

THE REAL JESUS: REAL OPPOSITION [MATTHEW 10:26-33]

Jesus' Instruction

v. 26 *"So have no fear of them..."*

-The "them" of this verse refers to the religious leaders of the day (Matt 10:5-7), and Jesus warns that as they maligned Him, they will also malign those who follow Him (10:24-25)

"for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known."

-revealed **αποκαλύπτω apokalyptō** - to make known or forcefully remove from being hidden

-Jesus tells us that the intents of the hearts of all people will be made known one day.

-This means that when opposition comes, we need to be foremost concerned with our own heart and attitude, because Jesus is still sending us out in the midst of religious people.

v. 27 *"What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops."*

-We listen to Jesus, not to those who would oppose us.

-Are you opening the lines of communication for Jesus to speak to you?

-What do we do with the information? We **proclaim** it. (Even though this is not always welcome in a postmodern society.)

v. 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 in hell."*

-This is hard for American Christians to really get. We fear being mocked or ostracized, and yet Jesus says **not to fear death**.

-Real, reverent fear is to be reserved for God, who unlike those who oppose us, decides the eternal destiny of everyone who has ever lived or will live.

Jesus' Intervention

v. 29 *"Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father."*

-Sparrows were customarily thought of as the smallest and most insignificant of creatures, and a penny (a Latin *quadran*) was worth about 1/16 of a day's wages. Yet the death of one of them doesn't escape God's attention or sovereignty.

v. 30 *"But even the hairs of your head are all numbered"*

-Emphasizes the extreme value that we are to God.

v. 31 *"Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows."*

-This is a reiteration of the position of dominance that mankind occupies in God's creation.

-And it has something to say for **how we proclaim the truth** to those who oppose us.

(1 Peter 3:15 - "...but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.")

v. 32 *"So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven."*

-And Jesus alone has the authority to do this (1 Tim 2:5 "For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ.")

v. 33 *"but whoever denies me before men, I will deny before my Father who is in heaven."*

-This is **real** opposition, the opposition we do not want to experience.

-Jesus has intervened on our behalf, and the options are simple. If we do not become reconciled to God through repentance and faith in Jesus, we deny Him. If we repent of sin and live so as to honor Jesus, He will acknowledge us, and there is no opposition we need fear.