

Matthew 10: 24-31 // Do Not Fear

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Date: 14 June 2026

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[0:00] Funny story just to start with because I love that Aaron had bare feet up here and one of the things after I was brought on as pastor for this church that I kind of jokingly but not jokingly warned I think it was Jamie for sure that you know I'll be barefoot up here one day and there was a story behind it and where my previous church well it's still going where when I was there where it is there was a bus stop right outside and so you get all kinds of people on a Sunday morning you know at the bus stop and you know waiting for their for their ride and as I walked there one morning to go open up and get everything ready there was a guy there with no shoes and he looked at me about my size and so I I gave him my shoes and I didn't have a backup or anything like that so I went into church now realizing I'm about to go to church.

I didn't have to be you know preaching barefoot and the thing is and I loved it nobody said anything about it I mean there was a couple of friends that was like dude do you need money I mean you know are you okay right and then it was about two or three weeks later there was this woman that kept on coming back and she was she was only considered one of the marginalized she she lived she had a house she had her son she had a roof over her head be more accurate but she was still quite you know down and out in a lot of ways and and I was wearing my shoes and I was starting to teach and said excuse me I can't hear you your shoes are on so so I said okay you're you're right so I took my shoes off and I I preached barefoot again so there was actually quite a season there where I taught barefoot so y'all have been warned but anyway so I'm grateful for Aaron for that because that does made my heart smile I want to teach from Matthew chapter 10 verses 24 to 31 today so if you want to open your Bibles or tap and swipe right away there however you got there

I can't help but look around on all forms of social media any kind of news any kind of talk show there is just always this hyped up amped fear we're kept in fight or flight we're told who to hate we're told who to like we're told what to think we're told what is inappropriate thinking we're told all kinds of things that come at us from all kinds of directions to the point where we some of us will go to sleep doom scrolling looking at this and being fed this on a constant basis and what it does is it breeds this sense of fear am I am I am I too fat am I too thin do I eat salad now Mario sent me something this morning that it was just like you know the the evils of eating salad and it's like there was a part of me that's like but we were told 10 years ago that we're dying we don't right and it's just like everything just seems to change and we're always kept on this sense of I'm afraid I mean should we be afraid to walk out the front door maybe we should just have oatmeal and nothing else oh but I'm sure that's bad for you too right we can get locked in this cycle of never being enough never feeling the right things never believing the right things or some kind of challenge to us and now we have Steven Spielberg's movie Disclosure Day that comes out that is supposed to challenge Christianity and my first thought was why not Islam right why not Judaism what not the other monotheos why are you picking on Christianity and it's because there is a diabolical and awful mainstream rhythm to try and make us fear and to be afraid and the thing is when I read this passage right here it says the exact opposite to that do not fear if you read all of Matthew 10 it says do not fear three times fear is something we have to deal with fear and as I was saying earlier this morning I don't think we can pray for an absence of fear because we're always going to wake up and have some fearful moments how we approach them whether it's with faith and trust or fear and panic well that can be our choice sometimes and I don't know about you but one of the greatest struggles I've had and leading into Father's Day it's been an interesting process where it's like one of the greatest struggles I've had because I did not have a great earthly father was trying to seek God independent of my experience with my earthly father my earthly father was cool and distant and so I thought well God being heavenly father is cool and distant how much could he possibly

care for me and somebody took me through this when I was about 16 and it changed my life because this is one of these moments where you have to choose to believe what God thinks of you how much he loves us how much he cares for us individually uniquely how much he wants what's best for us even if sometimes that's saying no and if you've been a parent you'll know sometimes the best way to love your kid is to say no at times no you can't have 12 cookies before dinner you know just chill out eat your beans right whatever it is there's some times when you have to do that God does that with us too and it is out of love but let's just I don't want to divert too far next week I will say this this is one of these rare moments where I felt like the Lord gave me the passage for next week this week and I'm going to teach through the story of the prodigal son because it's such an idea of the father who ran not ran away but ran toward okay and I think it's a beautiful picture of what God does for us I want to leave that as a footnote for next week the father who ran toward you and right here we'll go through this because if we believe that then there's some certain things we have to wrestle with one don't be afraid two you're going to be rejected you'll be hated if they can say that Jesus is in line with the devil right he was casting out demons and people are saying well he's getting the power because he's one of them you know he's Beelzebub they're saying all these crazy things about Jesus untrue and if they say them about him they'll say them about us there will be hard times there will be moments of rejection where you share your testimony and someone says right don't believe it for a second even though it's what's carved you as a person God will be your justice he will bring everything to light in its time he will be your justice you may not see it this side of heaven you may not see it for a while I've been through some circumstances where I didn't see any justice in the moment and I so desired it not out of a sense of revenge but it's like Lord show me that you've got my back help me to see that I can boldly step out and know that you're with me and there were seasons where I immediately saw that and there were seasons where I did not and I would sometimes hear a decade later about how God made that situation right but in a way so I could never claim the victory for myself it was his victory and I got to sit back and say holy are you Lord master and commander of all things even my little life God will be your justice so fear God more than man fear God more than governments fear God more than Hollywood fear God more than man because God cares for his own don't be afraid to openly express your faith and especially as the days darken especially as the difficulty seems to increase and the stories out there against Christianity seem to grow like wildfire you notice they all just have no substance it's smoke and mirrors but the Bible has been true and good and right and we can lean on that just as our forefathers have leaned on it before the same God as we just sang because when Christianity costs us something when our faith costs us something it's the closest we can get to fellowship with Christ right now when it costs us something that's an interesting thought verses 24 to 25 the disciple is not above his teacher nor a servant above his master it is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher and the servant like his master if they have called the master of the house of Beelzebub how much more will they malign those of his household as a follower of Christ as a believer as a Christian there is a certain amount of courage that we need to walk in with there's a certain amount of courage you have to have to boldly claim that there is one way to heaven it is only through Jesus Christ it sets us apart and in some people's minds in a negative way [9:30] I wish it were not exclusive like that but I didn't make the rules God has said it very clearly Jesus himself said it very clearly I am the way the truth and the life and no one comes to the Father but through me therefore okay and we have to be able to proclaim that we know we're going to get rejected wouldn't it be easier sitting around the dinner table sometimes to say you know what however you want to get there all roads lead to Rome you know that kind of thing right wouldn't it be nice to be able to say that but if you're like me and you've studied a few of the other religions you realize none of them agree on anything and you read the Quran and there is no concept of mercy in it you read it cover to cover there is no concept of mercy we don't go to the same place we don't agree with anything right I mean I could go on and on and on but that's a message for another day all that to say is that the disciples shouldn't be expected to be treated any differently than the way Jesus was treated people tried to trip him up and mocked him about his parentage right you didn't really know your father earthly father right they tried to you know even claim that he was picked on a lot and one of the things that I appreciate about Jesus one of the many many things is that he is so secure in who he is and being fully man and fully God none of that affected him you know sticks and stones might break my bones but words will never hurt me he lived that out right because he knew who he was there was no fear in that if you and I know fully who we are then throw the words at us break our bones with sticks and stones who cares if we are secure in who we are in Jesus

who do we have to fear really the worst case scenario is we die here for our faith and we awaken in heaven that does not sound so bad to me especially Monday morning sometimes right just there's that moment of just like

Lord I just can't wait to be with you so that's not so bad so stand now he's our master our Lord our teacher and if we live for him we'll be counted with him not just in the difficult times but also in his victory because we can walk and live in the victory of the cross the world can fall apart the lies can increase the smoke can get more and more volume we can not be able to see 10 feet in front of us we can still take a step into darkness into the faith in faith knowing that God has got our back Jesus comes into our life and God's transforming process helps us to be more like him less insecure less worry less anxiety and more trust and more belief and more courage I love how our personalities are not erased when we say things like let us

Jesus let us be more like you it's not to become this you know uniform blob of motion we all have our different personalities he has created us he's given us different talents different skills different abilities different personalities within that beautiful mosaic of people that I'm looking at right now he has also been making us to be more like him in that same uniqueness it's a beautiful thing because there will be some people who are just incredibly kind it's like breathing it's just so easy for them to be kind some of us that's something we got to work on but maybe we have a real gentle spirit you see what I mean the fruits of the spirit move so beautifully and dynamically in a body of people when we try and be more like Christ day by day and we need each other because together as a group I think we look more like Jesus than ever before so we keep pushing on because God will bring everything to light verses 26 to 27 so have no fear of them for nothing is covered that will not be revealed or hidden that will not be known what I tell you in the dark say in the light and what you hear whispered proclaim on the housetops there's nothing covered that will not be unveiled that shouldn't sound like a threat it's more just think of it this way the persecution that you receive the anxiety that you feel when your legs are trembling and you know you just got to tell this person about Jesus and you don't know how that little bit of kindness that you gave where nobody else in the world sees it the Lord did that moment where you shared with him bravely where other people would have shrunk back and nobody else saw it the Lord did so it's not just about oh you've got this thing hiding under a rock whoops there everybody sees it now it's not a threat like that though for those who have harmed you hurt you maligned you in the name of Jesus they will be exposed too God will be your justice for those moments where you have been caught and you in the sense that somebody has come and tried to trip you up maybe to try and stray you from your faith and you remain faithful their efforts will be brought to light and they will need to answer for that one day because God will be your justice so bringing things to light isn't a threat bringing things to light means all of those sufferings that you've had to bear maybe when you've cried in the shower and nobody else knows the pain that you're experiencing God does and he loves you and he's going to make it right those things will be brought to light it isn't always about shame because we can read that as thinking oh man better get the confessional fast right not that we do that here want to confess it's one way go ahead do it anytime you don't need me or anybody else okay anyway true believers are open and courageous with their lives and witness we really really really are there's a part of it where it's like if you're given a situation and someone says to you why are you so different why do you seem to have peace when everything else freaking out you don't seem rattled by this why that's an opportunity right there oh

I'll tell you why I'd be a basket case if it were not for Jesus in my life and it doesn't take much more of that if they reject you they're not rejecting you they're rejecting him but taking that step that courageous step and just saying yeah I'm going to identify with him that's a beautiful thing because we have nothing to hide we don't we have nothing to hide there's a saying of the language of recovery openness is to wholeness as secrecy is to sickness and I really appreciate it because when we are open with one another and one another and ourselves when we're open with God we are actually working towards wholeness privacy privacy is something different I don't want to know what you all are wearing at 10pm when you go to the fridge for a glass of milk I don't want to know that's your privacy please don't ever give me that information okay but secrecy is something else if you're hiding something if you're hiding something secretly from the Lord from yourself from family friends and it's your own private little secret right surrender that to God because if it is something that needs to be cut out of your life it's better to do it now if people have been hating on you or making your life miserable maybe physically or emotionally abusing you those things will be

brought to light but be open about it now so you can get help openness is to wholeness as secrecy is to sickness there's a theme that we're working on here and it's just simply this do not fear do not fear yes you're out there in this world like sheep among wolves yes you are yeah family might turn against you government and church might turn against you stay the course because the truth will prevail because we can preach the truth of God regardless of what dangers are ahead who cares what's going to happen to this world

[18:35] I'm not saying we mistreat it I'm not saying we take it for granted I'm saying we steward it but I'll tell you this right here is the most important thing you can work on right now the closer we get to Jesus the more we can love those around us as a church the closer we get to Jesus the more we can love this town around us do not fear do not fear when things seem to get shut down when we're told to stay in our homes do not fear when we're told to drive only certain miles a day do not fear when we're told to fear to be afraid to maybe even give up your faith do not fear it will not be the first time in this world that that message has been brought across any history student here knows very well that anything that's being told today has been told before and before then and before then and before then and God is still on his throne in heaven do not shrink back in the face of persecution the enemy wants to stop you from being a witness for Jesus and you may think well

I better have like a five point plan of how to evangelize and stuff and if that's what you want to do brother sister go for it sometimes the greatest thing you can do is share your testimony how you encountered Jesus I took the interns through this recently go through Acts 26 if you want to get a good template as to how to do this go through Acts 26 because this is Paul's testimony there is a before there's a how it happened and then there's what his life was like after Acts 26 it is a great template so if you want to work with something work with that Paul had a testimony to tell you have a testimony to share but nothing stays hidden the truth of honorable sacrifice will be known and I think of this often when I think of sacrifices that are happening martyrdoms that are happening now all across the world some we will never hear of because the news is very biased in one direction okay

God sees those God sees that and all that has been in dark will be brought to light and all will have to answer for their deeds good or bad we fear God alone verse 28 and do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body and hell all of this world can do all they can do is kill the body that's it that's not so bad I mean you know all things considering that's all they can do there's a lot of smoke and mirrors there's a lot of barking dogs in the middle of the night that can scare you but it's all just vapor the only thing the world can do is take your life and like I said if you're a believer in Christ be with him who cares so live your life now fearlessly courageously do what he has told you to do fearlessly walk it out be his servant his hands his feet here and now share your testimony with someone share it up here if you even feel called I would love that every week to have somebody sharing their testimony I said that a year ago I'm still going to be railing on that just yeah come share your testimony share what the Lord has done God is on his throne in heaven he protects his disciples and his children there's a lot of things we can look out there right now and see the evil that has been done upon children all over the world it breaks the heart it truly breaks the heart but the Lord sees it and they will have justice they will I found this quote from Martin Luther let goods and kindred go this mortal life also the body they may kill but God's truth abides still his kingdom is forever those of us who fear God alone have nothing to worry about this world and when I say fear I know that you probably already know this but I'm saying it again for my own sake fear is not in this sense

I'm terrified of God he's going to beat me or send a lightning bolt to smite me because he's got his finger on that button every time he looks at me no that is not what I'm talking about fear of respect I've said this before I fear Maria not because she's scary okay but because I respect I don't want to grieve her I don't want her life to be made worse I don't want to be the cause of pain right so that is fear that is respect respect given to God fearing God is in that same way I'm not afraid of God I know that he loves me but I fear him in so much I respect that he is God he is in absolute control and he sees my deeds good bad ugly dark light otherwise so fear him who weighs the soul more than the man or woman of the world where all they can do is take your life have that perspective because God cares for his own verses 29 to 31 are not two sparrows sold for a penny and not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your father but even the hairs of your head are all numbered fear not therefore you are of more value than many sparrows like sparrows at the market were really cheap that's not a play on the bird noise they were really inexpensive you could actually

a lot of the vendors would commonly give you an extra one you bought two here take a third get rid of them they're so cheap they were worth nothing they were not a commodity in that way if God cares for them how much more does he care for you and I made in his image and yet the world tries to stamp that out of us doesn't it it tries to drain that faith and that courage out of us they tell us through marketing through media that we're worthless we need to be more this less that etc etc etc except for accepting that we are children of

[25 : 10] God and he loves us this much because he cares for his own we are of immeasurable value to the Lord I'm not saying out of the pride I'm saying that out of absolute disbelief because it just is so hard to have come out of my mouth we are of immeasurable value to the Lord think on that let your decisions in life be filtered through that that you are of immeasurable value to God the King of all kings the Lord of the universe sees you and I as an immeasurable treasure wow God is concerned about the details of our lives even the hairs on our head are numbered not just counted there is a big difference there right you could kind of say oh there's a few people here at church or I can look and I say Brady came to church today

I'm so glad Brady is here I love this guy singled out counted numbered okay that's different than oh yeah FCC showed up today you see how personal it is sorry Brady you see how personal that can be that's how the Lord looks at us okay he says I see you I see what you're going through I see you crying in the shower I see you doing all this stuff I see you going through this hard time I see your joys I see the victories you're having I'm thinking the things that make you laugh and I'm laughing with you sometimes at you but the Lord sees us okay he loves us with an immeasurable value so when he protects his own he protects them down to the individual hair on our head that is being fully known truly fully known so do not be afraid God who is on his throne as it says in revelation one there's a throne and it is occupied God who is on his throne knows you and numbers your hairs on your head and knows you that well and loves you that much you are not forgotten because it can be easy when we're feeling persecution when we're feeling burdened when we're feeling challenges and hurt and wounds it can be easy to say Lord where are you have you forgotten about me no he hasn't it's just sometimes the journey that we're on needs to teach us something so that he can prepare us for what's next it is not always easy but God is there and he loves us and it's like I said sometimes you're not going to get 12 cookies before dinner sucks when you're a kid but as an adult you get it right especially the dinner is going to be really good Hebrews chapter 6 verse 10 God is not unjust he will not forget your work and the love that you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them I'm going to read that again God is not unjust he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them you know one of the things that I've said I've learned through fatherhood is that if you want to love me love my children there is there is quite often no better way to show me love than to love my children and if I think about that in God's perspective or try to wrap my mind around his perspective love one another show one another love so that he can look upon it and smile don't be afraid don't be afraid to give encouragement even if it's across the aisle or it's across the street or across the county or the country wherever it is don't be afraid to step out in what God has called you to do uniquely your personality what he's called you to do don't be afraid take the risk take the step of faith because there will be hard times and there will be rejection we know that God will be your justice and everything hidden will be brought to light fear God more than man because God cares for his own so if we believe this to be true what are you afraid of now let's pray Heavenly Father I don't want to be afraid anymore I want to be someone who learns more and more how to step out in courage to be courageous for your namesake and Lord I pray for everybody here that we will not be a people of fear we will not be surrounded or drowned out by fear that we see in the media that we will not have moments of doubt we're wondering where you are but Lord help us to take steps of faith some of those might be radical some of those might be small but they are all steps of faith Father help us to take them and I ask that you will show us in a very unique way today just as you've numbered our hairs on our head you know us that well show us in a unique way today how you have our back how you will be the justice in our lives and how you care for us as a father in Jesus name amen amen you