

Who Do You Say That I Am?

Seeing and Delighting in Jesus through an Expository Journey through the **Gospel of Matthew** 124- Jesus Instructs the Apostles- Part 1

Church April 06, 2025

Matthew 10:5-11:1

5 These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them: "Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans;

6 but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

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

8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. Freely you received, freely give.

9 Do not acquire gold, or silver, or copper for your money belts,

10 or a bag for your journey, or even two coats, or sandals, or a staff; for the worker is worthy of his support.

11 And whatever city or village you enter, inquire who is worthy in it, and stay at his house until you leave that city.

12 As you enter the house, give it your greeting.

13 If the house is worthy, give it your blessing of peace. But if it is not worthy, take back your blessing of peace.

14 Whoever does not receive you, nor heed your words, as you go out of that house or that city, shake the dust off your feet.

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

16 "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

24 "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master.

25 It is enough for the disciple that he become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called the head of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign the members of his household!

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

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

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

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

30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

31 So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

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

11:1 When Jesus had finished giving instructions to His twelve disciples, He departed from there to teach and preach in their cities.

*To the Glory of God the Father; God the Son;
and God the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

One of the most important Factors to consider when reading the Bible- especially a long Narrative like our brother just read to us- and trying to apply it to your own individual Life in the 21st Century- is to do your best to arrive at the correct "*Context*" of the Narrative you are reading. Because there are certain Issues that God the Holy Spirit wanted in the Bible- that are NOT Instructions for us to follow today. For example, we read this in **The Acts 4:33-37**:

33 And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all.

34 For there was not a needy person among them, for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales

35 and lay them at the apostles' feet, and they would be distributed to each as any had need.

36 Now Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means Son of Encouragement),

37 and who owned a tract of land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Now this is NOT a Passage about "Giving". This is a Passage that Dr. Luke was "moved" by God the Holy Spirit to pen down in this Book- **The Acts of the Apostles**- which is the "*Diary of the first 30 years of Christianity*"- so we could know just HOW the Christian Church began.

What is written here is true; and reliable; and trustworthy and it is the Inspired; Inerrant; and Infallible Word of the living God. So, what is written in this Passage is a historical Account of the *early* Days of the Church. But while this Passage is "*Descriptive*" of what went on during those days- it is NOT "*Prescriptive*"- in that we are NOT supposed to put this Passage into Practice in *our* Day- for a number of Reasons.

First of all, there are NO Apostles in our Day and so, we do NOT have anyone to whom we may bring our money and lay it at their feet. We simply give to God today with a joyful heart.

And so, anyone; any Group that takes this Passage as something we are supposed to obey in our Day is taking this completely out of Context. Let me give you another Example. Please look at what Jesus said in **John 14:26:**

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

Now this is a favorite verse that is used often within the Pentecostal; Charismatic; and Full-Gospel Movement that *seems* to say that God the Holy Spirit will, “**teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I [Jesus] have said to you**”. It is this verse that *seems* to give Credibility to those who say things like, “*God told me!*” or “*God spoke to me!*” or “*God revealed this to me!*” and it is used today to allow mis-guided people to think God will give them a unique understanding about the Bible- without them having to actually study it.

But once again, that is taking this verse completely out of Context. As verses 25 & 27-31 of this same Chapter clearly reveal- Jesus was speaking verse 26 to ONLY His 12 Apostles. And so, rather than Jesus giving License for people to NOT study the Bible and to supposedly hear directly from God- which has resulted in horrible Cults; terrible spiritual Abuse; and many false Teachings to abound- this verse is very *narrowly* promising the Apostles that AFTER Jesus ascends back to His Father- God the Holy Spirit will “move” on them to give them the Revelation of the New Testament. And so, the Way Jesus “brings back to our minds all that He has said to us”- is by using reading and studying the Bible- because that is the ONLY Way Jesus speaks to us today.

So, this is a Promise from Jesus to the Apostles that God the Spirit will lead and guide and direct *their* Paths- in the production of the 27 Books of the New Covenant- in the same Way- that He did with the Prophets as they wrote the 39 Books of the Old Testament. So, rather than give people today the License to *ignore* the Scriptures or to take them completely out of Context- this verse *re-enforces* how important it is for the Leaders of the Church to know and understand the Bible- in its correct and full Context!

Now there are several other Examples I could give but suffice it to say that everyone who teaches- must work very hard to make sure we are interpreting the Scriptures rightly and fully.

Now the Reason I have told you all of this- is to say this: MOST of what Jesus said in **Matthew 10:5** all the Way down to **Matthew 11:1** is His Instructions about how the 12 Apostles were supposed to carry out the Ministry of the New Covenant- *in the Beginning!* And while there are *some* verses in this long Narrative that *can* and *should* be applied to ALL Gospel Ministries- even in our Day- for the most part- this Narrative is *descriptive* of what Jesus told those men at that Time- and NOT *prescriptive* about how ALL Believers should conduct Ministry in our Day. But if we do not arrive at the correct and full Context of what was going on at the Time that Jesus gave these Instructions to the Apostles- we will simply NOT understand why He said what He said. And that contextual Ignorance is why so many get this part of the **Gospel of Matthew** wrong.

In fact, the Way that Jesus instructed the 12 Apostles here in **Matthew 10** was NOT even permanent for them, either. So, for example, at the Beginning of their Ministry- in **Matthew 10:9&10**- Jesus instructed them to NOT accumulate any financial or material Means to sustain them when He said,

Do not acquire gold, or silver, or copper for your money belts, or a bag for your journey, or even two coats, or sandals, or a staff; for the worker is worthy of his support.

... and yet at the End of His earthly Ministry, Jesus said this in **Luke 22:35-38**:

35 And He said to them, "When I sent you out without money belt and bag and sandals, you did not lack anything, did you?" They said, "No, nothing."

36 And He said to them, "But now, whoever has a money belt is to take it along, likewise also a bag, and whoever has no sword is to sell his coat and buy one."

37 For I tell you that this which is written must be fulfilled in Me, 'AND HE WAS NUMBERED WITH TRANSGRESSORS'; for that which refers to Me has its fulfillment."

38 They said, "Lord, look, here are two swords." And He said to them, "It is enough."

... and here in **Matthew 10:5b&6**, Jesus said,

..."Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

So, Jesus, very *narrowly* told these freshly chosen Apostles- His own private "Shaliah"- to NOT even preach the Gospel to the pagans. Why? Does Jesus not

care about lost Gentiles? Yes, but in order to fulfill God's Word and Will- Jesus HAD to go to the Jews- FIRST! But look what Jesus Himself called them,

... the lost sheep of the house of Israel

So, in their current Condition of being physical descendants of Father Abraham and being fully circumcised- Jesus said they were Lost and needed Salvation!

And to some extent- this "Order" was true even *after* Jesus rose from the Dead and ascended into Heaven. Because in Paul's Ministry, he said this in **Romans 1:16**:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

... yet just before He ascended- in **Matthew 28:18b-20**- this same Jesus said,

**18 ... "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,
20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."**

So, right after He chose them- Jesus told the Apostles to go to ONLY the lost sheep of the Tribe of Israel. But just before He ascends into Heaven to sit at the Right Hand of the Majesty on High- He tells these same Apostles to go preach the Gospel to every creature. So, what gives? Was Jesus talking out of both sides of His Mouth? Are these Examples of where the Bible contains Contradictions? No! The "Means" and the "Methods" Jesus used and taught to *begin; create, originate, and start* the Christian Church- was NEVER to be *permanent!*

And so, today- we are NOT to follow the *early* Instructions that Jesus gave to the Apostles that was designed to both train them and to reach the Jewish people. But we ARE to follow the *later* Instructions that Jesus gave that opens up the entire World to the Gospel!

Again, arriving at the full and correct Context of what is going on in Jesus' first Advent is so important as we try to navigate through a maze of seemingly confusing and contradictory Statements. And to do that- we need to arrive at a solid "Baseline" of what was going on in 1st Century Israel during Jesus' earthly Ministry.

So, the *first* thing to remember is that the Old Covenant that God gave to Moses that described how to worship the one, true, and living God; how to please God; and how the Jews could become “Holy” was coming to a decisive End. So, both the *ceremonial* portions of the Law as well as the *dietary* portions would soon fade away under the infinitely *superior* New Covenant. And those *ceremonial* and *dietary* Portions included...

- Sacrificing animals
- Feast Days
- The Levitical Priesthood
- The Sanhedrin Court
- The Temple in Jerusalem
- The Sabbath

... as well as what they could and could not eat.

Secondly, the Temple in Jerusalem in the 1st Century was, supposedly, the “2nd Temple”. The 1st Temple was “*Solomon’s Temple*” which God destroyed by raising up the pagan Babylonians in 586BC.

Now WHY would Almighty God raise up a pagan Empire to come and destroy the single most sacred Site in all of ancient Judaism? Because, for the most part, by the 6th Century BC- the Jewish people had gone wholesale into Idolatry and Wickedness. They were *neglecting* the Commands of God by almost completely *ignoring* the Law of Moses.

So, God was judging His own people- NOT to totally annihilate them- but to *lovingly* bring them to a place of genuine Repentance. So, many of the Jews were carried off into Slavery for 70 years until God used Daniel to *facilitate* their Repentance.

But what did Repentance look like in the 6th Century BC for the Jews? It looked like a complete *rejection* of sinful and immoral Behavior as well as a full-hearted Return to the Tenets; Commands; and Statutes of the Old Covenant- the Law of Moses. And through the Prophet Jeremiah, God had *predestined* that wholesale Repentance to occur after 70 years of Captivity! And so, when the Jewish people repented- God moved for them; freed them from their Captivity; and brought them back into the Promised Land.

And one of the 1st things they did when they returned to the Land God had given to them- was to *rebuild* another Temple on the exact Site where Solomon’s Temple once stood. And they then immediately revived the sacrificing of Animals under the Leadership of the Levitical Priesthood.

But over the years- the Jewish people *continued* the Cycle of “Sin-Repent”; “Sin-Repent” many times. And God would periodically raise

up a pagan Nation to come and put their cruel boot on the neck of God's people to humble them. And God would raise up Prophet after Prophet to call the Jewish people back to God and to help facilitate whole-sale Repentance which ALWAYS looked like a genuine heart-felt Return to the Law of Moses.

So, God raise up first the Assyrians (Babylonians); then the Persians; then the Greeks; and finally toward the End of the "BC" Era- God raised up Rome to first, brutally conquer the Jewish people and then, to cruelly rule over them.

Now while all that was going on- God had stopped speaking to His people. So, from the "Burden" of the Prophet Malachi all the Way until the arch-Angel Gabriel appeared to Zacharias behind the Veil- a Period of 400 years- God was silent. For four Centuries there was NO Voice from Heaven; NO angelic Visitation; NO Prophet; NO Miracle; Sign; or Wonder. Nothing but cold and frightening Silence. So, the Jew struggled mightily under the brutal hand of a pagan Nation- all while God was NOT speaking to them. It was truly a terrible Time.

And NOBODY understood what was going on. Ancient documents that have been recovered show us that during that Time- many Jews were terrified that they had "*sinned away*" their "*Day of Visitation*" and that God had completely *abandoned* them. And some even went so far as to suggest that, perhaps God Himself had died.

But it was during that "400 years of Silence" that the Jews committed what was, perhaps, their greatest Sin. And partly out of Fear; and partly out of their "gut-Belief" that God had finally grown weary with them enough to completely abandon them- they cast aside the Law of Moses and began to invent their own Man-made Religion. So, during the 400 years of Silence- the Jews invented and fabricated Rules; and Ceremonies; and Laws that God NEVER spoke. For example, they almost completely *abandoned* following the Levitical Priesthood and the Sanhedrin Court. And, in that vacuum, four religious Groups rose up to lead them:

1. The Pharisees (religious Conservatives)
2. The Sadducees (religious Liberals)
3. The Essenes (religious Mystics)
4. The Zealots (religious Terrorists)

... of which the Pharisees were, by far, the largest.

It was also during this four Centuries of God NOT speaking to His people that the unbiblical Concept of "Synagogues" or "Teaching Centers" was invented and instituted. So, keep in mind that by the 1st Century- the Jewish people had been enslaved for over 300 years. And during the 400 years of Silence- they

had, for all intents and purposes *invented* their own Religion that had NOTHING to do with what God had given Moses. And that false Man-made Religion is what was *dominating* Israel during the Time Jesus walked the earth.

Also, during that Time-frame- the 2nd Temple in Jerusalem began to go into disrepair. And by the 1st Century- the Temple was about to fall down due to the sinful neglect of the Jewish people.

So, who did the Jewish people look to- to help them restore the Temple to its former Glory? NOT God; and NOT godly people. The Jewish people- being led by unsaved and sinful hypocritical Leaders- looked to the pagan Ruler of the Roman State of Palestine- a half- Jew (Idumean)- the cruel, wicked, and infamous King Herod! And they even went so far as to actually call *the* single most sacred Building in all of Israel, “*Herod’s Temple*”!

Now keep in mind that all during this Time- the Jews- again led by their wicked religious Leaders- literally *despised* the Samaritans. The Samaritans were also “half-breeds”- Jewish people who had *intermarried* with the Babylonians (Assyrians). But Herod was a “half-breed”, too. So, why did the Jews accept Herod’s Gift of restoring their broken-down Temple when they hated the Samaritans? What made one “half-breed” acceptable and the others not? The *worst* of all possible reasons: Money and Power.

Herod’s Logic, by restoring the Jewish Temple, was to curry Favor with the Jews, who would then acquiesce to Herod’s Domination over them and so, there would be Peace in the Land. So, this would make Herod look good to the Roman Authorities- so he could get promoted. So, Herod’s Reasoning was purely political. But by accepting Herod’s Gift- the Jewish leaders were *compromising* their core Convictions; and they were “getting into Business” with a pagan Gentile over the single most sacred part of their Religion!

Now in addition to all of this- one of the Reasons Jesus came to this earth was to bring the Old Covenant to a decisive End and to institute on the earth- the promised New Covenant. And this New Covenant would be *infinitely* superior to the Old in every Way.

You see, the First or the Old Covenant was between God and Man. Over and over throughout the Old Testament- God said, “*IF you do this- then I will bless you!*” But then God also said, “*If you do NOT do this- I will curse you!*” So, it was precisely because the Old Covenant was based on the Weakness of Man’s human Ability to obey- that doomed the Jewish people to failure! But it was also that inherent Weakness of the Old Covenant that caused the remnant of faithful and believing Jews to seek after the promised New Covenant.

The New Covenant, however, is between God the Father; God the Son; and God the Holy Spirit. So, the New Covenant is *guaranteed* to succeed because it is

based solely on God's sovereign Ability to keep every portion of it. Man is simply the Beneficiary of this New and Better Covenant!

Now as you read the four Gospel Records what is impossible to miss is the blatant Hostility that existed between Jesus and, primarily the Pharisees. And that Hostility must be understood and explained if we are to get the correct and full Context of what this Passage in **Matthew** is teaching us.

For example, I know of not a single verse that describes any Condemnation from Jesus toward the Levitical Priests. Or the Sanhedrin Court. Or toward anyone who worked in the Temple. Or toward the people who raised the animals used for Sacrifice- even though through His Life; Death; and Resurrection- He was putting them all out of Business. And yet, Jesus never said anything Good about the Pharisees. So, why was that?

It could NOT be simply because they were Lost- because Jesus met people all the Time who were Lost. In fact, I would say that MOST of the people Jesus met were Lost. And yet, He didn't *condemn* them- He sought to *save* them. And some of them were the *worst* people in Town! But Our Lord and Savior- God's Love personified- *repeatedly* confronted the Pharisees to their face! In fact, one of the most common Ways that Jesus described the Pharisees was by using the term, "*Hypocrites!*" And this indicates that, while Jesus absolutely respected and honored the Law that God Himself gave to Moses- He utterly *despised* the people who had fabricated a false and Man-made Religion that was *deceiving* the Jewish people of the 1st Century.

It is important to understand that when satan fights against us- he attacks us at our *weakest* Link- along the Lines of our *deepest* Fears. But when Jesus confronted the Pharisees- He attacked them at the Points of their supposed greatest Strengths. And there were at least three of these "Strengths":

1. Their supposed Knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures
2. Their Teaching about the Sabbath
3. Their Embrace of the Temple in Jerusalem

Jesus constantly confronted the Pharisees for NOT knowing and for NOT understanding the 39 Books of the Old Testament by repeating the same phrase, "*Have you not read?*" over and over again. It was patently insulting to hear Jesus ask them this- seeing as how they were the supposed to be "experts" of the Law.

And when Jesus gave the famous Statement that we all love to quote from **Matthew 11:28**:

Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.

... He was not only verifying His full Divinity by quoting verses from the Old Testament attributed to God Himself (**Exodus 33:14; 2Samuel 7:11**)- but He was also condemning how the Pharisees had taken the simple Command from God for His people “to rest” on the Sabbath and had totally perverted it by writing volumes of what the Jewish people could and could not do on the last day of the week.

So, by saying that He Himself would give His people “Rest” (which in Hebrew was “Shabat/Sabbath”)- Jesus was teaching that the *true* Sabbath; the *ultimate* Sabbath was NOT a particular Day of the Week but true “*Sabbath’s Rest*” could be found ONLY in Him through Salvation!

And then when the people showed Jesus the Temple in Jerusalem and all of the Glory of it- Jesus’ Response was both immediate and frightening:

Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down. (Matthew 24:2)

Now this begs the Question: “*Why would God Incarnate desire to tear down THE SINGLE most sacred Site in all of Israel? Isn’t God the One who instructed His people to build it in the first place? Is this not where the animals were Sacrificed; where God’s Word was read; and where people learned the Law? Isn’t this the place where Jesus was dedicated as a baby? Why would God want what He commanded to be torn down?*” And the Answer is two-fold:

1. By tearing down the Temple God was proving beyond any Doubt that the Old Covenant was forever superseded by the New
2. God was judging His people to bring them to Repentance

... in other words, *part* of the Reason God tore down the Temple was so that His people would repent. So, the Judgment that God sovereignly orchestrated by Him raising up the Roman army in 70AD to sweep in “from the North” and tear down the Temple- was NOT to utterly annihilate the Jewish people. It was to simply bring them to Repentance. So, from that standpoint- the tearing down of the 1st Temple by the Babylonians/ Assyrians in 586BC and the tearing down of the 2nd Temple by the Romans in 70AD- were for the very SAME REASON: to bring the Jewish people to Repentance.

But the Repentance of the Jews in 586 BC and the Jews of 70AD did NOT look the same. It didn’t contain the same Parts. In 586BC- Repentance for the Jews included a genuine rejection of sinful and immoral Behavior; AND that the Jews genuinely returned to the Commands; Ceremonies; Tenets; Statutes; and Ordinances of the Law of Moses.

But Repentance in 70AD was NOT the same as Repentance in 586BC. In order for the Jew to humble themselves; accept God's Chastisement; truly repent; and once again embrace God- they MUST now turn away from their Rejection of Jesus and fully embrace Him as Savior- as well as EVERYTHING He said and did.

And so, in addition to rejecting Sin and immoral Behavior- their Repentance now MUST include a genuine "Rejection"- a "Leaving" of the Old Covenant and a genuine Embrace and Adherence to the New Covenant. And by default- that WILL include the END of Temple worship; animal sacrifices; the Levitical Priesthood; the Sanhedrin Court; Sabbath Worship- along with all the ceremonial and dietary Aspects of the Law of Moses.

The ONLY part of the Law of Moses (or the entire Old Testament) that remains in force for the Believer today (Jew or Gentile)- is the MORAL Aspects. Because true and genuine Morality is based on God's own personal Character and Nature- which NEVER changes!

In other words, now that Jesus has come and lived and died and has risen again- nobody can act like that hasn't happened. Therefore, ANYONE for ANY REASON who tries to keep or who tries to adhere to the Old Covenant in our Day- is, by default, *rejecting* Jesus and His finished Work! And that is NOT worshipping God- it is committing Blasphemy!

So, today, loving God is NOT enough. Seeking to obey God is NOT enough. Striving to be Holy today based on how the Law of Moses defined that Holiness- is NOT enough. Everybody must now love Jesus. They MUST obey Jesus. And they MUST strive to be Holy based on how the New Covenant defines it.

THAT is the Context of all that was going on as Jesus is now issuing Instructions to the Apostles that He has just chosen. And so, we need to keep all of this in mind as we go through these 39 verses. And so, in addition to Jesus utterly condemning the unsaved Pharisees- He was also ushering in the New Covenant through His Life; Death; and Resurrection. And so, *part* of the Instructions that Jesus is giving to the Apostles in this Passage- has all of this in mind.

The Reason that *some* of the Instructions in this Passage sound odd or out of place to us- is because Jesus is determined that those who "go in His Name"; to "herald His Message"; and who "give Divine Credibility to that Message through Signs, Wonders, Miracles, and Gifts of the Holy Spirit" will be people who are completely *different* from the hypocritical Pharisees.

The people who represent Jesus will be people who have personally experienced the Miracle of the New Birth. They will be people called and chosen by God the Father before the Foundation of the world. They will be people who are empowered and enabled by God the Holy Spirit. They will be people who fully

embrace Jesus and His finished Work. They will be people who look for a City whose Architect and Builder is God. And they will be people who have completely *abandoned* the inferior Old Covenant and who have fully embraced the New!

And so, even though the Apostles were very ordinary and average men- they were called to do something that was very extra-ordinary and something that will last throughout all Eternity.

So, the Apostles will be men, who see such Value; such Delight; such Beauty; such Wisdom; such Joy; such Importance; and such Glory in the Man, Jesus Christ- including ALL that He said and did- that beyond anyone before or since- these men- these Apostles- will be willing to be persecuted; willing to suffer; willing to be tortured; willing to be beaten; and to be murdered- in the pursuit of powerfully and effectively and unashamedly heralding the glorious Gospel to both Jew and Gentile alike.

And through the final, full and completed Revelation that God the Spirit would give to them after Jesus ascended up into Heaven- these men (as well as those these men employed) will become the Writers of the 27 Books of the New Testament. And through what these men did and what they wrote down- they will also become the very Foundation of the Christian Church! And that is *why* we should study these Instructions.

Amen. Let's pray.

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