

Matthew 10, Sending the Disciples

Overview

A key to understanding biblical literature is discerning its structure: how it is put together, and how the parts relate to each other. This structure is marked largely by repetition.

Most of the structure that we consider is based on repetitions *internal* to the passage, such as an alternation or an inclusio. However, an important set of structuring techniques is based on repetitions *across* multiple passages, what we might call *external* repetition. These patterns are called “literary forms” or (in narrative) “type scenes.” The reader is expected to recognize the familiar sequence of elements and supply the appropriate context.

For example, we all recognize the standard form of a letter (chart, Illustration 1), with the expected components of the return address, date, inside address, salutation, body, closing, signature, typed name, and postscript. This structure is marked, not by internal repetition, but by our familiarity with repetition of these elements across many letters that we have seen.

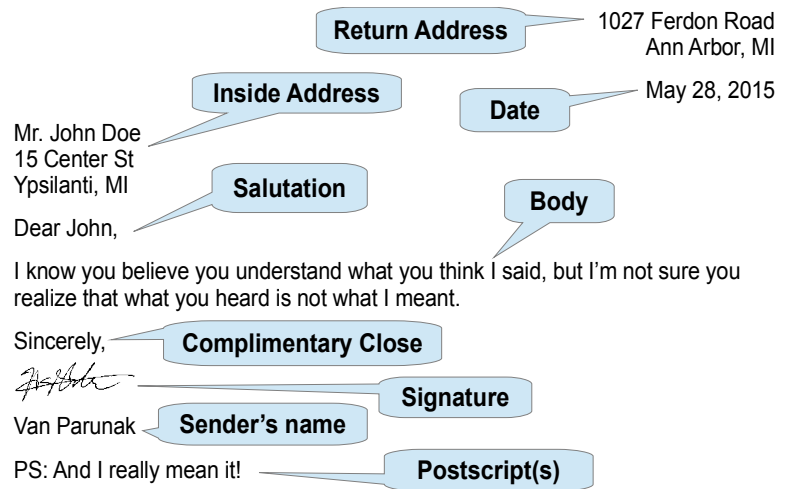


Illustration 1: Example of a literary form: a letter

People in the time of the Bible were familiar with many such literary forms, including the covenant, the כּוּבָר or covenant lawsuit, letters, and numerous stereotyped Psalm structures (e.g., Declarative Praise, Descriptive Praise, Imperative, Petition, Victory). A particularly common form is the call or commissioning narrative, in which one person sends another on a mission. Examples include Abraham sending his servant to find a wife for Isaac (Gen 24), Moses (Exod 3-4), Gideon (Judg 6), Isaiah (Isa 6), Jeremiah (Jer 1), and Ezekiel (Ezek 1-3). Our section has particular ties to Moses’ commissioning (chart, Table 1).¹ Commissioning scenes in the OT typically have up to seven components (chart): Introduction, Confrontation, Commissioning proper, statement of the Difficulty of the mission, Objection, Reassurance, and Conclusion. The correspondence is far from perfect (just as letters may deviate from some of the standard elements). But the confrontation, commissioning, some expression of difficulty or objection, and the reassurance are pretty consistent.

There are two points to notice here, one technical, the other quite practical.

1 Robert E. Morosco, JBL 103/4 (1984) 539-556.

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Section	Moses, Exodus 3-4	The Disciples, Matt 9-11
Introduction	3:1, Moses is herding sheep	9:35-36, The Lord is ministering and observing "sheep without a shepherd"
Confrontation	3:2-6, God speaks from the burning bush	9:37-10:4, The Lord presents the need and chooses the twelve
Commissioning	3:7-10, God sends Moses back to Egypt to deliver the people	10:5-15, The Lord sends the Twelve out to preach and heal
Difficulty/Objection alternating with Reassurance (4x)	3:11 Whom am I? → 12 I will be with thee 3:13 Who are you? → 14 I AM 4:1 They will not believe → 2-9 three signs 4:10 I am not eloquent → 11-12 I will teach thee	16-18 councils and kings → 19-20 take no thought how or what ye shall speak 21-22a family and all men → 22b-23 salvation and the Son of Man 24-25 false accusation → 26-33 fear not (3x) 34-39 family (3x worthy of me) → 40-42 receive, reward (3x)
Conclusion	4:18-20 Moses prepares to return to Egypt	ch. 11:1, The Lord continues to minister

Table 1: Matthew 9-11 as a Commissioning Narrative

The technical point is that structure may be governed not by internal repetitions, but by elements of a socially recognized pattern of speech (here, a standard way of giving a commission). These patterns not only highlight the parts of the passage we are studying, but also link it to other texts that are relevant to it. Shared structure ties passages together just as shared vocabulary does.

The more practical point is that this pattern presents the Twelve as ministering under the authorization of somebody else. They did not just “feel called” and set out on their own. They were commissioned by one who himself had been commissioned. In today’s religious world, there are many who set up their own ministry, on their own recognizance. In God’s pattern, his Son ordains the Twelve; the local church ordains its elders and sends out its missionaries. Beware those who operate solely on their own authority.

9:35-36, Introduction

The introduction to Moses’ commissioning describes the setting in which the commissioning takes place.

Exo 3:1 Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, *even* to Horeb.

Here, the first two verses provide a setting for the commissioning by describing the need that it is intended to satisfy.

9:35 And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among

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the people.--Repetition of “Jesus” marks the break. The Lord’s ministry shows the need for a broader outreach.

Compare this with

- calling the four in 4:18-22
- invitation to all that labor in 11:2-30

9:36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them,--This verb is used only of our Lord (or of a divine figure in parables).

because they fainted,--This is one of the rare places at which the KJV deviates from the majority text. Instead of “fainted” εκλελυμενοι, the majority of manuscripts read “harassed” or “oppressed,” εσκυλμενοι.

and were scattered abroad,--Neither this word nor the previous one appears in the LXX, but the next phrase shows a clear link to the OT:

as sheep having no shepherd.--Jer 23 and Ezek 34 describe the pastoral crisis in Israel. Note first Jeremiah’s oracle (chart). He starts by summarizing the two problems of destruction and scattering, corresponding to our Lord’s “harassed” and “scattered”:

Jer 23:1 Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD. 2 Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD.

The Lord promises first to restore the scattering:

3 And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase.

Then he promises to correct the destruction:

4 And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD.

Finally, he promises the Davidic shepherd-king:

5 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. 6 In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Ezekiel 34 follows the same pattern (chart). First he describes how the shepherds oppress the sheep:

Eze 34:2 Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe *be* to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? 3 Ye eat the fat, and ye

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clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: *but* ye feed not the flock. 4 The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up *that which was* broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them.

Then he turns to their scattering:

5 And they were scattered, because *there is* no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. 6 My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek *after them*.

He will regather them from their scattering:

11 For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, *even* I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. 12 As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep *that are* scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. 13 And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, ...

He will feed and tend them, correcting the oppression:

13 And I will ... feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. 14 I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and *in* a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel.

Then he will provide the Davidic prince as their shepherd:

23 And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, *even* my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. 24 And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the LORD have spoken *it*.

This is the situation that the Lord observes. The prophets trace it directly to a lack of responsible leadership, a situation that the Lord proceeds to remedy. The Lord's allusion to these passages shows his consciousness that he is the promised shepherd and Davidic king. Moses' call begins by describing his work as a shepherd. Our Lord's call to his disciples begins with his own sense that he is the shepherd of God's flock.

These verses do not describe what he shares with the disciples—that begins in v. 37. They show his awareness of the need, and his responsibility to address it. He sends people based on his own deep conviction about the problem. They are the extension of his compassion.

9:37-10:4, Confrontation

God confronts Moses at the burning bush in Exod 3:2-6.

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Exo 3:2 And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: ... 4 ... God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here *am* I.

Here the Lord confronts his disciples with the problem.

37 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous,--Note the shift in metaphor. The difference between harvesting and shepherding is the same as between preaching and teaching; between evangelism and pastoring; between reaching out to the lost and caring for the saved.

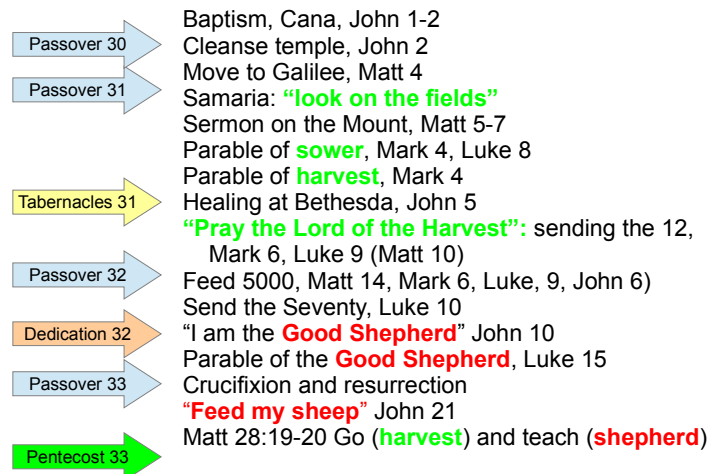


Illustration 2: Chronology of harvest and shepherd metaphors

There is an interesting temporal development in our Lord's instruction on these two ministries (chart, Illustration 2).² Early in his ministry, the Lord speaks openly about sowing and harvesting. Our text is probably late in AD 31 or early in AD 32, when he sends out the Twelve.

9:36 shows that the Lord is aware early in his ministry that he is the Davidic shepherd, but he does not speak openly of this role until much later. Perhaps the earliest is 10:6, where he describes Israel as "lost sheep." Not until Tabernacles of AD 32 does he introduce himself publicly as the Good Shepherd, and not until after the resurrection does he instruct Peter, "Feed my sheep" (John 21). The Great Commission finally charges the disciples with both responsibilities.

This ordering may reflect an important difference between the two ministries. Young men like Timothy (1 Tim 4:12) can do evangelism (2 Tim 4:5), but shepherding the flock requires the experience of an elder—an older man. Early in their training, the disciples are hardly capable of the shepherding work. He starts them off in evangelism, and then, only as he is about to leave them, does he commit the work of the shepherd to them.

but the labourers are few;--In fact, up to this point, only John the Baptist and the Lord have been faithfully laboring. Given this need, he seeks to recruit others to work with him.

38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.--We should pay attention to how he recruits people. First he asks them to pray for the need. Only then does he commission them to do the work. He engages their sympathy with the need that he has perceived before charging them to do something.

10:1 And when he had called unto *him* his twelve disciples, he gave them power *against*

² Following Hoehner, *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*. Zondervan, 1978.

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unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.--This is a summary of vv. 2-42: the twelve are enumerated in 2-4, while their charge is in 5-42. Interestingly, the summary mentions only demons and healing, but not preaching, which is included in 10:7.

2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these;--The twelve are also listed in Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:13-16; and Acts 1:13. The four lists are not in the same order, though all start with Peter, end with Judas, and have three groups of four with the same people in each group.

Matthew groups the twelve in pairs, and there appears to be some relation between those in each pair (chart).

The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother;--Andrew was one of the first two disciples, the other probably being John.

Joh 1:35 Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; 36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! 37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

He brought Peter:

Joh 1:40 One of the two which heard John *speak*, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. 41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. 42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.

Matthew calls Peter “the first,” not because he was first in time, but because he became preeminent among the apostles.

James *the son of Zebedee*, and John his brother;--John was probably the other of “the two” (John 1:40) of John’s disciples who first followed the Lord. He likely brought James the same way that Andrew brought Peter.

3 Philip, and Bartholomew;--Bartholomew is probably the Nathanael of John’s gospel, whom Philip introduced to the Lord.

Joh 1:43 The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. 44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

“Bartholomew” is Aramaic for “Son of Tolmai,” so this could be Nathanael’s family name.

We know very little about the last six, other than some isolated stories, but based on the relations among the people in the first three pairs, they also may have special relations with each other.

Thomas, and Matthew the publican;--We met Matthew in 9:9. John’s gospel preserves several anecdotes show Thomas’s empirical bent and tendency to question things:

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- (on returning to raise Lazarus:) Joh 11:16 Let us also go, that we may die with him.
- (in the upper room:) Joh 14:5 Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?
- (after the resurrection:) Joh 20:25 Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

Thomas's critical mind would be appropriate to a tax collector, accustomed to detecting fraud and deception, suggests that he may be among the publicans whom Matthew introduced to the Lord.

James *the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus*;--This James may be the one called "the younger" who appears at the cross in Mark 15:40. Lebbaeus is called "Judas the [son] of James" in Luke 6:16 and Acts 1:13; it's not surprising he would prefer another name. Perhaps James of Alphaeus is the James to whom Lebbaeus is related.

4 Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.--We know nothing of this Simon other than his inclusion in the twelve. But in Luke 6 and Acts 1 he is described as "Simon the Zealot," and "Canaanite" can be understood as the transliteration of the Hebrew term קנא "jealous." The Zealots were a Jewish freedom movement agitating for deliverance from the Romans. Judas's surname "Iscariot," shared by his father (John 6:71 MT), may refer to the Sicarii, another group of militant Jewish nationalists. He and Simon may be drawn together by a hope that Jesus would lead a armed uprising and push out the Romans.

In each case, the pairing suggests how the disciples brought one another into contact with the Lord. It emphasizes the value of personal contacts with friends and family in spreading the gospel. It also distinguishes the new work into which they are about to enter. Every believer should be speaking to friends and neighbors about the Lord, but the Lord sets some of his disciples apart to carry the message out more broadly, to those beyond their personal acquaintances.

If this hypothesis is correct, it may also suggest why the Lord chose these Twelve to receive the special commission. They have already demonstrated their willingness to speak for him to their friends and family, so now he entrusts them with a wider mission.

5-15, Commission Proper

Repetition of "Jesus" in v. 5 shows a new section.

Moses' commissioning proper is 3:7-10, the command to return to Egypt

Exo 3:10 Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying,--The command tells to Whom

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they are to go, What they are to do, and How they are to go. Then it gives some Scenarios that they may encounter. In each case, it is worthwhile reflecting on how these instructions are reflected later in the New Testament.

5-6, Who?

Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of the Samaritans enter ye not: 6 But go rather to the lost sheep³ of the house of Israel.--This command is puzzling (chart). Later the Lord will tell them to “make disciples of all nations” (28:19). Even this chapter anticipates their testimony to the Gentiles:

Mat 10:18 And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

How should we understand this constraint? Here are some approaches that have been taken. The question is important, because it determines whether we understand this chapter as relevant to us or not.

Temporal: some suggest that the restriction applies only during the Lord’s earthly ministry. But the description of persecution in vv. 16-23 does not apply to the disciples during the Lord’s earthly ministry, and fits the book of Acts better.

Dispensational: some claim that the methods are appropriate to the life of Christ and again the tribulation, but not the church age. But:

- The apostles in fact follow the instructions of this chapter in Acts.
- Isaiah anticipates a Jewish outreach to the nations, not just to other Jews:
Isa 66:19 And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, *to* Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, *to* Tubal, and Javan, *to* the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.
- Even in the tribulation, the ministry of the two witnesses (Rev 11:10) extends beyond Israel to “them that dwelt on the earth.”

Personal: The focus of the twelve is to be on the Jews. Others will take care of the Gentiles. There is some truth to this: God raised up Paul to lead the Gentile mission, while Peter focused on the Jews:

Gal 2:7 the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as *the gospel* of the circumcision *was* unto Peter; 8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)

But the charge to go to “all nations” (28:19) was given to these men; Peter initiated the Gentile

3 This is perhaps the earliest recorded reference to the “sheep” metaphor, but without specifying the role of the shepherd.

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outreach with Cornelius; and there is a strong tradition that Thomas evangelized India.

Priority: The Lord's words describe the starting point of their ministry, but are not intended to limit its development. At this point they are to focus on Jews, but it is clearly understood that he will later expand their scope. Thus understood, they are reflected in our Lord's command upon his ascension:

Act 1:8 ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

They also may lie at the root of Paul's policy of going first to the Jew, and then to the Gentiles, in each town that he visits:

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

7-8, What?

7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.--As we saw in our study of Matthew 4, this theme continues to be in focus throughout the book of Acts.

The summary verses that frame ch. 5-10 emphasize three activities with respect to the kingdom: teaching, preaching, and healing (chart, Table 2).

4:23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, **teaching** in their synagogues, and **preaching** the gospel of the kingdom, and **healing** all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

9:35 And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, **teaching** in their synagogues, and **preaching** the gospel of the kingdom, and **healing** every sickness and every disease among the people.

Mat 11:1 And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to **teach** and to **preach** in their cities.

These activities are not evenly distributed across the intervening material. Ch. 5-7, the Sermon on the Mount, are devoted to teaching about the kingdom, and say nothing about preaching or healing. Ch. 8-9 describe the healing that the kingdom brings, but say nothing about either teaching or preaching. Similarly, this chapter introduces preaching, and says that the disciples will heal, but makes no mention of teaching.

	Teach	Preach	Heal	Kingdom
4:23 (Summary)	1	1	1	1
5:1-7:28	4	0	0	7
8:1-9:34	0	0	3	1
9:35 (Summary)	1	1	1	1
10:1-42	0	2	2	1
11:1 (Summary)	1	1	0	0

Table 2: Distribution of "Teach, Preach, Heal, Kingdom" in ch. 4-11

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This observation shows how this section is a systematic presentation of these three activities, preparing the disciples for their work. It also challenges us to understand the difference between teaching and preaching, as Matthew uses these terms. Their segregation in different sections reminds us that they do not describe the same activity. But what is the difference? It's not the content. The disciples are to preach "the kingdom of heaven," and the distribution of this phrase throughout the section is strongest in ch. 5-7, which talks about teaching, not preaching. Surely much of what they will say about the kingdom will come from ch. 5-7.

The word "preach" κηρυσσω means "to herald," and refers to the ancient custom of spreading news by sending a person to cry out in the streets. Here in 10:7, it takes place "as ye go." In preaching, the messenger goes out to find the audience.

Contrast what happens at the beginning of the sermon on the mount (chart):

Mat 5:1 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples **came unto him**: 2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them,

Teaching is delivered to those who come to the teacher. Preaching is delivered to those to whom the preacher goes. The difference is in who is doing the moving. Preaching is evangelism, reaching out to those who don't yet know that they need the message, and exposing them to it. Teaching is intended for those who know their need, and who come to have it met. Thus the common description of the exposition of the Scriptures in a regular gathering of the saints as "preaching" is inaccurate. This activity is teaching, not preaching.⁴

This distinction aligns with our earlier observation, on 9:36-37, that at this point the Lord recognizes himself as shepherding, but commissions the disciples to harvest. In harvesting, the worker goes out into the field to gather in the grain. The grain cannot come on its own. In shepherding, the sheep hear the voice of the shepherd, and come to him:

Joh 10:2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

In terms of the roles in the New Testament church (Eph 4:11), preaching is the work of the evangelist, while teaching is the work of the pastor (called "pastor and teacher" in Eph 4:11). As we know from other passages, the shepherding-teaching role is appropriate for older, more mature believers. The Lord starts his disciples off in harvest work, not shepherding. Younger believers are encouraged to "do the work of an evangelist" (2 Tim 4:5).

8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils:--He empowers them not only to preach, but also to heal. It's interesting that those who are not yet ready to teach can exercise this power. In many Christian circles, healing power is seen as evidence of great spiritual maturity, but here we have an example of immature believers who are given this power.

4 Dave Nelson helpfully observes that unbelievers can on occasion come to the evangelist, as with John the Baptist, who was "preaching" in the wilderness (Matt 3:1), even though the people "went out to him" (v. 5). The main distinction is in whether the material is addressed to believers (teaching) or unbelievers (preaching).

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freely ye have received, freely give.--In the context, this instruction forbids them to charge for their ministry. Their authority and power were given to them without cost. They must not seek to profit from them. Thus (chart) Peter refuses to sell his power, and rebukes Simon for seeking to link God's gifts to money:

Act 8:18 And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, 19 Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. 20 But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.

And Paul adopts a policy of ministering for free:

1Co 9:18 What is my reward then? *Verily* that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.

This instruction is a rebuke to those who offer God's word for pay, and it is ironic that this clause is often intoned when a church "takes the offering" precisely to make it possible pay those who give God's free gifts to people.

9-10, How?

9 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, 10 Nor scrip [bag, knapsack] for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves:--At first glance, comparison with the other gospels is confusing (chart, Table 3).

- Mark allows staff and sandals
- Luke forbids staves but doesn't mention sandals.

But both can be reconciled:

- Matthew forbids "shoes" but Mark permits "sandals," forbidding fancy footwear.
- In the case of the staff, both Matthew and (in the majority text) Luke use the plural. They are not to carry two (e.g., one for walking, another as a weapon; compare the shepherd's rod and staff, Psa 23:4).

Matt 10:9-10	Mark 6:8-9	Luke 9:3
9 Provide ... for your journey	take nothing for their journey,	Take nothing for your journey,
	8c no bread,	3c neither bread,
neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses,	8d no money in their purse:	3d neither money;
10 Nor scrip [bag, knapsack]	8b no scrip	3b nor scrip,
neither two coats,	9b and not put on two coats.	3e neither have two coats apiece.
neither shoes,	9a But be shod with sandals;	
nor yet staves	8a save a staff only;	3a neither staves,

Table 3: What should a preacher take?

The overall message is that their equipment is to be simple. They are not to make elaborate preparations. The journeys that the Lord envisions are short and to the point.

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Luke 22 gives a different set of instructions, which some suggest supersede those in our text (chart).

Luk 22:35 And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. 36 Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take *it*, and likewise *his* scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. 37 For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end. 38 And they said, Lord, behold, here *are* two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

Does this passage mean that after the resurrection, things will be different, as the Gentile mission requires longer journeys? But the reference to a sword is problematical. The idea of armed apostles not only goes against our Lord's teaching on non-violence, but is nowhere evident in Acts.

A more likely reading⁵ recognizes that Luke's paragraph, like those just before it, is intended to warn the disciples of their weaknesses.

- In vv. 21-23, he accuses Judas of betraying him.
- In vv. 24-30, he rebukes the disciples for their strife.
- In vv. 31-34, he warns Peter of his coming denial.

So in this paragraph, the Lord is responding to their resistance to his instructions in Matthew 10. He sarcastically tells them to ignore these guidelines, and be sure to arm themselves as well, but then reveals the sarcasm by quoting Isa 53:12. By doing these things (not just the swords) they will make themselves transgressors. "You guys are just like a gang."

His comments force them to reveal that they have in fact armed themselves. At this point, he breaks off the sarcasm, and forbids them to continue further in that line, and when Peter seeks to use his sword later in the garden (John 18:10-11), the Lord rebukes him.

Given this context, it is perilous to make Luke 22 the basis for overruling the methods set forth in our text. The spread of the gospel is to be done simply, depending on the Lord and not human logistical planning for provision.

How about ministries such as Bible schools and mission hospitals? Such efforts clearly require more than the kind of simple outreach envisioned here. The Lord may lead his people to establish such activities, just as he leads some of his people to work overseas. An international company provides products and services for its customers, and its believing employees should use it as a platform for the gospel. A mission school educates people, and provides a platform for the gospel. A mission hospital treats sick people, and provides a platform for the gospel. The Lord is not talking here about schools or hospitals any more than he is about international companies. He is talking about how we preach the gospel. Our outreach is to be simple, without elaborate

5 P.S. Minear, *Novum Testamentum* 7:2, March 1964, 128-134

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logistics, and dependent on him.

for the workman is worthy of his meat.--Paul quotes Luke's version (10:7) of this saying as "scripture" in 1 Tim 5:18, giving evidence for the early existence of the gospels.

The word "for" is important. The Lord tells them not to make extensive provision for their trip, *because* the one for whom they work will provide for them. The question is: for who are they working?

It is commonly supposed (e.g., Gill's comment on this verse) that this verse addresses the responsibility of those who receive ministry to pay for it. But this sense would be in tension with v. 8, "Freely ye have received, freely give" (chart). More likely he is reminding them who their true master is. Those who are worthy workmen for the Lord need not fear for his provision. They need not be preoccupied about their purse, or their store of food. They know that he will provide. Conversely, those who insist on elaborate logistical preparations for their ministry are showing that they do not really trust in the Lord. The restrictions he imposes force them to rely on the Lord, and filter out those who would seek to minister, not out of devotion and obedience to him, but to advance themselves.

11-15, Two Scenarios

Now the Lord illustrates how their ministry will proceed, with two scenarios. Both have parallels in the book of Acts, suggesting that Paul has this instruction in mind and is seeking to follow it in his ministry. This evidence is important for understanding that Matthew is not shut up in another dispensation, but is intended to guide the church throughout the present age.

In both cases, they are to seek lodging in a private home, not a public inn. This presumption of hospitality is appropriate as long as they are focusing on a Jewish audience, in keeping with vv. 5-6, and our examples from Acts involve Jewish hosts.

The first scenario envisions that they are received.

11 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

This verse is the second of seven instances of the word "worthy" ἀξιός in this chapter (chart). (The first was in v. 10.) The word only appears 41 times in the entire NT, so this single chapter contains more than 1/6 (0.17) of the instances, nearly 200 times more than we would expect.⁶ This concentration makes it likely that we are to understand the instances in relation to one another.

Four of these instances describe the apostles:

Matthew 10:10 Nor scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is **worthy** of his meat.

⁶ The chapter itself contains 722 words out of 763,666 in the NT (Bibleworks BYM), thus only 0.0009 of the words in the NT.

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Matthew 10:37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not **worthy** of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not **worthy** of me.

Matthew 10:38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not **worthy** of me.

The other three (in vv. 11-15) describe those to whom they minister:

Matthew 10:11 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is **worthy**; and there abide till ye go thence.

Matthew 10:13 And if the house be **worthy**, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not **worthy**, let your peace return to you.

It is likely that the Lord intends us to understand these words in related ways. In particular, the exhortations about loving the Lord more than our relatives (v. 37) would be particularly relevant to inviting apostles into the home. The host would have to value their message more than the personal conveniences he is surrendering for himself and his family.

12 And when ye come into an house, salute it. 13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it:

We don't know where Paul stayed in most of the cities that he visited, but where we do have details, they fit this pattern. For example, in Philippi (chart),

Act 16:14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard *us*: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. 15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained us.

Her comment, "if ye have judged me to be faithful," illustrates the Lord's exhortation to discern who is worthy.

Again, in Corinth,

Act 18:1 After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; 2 And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. 3 And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.

Luke records that our Lord anticipates that the hosts will not only shelter but also feed the evangelists:

Luk 10:5 And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace *be* to this house. 6 And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again. 7 And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give:

Interestingly, Paul doesn't expect free hospitality, but looks for a host whom he can support with

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his work. He does not expect to be paid for his ministry. That would violate Matt 10:8. He looks for a way to earn his own keep.

but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. 14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.--They are not to stay where they are not welcome. Again, the record of Acts suggests that the apostles were aware of this instruction and sought to follow it. The most direct example is Acts 13 (chart). Note three points of contact with Matthew 10.

Act 13:46 Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was **necessary** that the word of God should first have been spoken to you:

The necessity lies in the Lord's command of 10:5-6.

but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves **unworthy** οὐκ ἄξιός of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

He refers directly to the Lord's word in v. 13, "worthy."

47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, *saying*, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. 48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. 49 And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region. 50 But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. 51 But **they shook off the dust of their feet** against them, and came unto Iconium.

The third point of similarity is obedience to 10:14.

In Acts 18, it's the clothing, not just the feet, that is shaken.

Act 18:5 And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews *that Jesus was Christ*. 6 And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, **he shook his raiment**, and said unto them, Your blood *be* upon your own heads; I *am* clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.

15 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.--Throughout his teaching, the Lord uses two pairs of cities as examples of coming judgment: Sodom and Gomorrah (Capernaum in Matt 11:24; cities visited by the Twelve in 10:15 and Mark 6:11, or by the Seventy in Luke 10:12), and Tyre and Sidon (Matt 11:22; Luke 10:14, both times with reference to Chorazin and Bethsaida; the second of these is also part of the sending of the Seventy).

There are several similarities between the two sets of exemplars.

- Both pairs of cities are legendary in the OT for their wickedness. By applying these examples to the Galilean cities, the Lord is emphasizing the pervasiveness of sin and its abhorrence to the Lord.

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- Sodom (and by association, Gomorrah) is emblematic of sexual license, and God singled them out for their sinfulness, Gen 18:20).
- Tyre and Sidon are examples of the Philistines, the classical enemies of Israel (Jer 47:4; Joel 3:4).
- Both had dealings with God's people. The Galilean cities enjoyed the ministry of our Lord and his disciples. They had opportunity to repent, and yet did not.
 - Abraham delivered the people of Sodom and Gomorrah from the Mesopotamian kings in Genesis 14, and Lot dwelt among them.
 - Tyre was subject to David (2 Sam 24:7), and both Tyre and Sidon provided materials for both Solomon's temple (1 Chr 22:4) and the restoration temple (Ezra 3:7).
- Both were subject to devastating judgments, and that is what the Lord warns the Galilean cities.
 - Gen 19 describes the fall of Sodom and Gomorrah by the direct hand of God
 - Great judgments are prophesied against Tyre and Sidon in Isaiah 23 and Ezekiel 26, which reached their climax when Alexander the Great destroyed Tyre in 332 BC.

It is not clear why the Lord uniformly associates Tyre and Sidon with Chorazin and Bethsaida, while mentioning only Sodom and Gomorrah in relation to Capernaum and the missions of the disciples. (In fact both are mentioned with the mission of the 70 in Luke 10.)

16-42, Difficulties and Reassurances

The next components of the commissioning form are the statement of the difficulty, and the sender's reassurance (chart). In Moses' commissioning there are four objections with four assurances:

Exo 3:11 And Moses said unto God, Who *am* I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

Exo 3:13 And Moses said unto God, Behold, *when* I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What *is* his name? what shall I say unto them?

Exo 4:1 And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee.

Exo 4:10 And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I *am* not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I *am* slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

The disciples do not speak during the commissioning, so we do not hear objections from them, but the Lord does emphasize the difficulty of their task with a fourfold alternation of difficulties

and reassurances, including one statement (vv. 19-20) that recalls one of Moses' objections.

16-18, Difficulty: Social Opposition

The first difficulty that they will face is opposition from the synagogue and government. The combination is significant: organized religion and civil government have often been the adversaries of God's people. Notably, they joined forces against Jeremiah in the OT, and against our Lord in the gospels.

16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves:--He already introduced the image to describe false teachers who might try to infiltrate the community (chart):

Mat 7:15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.⁷

That statement might have motivated them to fear. But now he describes the disciples as seeking to infiltrate the wolves! The believer, while peaceful, is not a pushover, but aggressive with the gospel. This same dichotomy is reflected in the second half of the verse:

be ye therefore wise as serpents,--Recall the characterization of the serpent in the garden,

Gen 3:1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made.

and harmless as doves.--The adjective is used in an archaic sense, describing those who have not been harmed or violated. It literally means "unmixed, unadulterated."

Together, these qualities mean that we are not to be naïve about the tactics of those who oppose us, but at the same time we are not to adopt their tactics in compromise of the principles of kingdom life.

We see an example of this rare combination in our Savior. His wisdom is evident at many points—in his answers to his adversaries, for example, but at the very beginning, in his insight into human nature (chart):

Joh 2:23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast *day*, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. 24 But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all *men*, 25 And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.

Yet no one could lodge any true complaint against him:

Joh 8:46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

17 But beware of men:--He describes two levels of opposition: first Jewish (in keeping with v. 5), but then Gentile (showing that the restriction of v. 5 is only temporary).

7 Paul picks this image up in Act 20:29, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock."

for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;--“Councils” συνέδρια is the plural of “sanhedrin,” the Jewish court. While there was only one “great Sanhedrin,” in Jerusalem, there were lesser ones in every community with at least 120 Israelites.⁸ The synagogues are of course the meeting places of the Jewish people for worship and prayer. He anticipates the rejection of the gospel by the Jewish people at large.

18 And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.--At this point he moves from synagogue to government, and the restriction to a Jewish audience in v. 5 is clearly relaxed.

19-20, Reassurance: Moses' Promise

19 But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. 20 For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.--This part of the warning reminds us of the Lord's response to Moses' fear that he cannot speak (chart):

Exo 4:12 Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

We see this promise fulfilled in the early believers. Consider Peter and John before the council of the Jews:

Act 4:5 And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, 6 And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. 7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this? 8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, 9 If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; 10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* by him doth this man stand here before you whole. 11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. 12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. 13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

21-22a, Difficulty: Family Opposition

Now he expands the warning of opposition, from the institutions of synagogue and government, down to the family and out to all men.

21 And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the

⁸ According to Gill

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children shall rise up against *their* parents, and cause them to be put to death.--Note the similarity with what follows in the fourth difficulty.

Twice he mentions being put to death, an increase in the level of opposition compared with the scourging that he described in v. 17.

22 And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake:--Not just the family, but all men will despise those who truly follow the Lord.

22b-23, Reassurance: Salvation and the Son of Man

but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.--The Lord repeats this promise in the Olivet discourse (chart):

Mat 24:9 and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. ... 13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

How should we understand this expression, “endure unto the end εις τελος?” “The end” would seem to be the end of the predicted period of persecution. But what does it mean to “endure”?

Simplistically, it might mean that those who survive until the end of the persecutions will in fact survive, but this seems banal and trivial. But as used elsewhere in the NT, “endure” υπομενω has a deeper meaning.

Rom 12:12 Rejoicing in hope; **patient** in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

2Ti 2:10 Therefore I **endure** all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

2Ti 2:12 If we **suffer**, we shall also reign with *him*: if we deny *him*, he also will deny us:

Heb 12:2-3 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him **endured** the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider him that **endured** such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Jam 1:12 Blessed *is* the man that **endureth** temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

1Pe 2:20 For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall **take it patiently**? but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye **take it patiently**, this *is* acceptable with God.

The book of Hebrews expands on the theme in this chapter of believers who are rejected by their peers, and a slightly different expression in Hebrews 3, *μεχρι τελος*, may give the clue:

Heb 3:6 But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm **unto the end**. ... 14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast **unto the end**;

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The teaching here is far deeper than just surviving. Those who stand fast in the face of rejection show themselves to be the true disciples of the Lord, and thus shall be saved in the fullest sense—saved from their sin and God’s judgment, saved for the kingdom of God and eternal blessedness.

In accepting these statements, we do not deny that salvation is “by grace, through faith” (Eph 2:8, 9), but recognize the truth of Eph 2:10, that God has foreordained that those who are true believers will maintain good works.

23 But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another:--He repeats the principle already set forth in v. 14: they are not to persist in the face of rejection. They must go into the wolf pack to offer the gospel, but they need not stay when it has been rejected.

for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.--Carson observes, “This verse is among the most difficult in the NT canon.” The problem is the temporal relation it implies between two events: the completion of the Jewish mission envisioned in vv. 5-6, and the coming of the Son of Man. The simplest way to understand the Lord’s coming is as his return at the end of the age. But there are two problems with this:

- The relation with v. 23a requires that the delay be short. Even if they move quickly from one town to another, they won’t cover them all before the “coming” occurs.
- The Jewish mission was a focus early in the church’s life, and by the end of Acts, the focus had shifted to the Gentiles.

The Notes summarize seven views on v. 23b that Carson has collected. My preference is based on the observation that after the resurrection, the Lord is said to “come” to the disciples (chart). This expression is most common in John:

Joh 20:19 Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, **came** Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you.

Joh 20:24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus **came**.

Joh 20:26 And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then came* Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you.

Joh 21:13 Jesus then **cometh**, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

Matthew doesn’t use *ερχομαι* to speak of the post-resurrection appearances of our Lord, but he does use the related verb *προσερχομαι*, in a context that takes us directly back to the “son of Man” language in Daniel 7.

Mat 28:16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. 17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some

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doubted. 18 And Jesus **came** and spake unto them, saying, All power ἐξουσία is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

ἐξουσία is what is promised to the son of Man in Dan 7:14, when he **came** to the Ancient of Days.⁹

Dan 7:13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *one* like ~~the~~ a Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. 14 And there was given him dominion ἐξουσία, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion ἐξουσία *is* an everlasting dominion ἐξουσία, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed.

The fact that he claims to have this power in 28:18 suggests that the assignment of ἐξουσία in Dan 7:14 has already taken place, though he has not yet received the earthly kingdom. Perhaps the occasion was when the Lord entered the presence of his Father during the three days between his death and resurrection.

So the sense of the promise in 10:23 would be, “You will not have completed visiting the cities of Israel, until I come to you as the son of Man anticipated in Daniel 7.” And in fact, at the time of the ascension, the Jewish mission was not complete, and the Lord instructed the disciples in Acts 1:8 to begin in Jerusalem, Judaea, and Samaria.

Thus understood, the verse is a good transition into the reassurance section. “I am sending you into persecution. But you must remember that I am the Son of Man to whom dominion over the earth has been promised, and before you finish the cities of Israel, I will come to you in that capacity, endowed with that authority.”

24-25, Difficulty: Accusation of wickedness

24 The disciple is not above *his* master, nor the servant above his lord. 25 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord.--The Lord will repeat this warning in the upper room (chart):

Joh 15:20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. 21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

If they faithfully follow him, they should expect the same kind of opposition that he received.

If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more *shall they call them of his household?*--That opposition includes a complete reversal of spiritual truth, as seen already at the end of the miracles section, and as we will see again in a few chapters:

⁹ Morris mentions the coming in Dan 7:13 as a possible meaning of Matt 10:23, but does not connect it with this verse and the coming of Jesus to the disciples.

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Mat 9:34 But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.

Mat 12:24 But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

One of the most painful attacks of the adversary is a “holier than thou” move on the part of unbelievers, when they accuse us of being the ones in league with Satan.

In Jeremiah 26, the priests and the people accused Jeremiah of sin in daring to criticize the holy city and the temple.

In Acts 7, Stephen was stoned on a charge of blasphemy against the temple.

A modern example of this attack is the emphasis on the ethics of acceptance, in which the ultimate moral shortcoming is failure to accept other people and their conduct without criticism. (Never mind that in applying this standard, its advocates must violate it!) We can't stop people from doing this, but our Lord's warning means that we will not be ignorant of the adversary's devices.

26-33, Reassurance: Fear Not (3x)

This reassurance answers the difficulty of being accused of evil-doing.

Each of the last three elements is marked with a triple repetition: “fear not,” “worthy of me,” “reward.”

In this case, the repetition is the exhortation, “Fear not.”¹⁰ The disciples are not to be cowed by accusations of evil-doing. Each “fear not” gives an answer to the difficulty.

26 Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.--Often false accusations are based on lies that we may not immediately be able to disprove, for example, slander spread by someone about a conversation in which only the two of us were involved. But God knows all things, and will make all things clear. Paul tells of a coming “day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel” (Rom 2:16).

27 What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.--This principle is to pervade the Christian mission. Contrary to the claims of the gnostics in the second century, the gospel is not built on secrets available only to the elite. God's revelation is just that, a revelation. Even the things that the Lord shared with the disciples privately, he expects them to preach openly. His final command to them was to “teach[] them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (28:20).

28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul:--The second reassurance recognizes that sometimes those who accuse us of evil-doing have the power of the sword over us, and may threaten us with bodily harm. The Lord frankly acknowledges that his

¹⁰ Structurally, the addition of the triples at the middle of the overall system is not unexpected: compare Rom 2:7-10. However, it is unusual for the center to split a pair in an alternation in this way.

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followers may sometimes have to pay with their physical lives, but reminds them that their life goes beyond this physical experience, and their adversaries cannot touch the spiritual experience that really matters.

but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.--That life experience is in the hands of one far greater than the adversaries, and they must fear him first of all. So when people accuse us of sin, we must bow before God and his word and ask whether he condemns us. If he does not, we must not fear those who accuse us.

It is worth noting that they are commanded to fear God. We sometimes hear claims that the believer should not fear God any longer, but this is contrary to the teaching of the New Testament (chart):

Act 9:31 Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking **in the fear of the Lord**, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.

2Co 7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness **in the fear of God**.

Eph 5:21 Submitting yourselves one to another **in the fear of God**.

Heb 12:28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly **fear**: 29 For our God is a consuming fire.

The spiritual believer need not fear God, but less mature believers need to be reminded that “our God is a consuming fire.”¹¹

29 Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. 30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.--The final “fear not” assures us of the Father’s care for us. He knows the false accusations, the deceitful tricks that people play against us, and he will care for us.

32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men,--That is, in spite of the accusations of wicked men in 25b. Our desire to be well thought of might lead us to dampen our testimony when we are accused of being Satanic. If, in spite of these accusations, we persevere, people will try to slander us, but theirs is not the only voice in the courtroom.

him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.--The “I” is emphatic. The Lord is setting his testimony against the accusations of our adversaries. Men may accuse us of being in league with the devil, but the Lord promises to counter their accusations with his own endorsement. The Father will certainly accept his son’s word over that of wicked men. We are “accepted in the beloved,” Eph 1:6. If he acknowledges us as his own, no other accusation can

¹¹ This important distinction is worked out in more detail in the paper on Law and the Christian Life (<http://cyber-chapel.org/LawAndTheChristianLife.pdf>).

stand.

33 But whosoever shall deny me before men,--Now he considers the case where, fearful of being slandered, we silence our testimony and refuse to acknowledge our allegiance to our Lord. Such a strategy may lead people to speak well of us, but the Lord warns that again, there is another voice in the court.

him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.--Just as the accusations of men will prove powerless against the Lord's endorsement, his rejection before the Father will outweigh any approval that men may offer us.

34-39, Difficulty: Forced to choose between Christ and Family (Worthy of Me 3x)

We have seen this theme before, in vv. 21-22, but now the focus moves from the persecution we experience to the choice we are forced to make.

34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.--How much error in the church would be avoided if people would only take this warning seriously! The gospel does not make all people brothers and sisters. It divides them.

The story of Genesis after the fall is one of divided families, of separation between those whom God has chosen and those whom he abandons in their sin. Revelation ends with the judgment of the Great White Throne in which the distinction between the saved and the lost is sealed forever. This teaching warns us against efforts to distort the marvel of God's love for his people into a bland acceptance of everybody.

35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. 36 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.--So, for example, Abram left his family in Haran, where they continued to serve idols, to follow the Lord. Ruth left her biological parents to come join the covenant community with Naomi. Our Lord's biological half-brothers opposed his ministry and criticized him.

37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.--Again we have a triplet, reminding us of the need to be worthy of the Lord by preferring him to every other loyalty. He must be first in our lives.

This criterion is a major distinguisher between casual followers and disciples. Here the Lord is speaking to his disciples as he sends them out, but he repeats the theme in Luke 14:26 in speaking to the multitudes, with a slight change in wording that makes clear what it means to be worthy of him (chart, Table 4):

Note first the correspondence of the phrases "is worthy of me" and "be my disciple." When he speaks to the disciples, those whom he had already chosen, he emphasizes what they must do to

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remain worthy of their calling. In speaking to the multitudes who were not yet disciples, he tells them what they must do to be his disciples. The expressions correspond to one another, one challenging those who have not yet followed him, the other those who are following him.

Second, note the correspondence between the things to which we must prefer Christ in the successive statement. The three members of the triplet raise the bar increasingly higher.

- The love of father and mother is precious, but temporary. “Gen 2:24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife.”

- A parent’s love for the child never ends. That’s why God’s love for us is

described as the love of a parent for a child. “Isa 49:15 Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.” The version in Luke at this point includes other collateral relations that express enduring relations: we are brethren of the Lord Jesus, and the church is the bride of Christ.

- Only in Luke does the Lord mention “his own life,” but both passages end with the command to carry the cross, which is an implement of death. We must be willing to lose, not only our closest relatives, but even our own life, for the sake of the gospel.

These commands leave no room for half-hearted, uncommitted disciples. We do not earn our salvation, but if it is genuine, it will transform us. The Lord expects no less than total commitment.

39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.--

This verse is transitional between the costs required in the previous verses and the promises of the following reassurance. The attitude toward our “life” expressed here parallels Luke’s record in 14:26.

We find this challenge and similar ones four times in the gospels.¹² (“Life” in our verse is the same Greek word, ψυχη, that is often translated “soul.”

¹² See Notes for exhaustive list and further discussion. In the citations, I have glossed the words for “save” and “lose” and their synonyms only when they are not the usual σωζω and απολλυμι, respectively. This list omits Mark 3:4 and Luke 9:56, which appear to deal with physical life and death.

Mat 10:5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying,	Luk 14:25 And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,
37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me:	26 If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother,
and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.	and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters,
	yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.
38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.	27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.
39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.	

Table 4: The charges to the Twelve and to the Multitudes

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- Here, which probably corresponds temporally to the sending of the 12
- After Peter's confession and the Lord's announcement of his coming passion
 - Mat 16:25 For whosoever will **save** his life shall **lose** it: and whosoever will **lose** his life for my sake shall **find** εὕρισκω it.
 - Mar 8:35 For whosoever will **save** his life shall **lose** it; but whosoever shall **lose** his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall **save** it.
 - Luk 9:24 For whosoever will **save** his life shall **lose** it: but whosoever will **lose** his life for my sake, the same shall **save** it.
- To the disciples after he spoke to the Pharisees about the kingdom of God, Luk 17:33 Whosoever shall seek to **save** his life shall **lose** it; and whosoever shall **lose** his life shall **preserve** ζῶογονεω it.
- During passion week, Joh 12:25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

In addition, the writer to the Hebrews clearly echoes it:

Heb 10:39 But we are not of them who draw back unto **perdition** ἀπώλεια; but of them that believe to the **saving** περιποιησις of the soul.

The idea of the saving of the soul also comes up without mention of the opposite:

Jam 1:21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to **save** your souls. [compare the role of the Word in the new birth, in 1:18]

Jam 5:20 Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall **save** a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

1Pe 1:9 Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the **salvation** σωτηρια of *your* souls.

To understand this statement, we need first to explore what the “soul” is, then what it means to “save” or “lose” it.

The Greek word for “soul” ψυχη corresponds in the LXX almost entirely to נַפֿשׁ. In the OT, this term has a very broad usage. It can refer to the throat or neck, to the breath (which passes through the throat), to physical life (which breath animates), to living beings (where we would use “person”), to one's personality or inner life, and even to a dead body that once was alive¹³!

We can see this range even in the NT (chart). Sometimes the word simply means physical life. When a Samaritan village refused to receive the Lord, James and John suggested destroying them, but the Lord rebuked them, using the very same expressions he does in this verse,

Luk 9:56 the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save *them*.¹⁴

¹³ e.g., Lev 21:1; 22:4

¹⁴ Mark 3:4 probably belongs to this category as well.

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But at the same time, “soul” can mean much more than physical life, as this chapter shows:

Mat 10:28 And fear not them which **kill αποκτεινω** the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to **destroy απολλυμι** both soul and body in hell.

In our verse, if the word means simply physical life, the Lord is saying that we must be willing to die for him. But v. 28 makes it likely that the word has a deeper meaning, dealing with the inner life, the seat of our personhood.

Let’s turn from the word “soul” to the verbs that impact it (chart). We read of saving the soul, but also of losing it. In the various forms of the statement, several different verbs are used for “save” or a similar positive meaning, including “find” ευρισκω (Matt 16:25), “keep alive” ζωογονεω (Luke 17:33), “love” φυλεω and “guard” φυλασσω (John 12:25), and the noun “περπιουησις (Heb 10:39). But almost every reference to losing the soul uses the same Greek verb.¹⁵ It turns out that this verb has a very distinctive use in the OT, which may be a key to the meaning of our verse.

In the LXX, απολλυμι occurs together with ψυχη prominently in Leviticus, where the two words consistently translate Hebrew expressions that our version translates as being “cut off” or “destroyed” “from among his people,” e.g.,

Lev 7:20 **that soul shall be cut off** from his people.

To a Jewish hearer familiar with the Torah and its Greek version, “destruction of the soul” indicates being separated from the people of God. The destruction of the soul is what God does in hell (10:28), cutting a person off from the people of God. It follows, then, that the various positive statements describe the opposite of hell, the preservation of the ψυχη in fellowship with God and his people.

Our verse comes at the end of a paragraph forcing us to choose between our physical families and our fellowship with the Lord. This difficulty is the climax of the theme of ostracism that pervades Matthew 10. The saying points at least in part to the contrast between the visible and the true people of God. Those who truly love him must be willing to forsake visible affiliations for the sake of the true ones. We must be willing to be cut off from our physical family, and even those who call themselves the people of God but are not, if we would enjoy fellowship with God as members of his family.

40-42, Reassurance: God’s reward (3x)

This final reassurance also has a triple reference, to the reward μισθος that God will give those who serve him faithfully.¹⁶ It also has a triple reference to receiving people, but interestingly, the two are skewed (chart, Table 5). Spanning the two sets of triples, we identify four kinds of people: “you,” “a prophet,” “a righteous man,” and “these little ones.”

40 He that receiveth you

15 Απολλυμι, or (Heb 10:39) the re
16 The idea of a reward is not in ce
δουλος in 1 Kings 5:20 and Rev

10/17/17

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	“Receive”	“Reward”
	40 He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.	
	41 He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet	shall receive a prophet's reward ;
	and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man	shall receive a righteous man's reward .
		42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward .

Table 5: Reception and Rewards in vv. 40-42

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receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.--The immediate reference here is to the Twelve, the ones he is addressing throughout this discourse. Earlier, he warned that some would not receive them (10:14).

This saying is so important that it appears again at the end of the Lord's ministry, in John 13:20 in the upper room. In both cases he gives the Twelve full authority as his representatives.

41 He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. 42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.--The basic pattern is to receive X in the name of X, and then to receive X's reward.

To receive X "in the name of X" is probably to be understood causally (see notes), "because a person has the name, or reputation, or X."

"Reward of X" is simply the genitive, and can naturally mean "the reward associated with a prophet." There are two possible meanings (chart).

The reward might be one that the prophet gives (subjective genitive), perhaps by praying for the host; compare Elijah and the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17), or Elisha and the great woman of Shunem (2 Kings 4), or Paul and the house of Onesiphorous (2 Tim 1:16-18). But in each case, the reward is given not by the prophet, but by the Lord at the request of the prophet.

More likely, the reward is the same that the prophet will receive (objective genitive). By supporting the prophet, you are supporting his ministry and sharing in it, and will share in his reward. This sense is consistent with v. 40, which emphasizes that in receiving God's people, we are receiving him. It is also supported by 3 John, speaking of hospitality:

3Jo 1:5 We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.

We have here a gradation of outward importance within the community (chart).

- The section starts with the Twelve ("he that receiveth you") in v. 40, who became the Lord's apostles, a unique group not perpetuated in the later church.
- Next come the prophets. These were notable teachers in the early church:
 - Act 13:1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain **prophets** and teachers;
 - Eph 2:19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and **prophets**,
 - Eph 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, **prophets**; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;
- Next comes "a righteous man." A mature believer, the spiritual person, "judgeth all

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things, yet he himself is judged of no man” (1 Cor 2:15). This title does not depend on any special gift, but is the expected point of maturity of every believer.

- In the context of considering a mature believer, it makes sense next to consider immature believers, the “little ones” of v. 42, the “little children” of 1 John 2:12, 13, of whom it can be said that “your sins are forgiven you.” This is confirmed by the phrase “in the name of a disciple,” which, in parallel with the previous two verses, most naturally refers to the one being received.

The point of this sequence is that disciples of every level of gift and maturity can look forward to the hospitality of other believers.

This teaching is presented as an encouragement to those who are being received, but as the Lord expands it, it becomes an exhortation to those doing the receiving to be hospitable to believers of every level of maturity. In the midst of a hostile world, believers must be prepared to care for one another—not just for apostles (v. 40), prophets, and righteous men (v. 41), but even for the least among the brethren (v. 42). This network of loving care will provide families for those who have forsaken earthly bonds for the sake of Christ, and thus provides a fitting reassurance to the difficulty of vv. 34-39.

11:1, Conclusion

1 And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.--The commissioning scene expects a conclusion in which the messenger sets forth to do the task. At first glance, Matthew’s conclusion doesn’t fit this very well—the focus is not on the twelve, but on the Lord. But perhaps that is just the point. The work of the Twelve *is* the work of the Lord. They will become his body, and their work is the extension and continuation of his work.

Notes

Worthy

The word appears 7x in this chapter, more than 1/6 of the 41 instances in the entire NT.

Matthew 10:10 Nor scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is **worthy** of his meat.

Matthew 10:11 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is **worthy**; and there abide till ye go thence.

Matthew 10:13 And if the house be **worthy**, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not **worthy**, let your peace return to you.

Matthew 10:37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not **worthy** of me: and he

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that loveth son or daughter more than me is not **worthy** of me.

Matthew 10:38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not **worthy** of me.

The worthy person is one who

- serves the Lord (v. 10)
- loves the Lord more than family members (v. 37)
- is willing to endure deprivation for the sake of the gospel (v. 38).

Can this meaning then be transferred to vv. 11, 13? The worthy house is one that receives the word obediently.

The family implications are particularly important in the question of whether to receive the apostles into the home.

10:10, Staves

Psa 23 envisions a shepherd with two implements, a rod שבט ראבδος and a staff משענת (lit. something on which to lean) βακτηρια. Our Lord's word ראבδος can be used of both of these.

	Ραβδος rod	Σκηπτρον scepter	Βακτηρια rod, staff	Φυλη tribe	Δημος people	Πατρια people, clan, nation
שבט	27	16	1	121		
משענת	6		4			
מטה	51	3	1	170		
מקל	14		3			
משפחה		1			186	25

10:23, the coming of the Son of Man

The saying appears only in Matthew.

Carson: "This verse is among the most difficult in the NT canon."

Possible meanings: the first seven of these are from Carson.

1. Jesus will catch up with them as they go on their way. Compare what happened with the 70:

Luk 10:1 After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.
2. His recognition as son of man, after the resurrection. This might be satisfied by passages such as:

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Joh 20:19 Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, **came** Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you.

Joh 20:24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus **came**.

Joh 20:26 as with them: *then came* Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you.

Joh 21:13 Jesus then **cometh**, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

Matthew doesn't use ἐρχομαι to speak of the post-resurrection appearances of our Lord, but he does use the related verb προσερχομαι, in a context that takes us directly back to the "son of Man" language in Daniel 7.

Mat 28:16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. 17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. 18 And Jesus **came** and spake unto them, saying, All power ἐξουσια is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Ἐξουσια is what is promised to the son of Man in Dan 7:14, when he **came** to the Ancient of Days.¹⁷ The fact that he claims to have this power in 28:18 suggests that the assignment in Dan 7:14 has already taken place.

So the sense of the promise in 10:23 would be, "You will not have completed visiting the cities of Israel, until I come to you as the son of Man anticipated in Daniel 7."

3. The second coming, with "Israel" extended figuratively.
4. The second coming very shortly after the resurrection, which did not happen (Schweitzer)
5. Combination of 3 and 4 (??)
6. Dispensational view: ministry during the tribulation, in the absence of the church.
7. The Lord's coming in judgment against the Jews in AD 70 (if consistently extended, this view turns into preterism)

10:39, Finding/saving or losing the ψυχη

Ψυχη = נפש almost exclusively. The broad use of this term in the OT (indicating physical life, but also personhood, breath, and even a dead body) makes it difficult to get much leverage on what is being saved or lost from this term alone.

Our verse is one of several that contrast the losing of the ψυχη with its deliverance. A variety of words are used for the deliverance of the ψυχη: In addition to the common σωζω, we find

¹⁷ Morris mentions the coming in Dan 7:13 as a possible meaning of Matt 10:23, but does not connect it with this verse and the coming of Jesus to the disciples.

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ευρισκω (Matt 10:39; 16:25b), ζωογονεω (Luke 17:33), φιλεω and φυλασσω (John 12:25), and the noun περιποιησις (Heb 10:39). But the negative side of the expression is almost always απολλυμι in the middle. Here is my collection of all the expressions of this sort that I can find; “save” and “lose” are glossed only when they do not translate σωζω and απολλυμι, respectively.

Mat 10:39 He that **findeth ευρισκω** his life shall **lose** it: and he that **loseth** his life for my sake shall **find ευρισκω** it.

Mat 16:25 For whosoever will **save** his life shall **lose** it: and whosoever will **lose** his life for my sake shall **find ευρισκω** it.

Mar 3:4 And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to **save** life, or to **kill αποκτεινω**? But they held their peace.

Mar 8:35 For whosoever will **save** his life shall **lose** it; but whosoever shall **lose** his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall **save** it.

Luk 9:24 For whosoever will **save** his life shall **lose** it: but whosoever will **lose** his life for my sake, the same shall **save** it.

Luk 9:56 For the Son of man is not come to **destroy** men's lives, but to **save them**.

Luk 17:33 Whosoever shall seek to **save** his life shall **lose** it; and whosoever shall **lose** his life shall **preserve ζωογονεω** it.

Joh 12:25 He that **loveth φιλεω** his life shall **lose** it; and he that **hateth μισεω** his life in this world shall **keep φυλασσω** it unto life eternal.

Heb 10:39 But we are not of them who draw back unto **perdition απολεια**; but of them that believe to the **saving περιποιησις** of the soul.

The idea of the saving of the soul also comes up without mention of the opposite:

Jam 1:21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to **save** your souls. [compare the role of the Word in the new birth, in 1:18]

Jam 5:20 Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a **soul** from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

1Pe 1:9 Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the **salvation σωτηρια** of *your* souls. [Note italics on “your.” Might this be speaking of others who come to faith through us???

Certainly, the expressions can refer to life in the simplest sense, as the animation of our bodies: the references in Mark 3:4 and Luke 9:56 (given the disciples’ suggestion a few verses before) seem to point this way. If this is the case, the contrasts mean simply, “If you are willing to die for me, you will be raised from the dead; if you try to stay alive by denying me, all you can expect is death.” But the contrast can mean much more.

Since απολλυμι is almost always the common opposition for the positive terms, it’s worthwhile

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considering its cooccurrences with ψυχη in more detail. When we do, we find a strong concentration in Leviticus, where the two words consistently translate כרת נפש N (7:20, 21, 25, 27; 17:10; 20:6) and once אבד נפש C (23:30), all setting forth the notion of being “cut off” or “destroyed” “from among his people.” To a Jewish hearer familiar with the Torah and its Greek version, “destruction of the soul” indicates being separated from the people of God. This spiritual sense of the expression is reinforced by a use of the expression a dozen verses earlier, in this same discourse, where it certainly means more than just the end of physical life:

Mat 10:28 And fear not them which **kill** ἀποκτείνω the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to **destroy** ἀπολλύμι both soul and body in hell.

Here those who kill the body are said to be incapable of touching the soul, so the soul must be more than physical life. The destruction of the soul is what God does in hell. It follows, then, that the various positive statements describe the opposite of hell, the preservation of the ψυχη in fellowship with God and his people.

How then can the Lord commend those who seek to lose their souls? Recall the ostracism of which our Lord warns in Matt 10 and elsewhere to those who truly follow him. Perhaps the saying points at least in part to the contrast between the visible and the true people of God, and the need for those who truly love him to be willing to forsake visible affiliations for the sake of the true ones.

10:41-42, εἰς ὄνομα Χ

Numerous commentators (Alford, Carson, cf. Zerwick 106) treat this as “causal εἰς,” and cite

Mat 12:41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at εἰς the preaching of Jonas;

Some commentators compare the whole expression with semitic לְשֵׁם. What examples of the latter can we actually find?

Jos 9:9 From a very far country thy servants are come **because of the name** of the LORD thy God:

The temple is often described as being built לְשֵׁם (e.g., 1 K 3:2; 5:17, 19; 8:17, 18, 19, 20, 44, 48; cf. 9:7; 1 Chr 22:7; cf. 22:5 לְיָי;). Is the sense here “for the reputation, because of the reputation of YHWH”? More directly, it could also be purpose: “in order to establish the Lord’s reputation.”

How would an adverbial sense of promise compare with לְמַעַן שֵׁם ? Examples: 1 Ki. 8:41; 2 Chr. 6:32; Ps. 23:3; 25:11; 31:4; 79:9; 106:8; 109:21; 143:11; Isa. 48:9; 66:5; Jer. 14:7, 21; Ezek. 20:9, 14, 22, 44. Note in particular the full expression in 1 Kings 8:41, right in the context with the shorter expression.

Conclusion 1: the concurrent usage of לְשֵׁם and לְמַעַן שֵׁם suggests that the two must be distinct, and makes it unlikely that לְשֵׁם is a causal marker.

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How about the idea of a causal *lamed*? Neither Jouon-Muraoka nor Waltke-O'Connor recognize such a form. HALOT lists Gen 4:23; Isa 36:9; Psa 69:22. Clines recognizes Isa 15:5; 16:7, 11; Jer 22:10; Nm 16:34; 2 Sam 18:5.

Conclusion 2: the idea that ל by itself may have a causal nuance is better substantiated, though probably not active in the temple references.