rejects it.

The apostles were directed to give an outward sign of shaking the dust off their feet.

You can try that if you want, but few people would understand the meaning now. You might be more effective if you just told them straight out, "You have rejected the word of God, so you stand condemned before Him. You are responsible for yourselves. We are going elsewhere to those who will listen and heed."

It is not that we necessarily turn away from those who reject the gospel at the first hearing or even after several hearings.

2 Peter 3:9, *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

This principle is not applied against those that are slow to understand or believe, but against those that have had a clear presentation of the gospel so that they clearly understand it.

But if they continue to resist and oppose it then their condemnation will be greater than that of Sodom and Gomorrah, because they had been given the words of life, the message of salvation, and they rejected it.

We make diligent effort to win the lost, but when they clearly reject the message, we come to understand that they are the hogs and dogs the Lord was speaking about in **Matthew 7:6**.

We are not to give what is holy to them. We are not to cast our pearls before them. It is time to move on and leave them in their condemned state.

The gospel is too precious and there are too many that have not heard to waste time on those that reject it.

We need to move on and spend the time with those that are responding to it.

As we do minister, we need to remember these other principles too.

Have a heart that trusts the Lord.

Live a life of ministry and freely give of yourself.

Make sure you are giving out the message clearly in all that you say and do, and that seek the Lord diligently so that you may have the proper focus of ministry to accomplish what He wants.

Story of a missionary selection.