

REJECTION MANIFESTO

SCRIPTURE Matthew 10:16–23

SYNOPSIS Jesus is the Son of Man, the promised Jewish Messiah. He came first to Israel, showing God’s faithfulness to His promises. He had to be rejected by Israel to purchase redemption (Romans 11:30-36). But this redemptive plan was not understood by those He is sending out. So in this passage, Jesus addresses the very heart of what is missing in their understanding of the Son of Man and His mission. He unveils a sort of manifesto, a declaration of His mission program into which they are entering. Surprisingly, the manifesto is one that projects rejection. Israel will reject her King and His kingdom message. But far from failure, this rejection will mean mission accomplished—redemption for all.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. **REJECTION** — Review why Jesus had to go to the Jews first: (1) to demonstrate God’s faithfulness to His promises (Matthew 10:5-6); (2) to be rejected by Israel according to promise (Luke 24:26, 44, 46; Acts 17:3) (3) in order for salvation to extend to all (Romans 11:30-32; Ephesians 2:11-13; Romans 15:7-13). Jesus’ words in Matthew 10:16-23 focus on rejection. How would these words of Christ minister to His apostles? How would these words strengthen and encourage them for the rejection set before them? How about you? How do the principles presented in this passage minister to you? Should we expect ease if we truly set out to make much of Christ in our world? Is there anything in this passage that would inspire you to persevere in the face of life-threatening persecution? What is the value presented in this passage worth dying for?

2. **THE SENDER** — A notable emphasis is placed on Jesus as the Sender of the apostles. We could translate Matthew 10:16 as, “Behold, I, Myself, am sending you...” What does this say about Jesus? Who can rightly send these men on a mission and bid them gladly die for Him? Remember, they didn’t understand the cross yet. They didn’t possess the Spirit-born view of Christ’s glory that will overcome them at Pentecost. Still, they trusted—still, they gave themselves to His cause. What does this emphasis on Jesus sending them out as defenseless suggest? What kind of trust does this demand? What type of dependence does this demonstrate? Do you have this kind of trust? Is Christ better than life to you? What are you not willing to lay down for Jesus?

DISCUSSION GUIDE

3. **TRUST** — Consider the following summary of Jesus’ words: “Do not be surprised by persecution. You are given powers to raise the dead (10:8) yet not to be protected from being delivered to death (10:21). Beware of men. Religious men will persecute you. Civil authorities will persecute you. Family will persecute you. Be wise, but do not trust in your own wisdom. You will suffer pain and shame not because of who you are, but because of who I am. You will be hated by all because of Me. Trust in Me.” How would you respond to this? Be honest and open. What kind of trust does this demand? How can you grow in trusting Christ? What are you doing to intentionally grow in your view and trust of Christ?

4. **ENDURANCE** — Read Matthew 10:22. Endurance is not a condition or qualification for salvation, it is a wonderful promise for those who are true. One’s true colors are revealed under trials. Read 1 Peter 1:7 and James 1:2-4. Discuss how these connect. Now read Philippians 1:27–30. Discuss verse 29. Along with faith, what else is granted to you? For whose sake (stated twice)? What can you do to cultivate a heart that could so delight in Christ that these words would readily be embraced?

DISCUSSION GUIDE

5. **MAKE HIM KNOWN** — Read Matthew 10:23. Notice that while Jesus promised that “the one who endures to the end will be saved” (10:22), He was not calling them to seek persecution. The mission isn’t martyrdom, the mission is to make much of Christ. We, like the apostles, are to accept—not seek—martyrdom. How does this correspond to 10:16? We do not fight the apostles’ battles, but Satan, the world, and the nature of man is universally the same. We may not be members of their special ops force on this first mission, but we serve the same King and face the same ultimate enemy. Persecution of all Christians is to be expected (2 Timothy 3:12). We are called to the mission of reaching the nations. How does knowing that Christ is Lord and will have dominion over all (Matthew 10:23; Philippians 2:10-11) affect your faithfulness to bear witness to His name? How can you grow in making Christ known?
