

Weaving the Word

Lamb, Sheep, Shepherd, Wolf

September 10, 2017

Welcome to where we're learning to fear the right things!

Are you on offense or defense with your faith? Are you shrewd?

Do you watch for someone worthy to share with?

How much do you fear the backlash of the unworthy?



When a crowd of many thousands had gathered, so that they were trampling on one another, Jesus began to speak first to his disciples ... – Luke 12:1a NIV



He sent 72 followers in 36 pairs to every place in Galilee where He was about to go. Then He pairs up the 12 and prepares to send 'em into Judea, 80 miles away, to face unimaginable, opposition. He gave 'em power and authority, and made 'em give away everything they own. (Lk 9:3, 12:33) **He asks them to go into battle unarmed, unfunded, and barefoot.**

He sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick **raise the dead**, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. – Mat 10:8; Luke 9:2 NIV

They'll be on their own in pairs in Judea over two months, while Jesus ministers in 36 towns in Galilee, resting on the Sabbaths, and then traveling the 80 miles to regroup in Jerusalem.

We're listening in on Jesus' marching orders to the Twelve.

Whatever town or village you enter, **search for some worthy person there** [wherever you go, look for someone worthy of what you have – if you have something that's worthy of sharing] and Whatever house you enter, **stay there until you leave that town.** [Invest yourself in any worthy person] As you enter the home, **give it your greeting** [(Greek: *eirēnē*; Heb: *shalom*) peace]. If the home is deserving, **let your peace** [*shalom*] **rest on it;** [show them, teach them, help them understand the shalom that fills and directs your life] **if it is not** [deserving of your shalom], **let your peace return to you.** [No harm. No foul. Allow their rejection without returning fire: hostility and discord and turmoil; because, this is a critical moment to demonstrate the depth of the Lord's shalom that fills and directs your life – because, *it does, right?*] **And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that home or town. as a testimony against them.** [Just shake it off. That's as much as you should defend yourself. Don't react in a way that dishonors your shalom, or you'll undermine

your message and disrupt your mission. Shake it off. Separate yourself from the undeserving – don't let it cling to you, or it'll diminish your mission; and, whatever you do, don't post it to Facebook] I tell you the truth, **it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.** [Because, they had God's shalom in Christ alone as shared by you; whereas Sodom and Gomorrah only had Lot ... which wasn't a lot] – Mat 10:11-15; Mark 6:10-11; Luke 9:4-5 NIV

We are held accountable for the light we've been given. If we're careless with the truth we've been entrusted, we'll be held more responsible than those ignorant of it.



When He sent out the seventy-two, He said:

I am sending you out like **lambs** among wolves. – Luke 10:3 NIV

But now as He addresses the Twelve, He says ...



I am sending **you** out like **sheep** among wolves. [You're no longer naïve; we've been together for over a year-and-a-half. If you're still a lamb, there's something wrong] **Therefore be as shrewd as snakes** [because you're up against snakes; it's another name for the wolves] **and as innocent as doves.** [Don't ever dishonor your own shalom, or you'll be a hypocrite caught in the enemy's trap. Beware of his ways and be wise ... and you'll be free of guilt in your response] *"Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.* – Matthew 10:16; Luke 12:1b NIV



Jesus appointed these young men on a *hillside*, and for nine months they've been at *His* side. Now they're being pushed out to speak and act on His behalf. No staff. No sandals. No food. No money. **They need to need those who need them; to see that we're in this together.** Lamb. Sheep. Shepherd. Wolf. Each must choose which one we'll be. It's a general sending his young men to the front line. He's turning His lambs into sheep, and His sheep into shepherds.



Be on your guard against men; they **will** hand you over to the local councils and **flog** you in their synagogues. On my account you **will** be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. But **when** they **arrest** you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. **"Brother will betray brother to death** [for believing you and receiving Me], and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death [People will be stoned and disowned and mocked and blacklisted and banished!]. All men will **hate** you because of me, but **he who stands firm to the end will be saved.** [So] **When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another.** [Because, part of standing firm, is knowing when to stop talking and cut and run to seek those who *are* worthy of your shalom; because, time's running out!] I tell you the truth, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes. – Matthew 10:17-23 NIV

A couple months later, one year before the cross and just before the Twelve regroup in Jerusalem to report to Jesus, He will proclaim to the lambs and the sheep and the wolves ...

“I tell you the truth, a time is coming and **has now come** when **the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.** [The Twelve have been preaching His words and raising the dead] For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to judge because he is **the Son of Man.**” – John 5:25-27 NIV

And, having told the Twelve: *You will not finish going through the cities of Israel before “**the Son of Man**” “comes”*, this is when they return to Him.

But, while out on their own, they’ll be under constant attack.

A student is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for the student to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebub,¹ how much more the members of his household! “So [Unless you think you deserve *better than Me, expect to be demonized*] do not be afraid of them. [Lamb. Sheep. Shepherd. Wolf. What’ll it be? *Because*] There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. What **you** have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, [So] What **I** tell you in the dark, **speak** in the daylight; and what **you** have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the roofs. [So] what is whispered in **your** ear, **proclaim** from the roofs. “I tell you, my friends, Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul and after that can do no more. But **I will show you whom you should fear**: Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Fear him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him. – Matthew 10:24-28; Luke 12:2-5 NIV



Fear of the greater overpowers fear of the lesser.

If you’re fighting with your spouse over some fear of the future, and a thief breaks in, *quarrel’s over! You’re in this together.* You grab a bat and fearfully approach the room.



Now if at that moment a grizzly bear breaks in, you’d *run* into the room, and you wouldn’t care if the thief had a gun. *You’re in this together. “Yeah-yeah. No time for that. There’s a grizzly bear!”*



Well, when it comes to seeking the worthy, and fearlessly sharing our shalom, many of us have yet to get past arguing with our spouse.



Do you typically fear the Greater or the lesser?

Take a closer look at that bear. You *know* him. You’ve been *close* with Him. *He’s your friend.* So, open the door and introduce the thief!

¹ This took place in Capernaum on the morning of Jesus’ big day. (Mt 12:24; Mk 3:22; Lk 11:15)

If you typically fear the wolf, you might not be so close with the bear.

Watch how Jesus brilliantly balances our fear of the Greater.

Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. **not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. And Indeed, even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid;** you are worth more than many sparrows. **[Just be less afraid of those lesser]** "I tell you, whoever acknowledges me before men, I the Son of Man will also acknowledge him before the angels of God **my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me [who refuse to acknowledge Me]** before men, I will disown before the angels of God **my Father in heaven.** And **everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, [if they sincerely ask for forgiveness]** but **anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.** **[Because, their hardness of heart won't allow them to ask. So]** "When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say." – Matthew 10:29-33; Luke 12:6-9 NIV

This doesn't mean you'll be brilliant.

It means whatever dumb thing *you think* you said, rest assured it was in His plan.

He doesn't turn you into C.S. Lewis.

He prepares *their* heart for that moment.

Now, no occupation is completely, deeply, fulfilling ... unless you see it as where you've been stationed to carry out your call. It can be: *"I'm going to work at a shoe store for 40 years. 40 years of selling shoes."* Or: *"I've been stationed at a shoe store; and, I'm going to stand firm until the end. And I'll be the best shoe salesman anyone has ever encountered, because of my shalom."*

So few believers look at their vocation this way. It seems so radical. But, it shouldn't. Because it isn't. It's your calling. Your choice. Lamb. Sheep. Shepherd. Wolf. And the wolf is a *snake!*

And you are on your own. But, you've been paired with the Bear! (Hos 13:8) Or, as it's pronounced in Hebrew: the dove. And, He'll never leave your side nor forsake you. So ...

Watch for the worthy.

Go on the offensive (without being offensive).

Be shrewd *and* be innocent.

Let rejecters reject, and haters hate.

Shake it off and share your shalom in Christ alone.