

Matthew 10:16

As sheep among Wolves

Intro:

TOLD the unexpected

Ever notice the hostility toward you when people learn you're a believer?

How do you deal with that?

Do you hide your faith, huddle with Christians, or hate on unbelievers?

What are you to do?

Here, in today's passage, Jesus shows what to do and what to expect

Today – 10:16

Big Idea – God's servants are like sheep in the midst of wolves

Prop – 2 Characteristics of the faithful servant, so that we are prepared for service.

**Distinctive - Alert**

READ 10:16-23

Review 9:35-10:15

The King's Authority over Ministry 9:35-8

1. His Model
2. His Motivation
3. His method – 37-38

The King Commissions 10:1-4

1. The summons
2. The supply
3. The selected

Instructions for the Mission 10:5-15

1. Respond to the call 5a
2. Go to people 5-6
3. Know your ministry 7-8
4. Walk by faith 9-10
5. Practice contentment 11-13
6. Have clear objectives 14-15

Passage intro:

Now unexpectedly, we get v. 16

Would expect – you're the victors, go conquer

Instead – Be amazed, behold – I send you as sheep among wolves

Sheep – 9:36, 10:5-6; 10:16

- Happy and quiet unless there's danger
- Eat what's in front of them – but can get sick
  - Be a Berean
- Helpless – so are we
  - Jn 15:5 “apart from me, you can do nothing”

Wolves –

- Mt 7:15 - “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.;
- Jn 10:12 - He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them.;
- Acts 20:29 - I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock
- Work together
- Make a plan
- Destroy
  - Philip Keller:

“Ewes, heavy with lamb, when chased by dogs or other predators, will slip their unborn lambs and lose them in abortions. A shepherd's loss from such forays can be appalling. One morning at dawn, I found nine of my choicest ewes, all soon to lamb, lying dead in the field.

“On several occasions, these cunning creatures came in among my sheep at night, working terrible havoc in the flock. Some ewes were killed outright, their blood drained and livers eaten. Others were torn open and badly clawed. Some had huge patches of wool torn from their fleeces. In their frightened stampede, some had stumbled and broken bones or rushed over rough ground, injuring legs and bodies.

“Yet despite the damage, despite the dead sheep, despite the injuries and fear instilled in the flock, I never once actually saw a predator on my range, so cunning and so skillful were their raids, they defy description.”

So you are a sheep in the midst of wolves. What can you do? Remember your shepherd.

- Jn 10:11, 14-15, 27-28

When stepping out to serve, Jesus provides 2 instructions: 2 Characteristics of the faithful servant, so that we are prepared for service:

v. 16 – be wise as serpents and innocent as doves

- I. Be wise as a serpent

Snakes:

- Sneaky
- Deceptive
- Gen 3
- But:
- Able to survive
- Wise – how are we to be wise?:

#### A. Know the Message

- V. 7
- 1 verse – **2 Cor 5:21** - For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
- 2 verse – **Eph 2:8-9** - For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.
- Romans road – **1:18** - For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.;
  - **3:23** - for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God;
  - **5:8** - but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ;
  - **6:23** - For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.;
  - **10:9** - if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.
- Know the message – do you?

#### B. Know the Response

- V. 25
- **1 Co 1:18** - For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.
- Be wise
- **Pro 25:11**
- Be wise as a serpent – know the message, know the response and be wise

## II. Be innocent as a dove

#### Doves:

- Ancient view
- Naïve
- Innocent

#### A. Live the Message

- Live as one saved by grace
- Saved by grace through faith alone
- Live in grace
- **1 Co 15:9-10** For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I

am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

B. Live in Hope

- Christ knew what was coming
- Could have prevented it
- Allows trials
- 1 Pt 1:3-9; 3:13-17
- We have hope
- 1 Co 10:13 - No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.
- Rom 8:28-9
- Mt 10:22
- James 5:11 - Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.
- As we step out to serve, God allows difficulties so that we will be transformed and come to be innocent as doves. Live the message, live in hope

Conclusion/App:

The Christian life is a battle. Ministry is a battle. As we go to bring life to those dead in sin, we are like sheep in the midst of wolves.

So, be wise as a serpent. Know your message, know the response you will likely get, and be wise with your interaction.

And, be innocent as a dove. Live out what you believe. Live the message of grace. Live in hope

God is able, God is at work, we are servants and it is He who is the Master.

**PORTRAIT – Zohar**

Distinctives – Teachable, commissioned, instructed, alert

Like a sheep when wolves are about, like a serpent, like a dove

Jude 24-5 - Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, 25 to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time[a] and now and forever. Amen.

When Trials Come – Getty

“When trials come no longer fear  
For in the pain our God draws near  
To fire a faith worth more than gold  
And there His faithfulness is told  
And there His faithfulness is told

Within the night I know Your peace

The breath of God brings strength to me  
And new each morning mercy flows  
As treasures of the darkness grow  
As treasures of the darkness grow

I turn to Wisdom not my own  
For every battle You have known  
My confidence will rest in You  
Your love endures Your ways are good  
Your love endures Your ways are good

When I am weary with the cost  
I see the triumph of the cross  
So in its shadow I shall run  
Till He completes the work begun  
Till He completes the work begun

One day all things will be made new  
I'll see the hope You called me to  
And in your kingdom paved with gold  
I'll praise your faithfulness of old  
I'll praise your faithfulness of old"