

Are You Jesus' Disciple?

Five Discourses

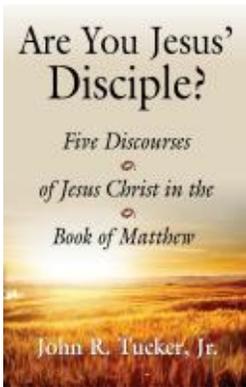


of Jesus Christ in the



Book of Matthew

John R. Tucker, Jr.



Are You Jesus' Disciple? This riveting and exciting book is easily understood because of its unique format. It focuses on the five discourses that were taught by Jesus Christ to His disciples from the Book of Matthew. The 37 topics will make Scripture come alive to believers and non-believers as a training manual for discipleship. With an in-depth explanation of verses, readers will understand what it means to be a modern-day disciple.

Are You Jesus' Disciple? Five Discourses of Jesus Christ in the Book of Matthew

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**Five Discourses of Jesus Christ
in the Book of Matthew**

John R. Tucker, Jr.

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First Edition

II. Discourse on Missions:

A. Jesus Sends out the Twelve—Matthew, Chapter 10, Verses 1 through 42:

Chapter 10 is an ordination sermon which our Lord Jesus preached when He advanced his twelve disciples to the degree and dignity of apostles. The number of twelve refers to the number of the tribes of Israel. Note that *The Webster Dictionary* defines the word “disciple” as one who accepts and assists in spreading the doctrine of another and defines the word “apostle” as one sent on a mission. Also note that the twelve chosen men were initially named and sent forth in pairs to help each other in their efforts to spread the Gospel. Although Peter was the most forward man among the twelve, it is thought that there was no mark of supremacy given to him over the other apostles.

¹He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.

²These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; ³Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴Simon the Zealot and Judas, who betrayed him.

⁵These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. ⁶Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. ⁷As you go, preach this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven is near.’ ⁸Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. ⁹Do not take along any gold or silver or copper in your belts; ¹⁰take no bag for the journey, or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff; for the worker is worth his keep.

¹¹Whatever town or village you enter, search for some worthy person there and stay at his house until you leave. ¹²As you enter the home, give it your greeting. ¹³If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that home or town. ¹⁵I tell you the truth, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town. ¹⁶I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.

¹⁷Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues. ¹⁸On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹But 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, ²⁰for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

Are You Jesus' Disciple?

²¹Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. ²²All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. ²³When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. I tell you the truth, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

²⁴A student is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. ²⁵It 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, how much more the members of his household!

²⁶So do not be afraid of them. There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. ²⁷What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. ²⁸Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. ³⁰And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

³²Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. ³³But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven. ³⁴Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵For I have come to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her

mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in law.
³⁶A man's enemies will be the members of his own household.³⁷“Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; ³⁸and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.⁴⁰“He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me. ⁴¹Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward. ⁴²And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward.

In the words in Verses 1 through 4, Jesus introduced His twelve selected disciples:

¹He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.

²These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; ³Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;

⁴Simon the Zealot and Judas, who betrayed him.

Prior to advancing these twelve chosen men from disciple to apostle, Jesus prepared them by taking them with Him to the point where they demonstrated that they were prepared to serve

Him. By teaching them, they were with Him as pupils and scholars. He taught them to understand the Scriptures and the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. In addition to that, Jesus gave His apostles unlimited authority to command men to obedience, devils into submission, and to have power over all manner of sickness. Sadly, despite all of Jesus' careful preparations, one of the twelve apostles, Judas, chose to betray him. It is known that there will always be tares among the wheat and wolves among the sheep. This betrayal is a warning that there is a day of discovery and separation coming when hypocrites will be unmasked and discarded.

In the words in Verses 5 through 7, Jesus gave His apostles their first mission:

⁵These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. ⁶Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel." ⁷As you go, preach this message: "The kingdom of heaven is near."

This mission was to proclaim the beginning of the Gospel. The footnote in Mathew 3:2 in the *NIV Study Bible* tells us that the term "The Kingdom of Heaven" is the rule of God and is both a present reality and a future hope. The idea of God's Kingdom is vital to Jesus' teaching and is mentioned 50 times in Matthew alone. The two words "is near" that follow the phrase "The Kingdom of Heaven," are meant to hasten people to ask for forgiveness of their sins and to accept the Gospel of Christ while there is still time.

In this first mission, the apostles were to only preach to the unbelieving Jews of Israel that He referred to as lost sheep. Why were the apostles told not to preach His message among

the Gentiles and not to enter any town of the Samaritans? The footnote in Matthew 10:5 in the *NIV Study Bible* says:

The Samaritans were a mixed-blood race resulting from the intermarriage of Israelites left behind when the people of the northern kingdom were exiled and Gentiles were brought into the land by the Assyrians. Bitter hostility existed between the Jews and Samaritans during the lifetime of Jesus.

Therefore, as it was written later in Acts 3:26, the first offer of salvation was made to the Jews. The restraint that Jesus placed on his apostles to only preach to the Jews occurred only in their first mission.

Afterward, Jesus told His apostles in Matthew 28: 19-20:

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

In Verses 8 through 10, Jesus said:

⁸Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. ⁹Do not take along any gold or silver or copper in your belts; ¹⁰take no bag for the journey, or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff; for the worker is worth his keep.

Jesus was giving His apostles the power to perform miracles for the sick, the dead, and those who were demon

possessed. Each would be a confirmation of their doctrine while making no provisions for themselves. By doing this, people would come to realize that they were servants of a good God who does good and whose mercy is over all of His works. Although there is no record of the apostles raising any dead people to life before the resurrection of Christ, it is known that they were instrumental in converting many people from disbelief to a spiritual life. We can be sure that at least eleven of the apostles obeyed Jesus' request of making no provisions for themselves while traveling to do their miracles since there is no Bible Scripture that suggests they were lacking anything by being obedient. Those who go on Christ's errands have the most reasons to trust Him for food and clothing needs. While we faithfully do God's work well, we may cast all of our other cares upon Him.

In the words in Verses 11 through 14, Jesus directed the apostles on their mission, telling them how to conduct themselves in regard to those they would meet in unfamiliar towns and villages:

¹¹Whatever town or village you enter, search for some worthy person there and stay at his house until you leave. ¹²As you enter the home, give it your greeting. ¹³If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that home or town.

It was assumed that there were some people in every location who were more receptive to receiving the Gospel. Therefore, the apostles' first task was to inquire as to the locations of such persons. In the worst of times and locations,

one could kindly hope that there would be some people who tried to refrain from being evil. In seeking a place to stay, they were told not to inquire at inns or public houses but rather private houses. And upon inquiring, they were told that if it was found that the owner of the house was polite, was willing to accommodate the apostles without expecting to be compensated for that generosity, and approved the purpose of them being there, that they had truly found a worthy person who was content to enjoy the reward of hearing the Gospel, their preaching, and their praying. At that point, it became the apostles' duty to conduct themselves courteously, make the best out of the house they were in, and remain in that house until their duty was over and they were ready to move to the next town or village.

However, the apostles were also told that, if upon questioning the owner of a house, they found that such household was rude, had contempt for the Gospel and the preaching of it, and shut their door against them, they must shake the dust off their feet to demonstrate the extreme hatred and wickedness that was in that house. At that point, the apostles were to depart from that house and possibly the whole city because the Gospel would not tarry long with those who refused to abide by it.

In Verse 15, Jesus said:

¹⁵I tell you the truth, "It will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town."

Jesus was indicating that there are different degrees of punishment awaiting those who are unrighteous. Geneses 13:13 tells us that the people of Sodom and Gomorrah were exceedingly wicked and sinning greatly against the Lord.

Genesis 18:32 tells us that the Lord said that for the sake of finding ten righteous people in Sodom, He would not destroy it, but it appeared that the only righteous people in Sodom were somehow related to Lot and his family. Genesis 19:1 tells us that God sent two angels to Sodom, while Genesis 19:15 tells us that the angels urged Lot and his family to hurry and get out of Sodom because it was about to be destroyed. Genesis 19:23-25 tells us that God then rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah from the heavens and that it destroyed the cities, plains, vegetation and all of those who were living there. Unlike Lot and his family who listened to the angels that God sent to them, the people of Sodom and Gomorrah did not. Why will God's punishment of the unrighteous in Sodom and Gomorrah in the Old Testament seem less than the punishment of the unrighteous living in the New Testament? It is bad enough to refuse to receive the angels of God, but it is much worse for those who choose not to receive Christ, His ministers, and the teachings contained in the Old and New Testament.

In Verses 16 through 20, Jesus predicts the troubles and sufferings that His apostles must expect and prepare for in doing their work for Him:

¹⁶I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. ¹⁷Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues. ¹⁸On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹But 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, ²⁰for it will

not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

In comparing the apostles in their missions in Verse 16 to a flock of poor, helpless, and unguarded sheep in the midst of a herd of ravenous wolves, Jesus told them that they needed to use wisdom and farsightedness, being comforted by the fact that He would protect them. In Verse 17, the apostles were told to be on guard as they would be handed over to the local councils. The footnote in *The NIV Study Bible* for this verse says that the local councils were connected to the local synagogues that judged less serious cases and beat those who were found guilty with a rod or a whip. In Verse 18, Jesus told His apostles that they were destined to stand trial before governors and kings for His sake; however, this would give them the opportunity of telling the governors, kings, and the Gentiles about Him. In Verses 19 and 20, Jesus told His apostles that when arrested, they were not to worry about the right words to say and the right time to say them because it wouldn't be them doing the talking. The Spirit of their Heavenly Father would be speaking through them.

In Verses 21 through 23, Jesus continued to predict the troubles and sufferings that His apostles must expect, and prepare for, in doing their work for Him:

²¹Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. ²²All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. ²³When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. I tell you the truth, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

The words in Verse 21 state that the day will come when the children's deep-seated dislike and desire to see people suffer will result in brothers killing their brothers, fathers betraying their own children, and children killing their own parents. Verse 22 tells us that there will be a time when all men will come to hate the apostles as well as those who follow in their teachings. This will be to the point where only those who stand firm in believing in Jesus Christ will be saved. In Verse 23, Jesus was protecting His apostles by telling them if they were being persecuted in one location to flee to another. *The NIV Study Bible* footnote for Verse 23 says that this verse is probably referring to Jesus, "the Son of Man," coming in judgment on the Jews when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed in A.D. 70.

In Verses 24 and 26, Jesus said:

²⁴A student is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. ²⁵It 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, how much more the members of his household! ²⁶So do not be afraid of them. There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known.

Jesus is saying in Verse 24 that students are not superior to Jesus, just as servants are not superior to their masters. He also said in Verse 25 that it is enough for the student to be like his teacher and a servant like his Lord; however, if a student, at times, says that he believes the teachings of Jesus but has called on Beelzebub, the prince of devils, to be his master, how often will he step out of the household of Jesus and into the household of Beelzebub? Whatever choice is made as to which

master he will follow, a student must share their master's fate. Unfortunately, those who end up in the household of Beelzebub are the most likely to have fathered others just like them, thus adding more and more members to his household. Jesus then tells the apostles in Verse 26 not to be afraid of those who threaten them because the time is coming when the truth and secret plots of that household will become public information.

In Verses 27 through 31, Jesus gave His apostles more instructions to follow:

²⁷What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. ²⁸Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. ³⁰And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

In Verse 27, Jesus tells His disciples to proclaim from the housetops at daylight the words He would whisper to them at night, and in Verse 28 He tells them that they are not to be afraid of those who can kill their bodies but can't touch their souls. *The NIV Study Bible* footnote says that the body and soul are closely related in this life but are separated at death and then reunited at the resurrection.

Unlike those who are evil and can kill the body, only God can destroy both the body and soul in Hell. God alone determines the final destiny of us all. In Verses 29 through 31, Jesus compares the worth of sparrows to humans, indicating

that neither of them will die apart from the will of God. But He clearly emphasizes that He made man far superior to the sparrows.

In Verses 32 and 33, Jesus said:

³²Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. ³³But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.

Jesus is saying that anyone who acknowledges Him to mankind as His friend will be openly acknowledged by Jesus to His Father in Heaven as His friend. But Jesus also said that anyone who refuses to acknowledge Him to mankind as His friend will be openly acknowledged by Jesus to His Father in Heaven as His enemy.

In Verses 34 through 36, Jesus said:

³⁴Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵For I have come to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in law. ³⁶A man's enemies will be the members of his own household.

Note that the first glance of these words appear to contradict the words written in Isaiah 9:6, Luke 2:14, and John 14:27:

Isaiah 9:6: The Lord said this to Isaiah: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And

he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

Luke 2:14: Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.”

John 14:27: Jesus’ words: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”

It is true that Christ came to bring peace—peace between the believer and God and peace among men. Yet the inevitable result of Christ’s coming is conflict between Christ and the antichrist, between light and darkness, and between Christ’s children and the devil’s children. This conflict can occur even between members of the same family. If everyone in the world would receive Christ as their Lord and Savior, there would then follow a universal peace. But while there are, and will continue to be, so many that reject Him, the children of God must expect to reap the fruits of their hostility. In saying, “I did not come to bring peace, but a sword,” Christ is saying that He came to give His disciples the sword of the Gospel to fight against the swords of persecution in a world that refuses to accept and fear the Gospel. The negative effect from the preaching of the Gospel is not the fault of the Gospel but of those who refuse to receive and believe it.

In the words in Verses 37 through 39, Jesus was laying the foundation of the apostles’ discipleship that was based on the condition of preparedness for suffering:

³⁷Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; ³⁸and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find.

In Verse 37, Jesus tells the apostles that they are not worthy of Him if they are not willing to part with everything and everyone for Him. Christ said that children must love their parents, and parents must love their children, but if they love them more than Him, they are unworthy of Him. Those who don't like the terms of Christ may leave Him, but if they do, they are foolishly risking their own salvation. Verse 38 tells us that those who want to follow Christ must expect to have their own cross and take it up. In taking up that cross, they must follow Christ's example and bear it as He did. And if we follow Him faithfully, He will lead us through sufferings such as He faced and someday share glory with Him. Verse 39 says that those who think that they have found life when, in reality, they have saved and kept it by denying Christ, they shall lose it in an eternal death. But those who are willing to lose their lives for Christ's sake, rather than deny Him, shall find eternal life which is beyond comparison.

In Verses 40 through 42, Jesus said:

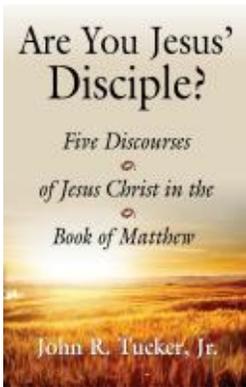
⁴⁰He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me. ⁴¹Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward. ⁴²And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little

ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward.

Jesus is showing the path of welcoming and rewarding given by honorable people that flows through the apostles, the prophets, Jesus, and His Father in Heaven which are better understood when read from *The Living Bible*. The words are as follows:

⁴⁰Those who welcome you are welcoming me. And when they welcome me they are welcoming God who sent me. ⁴¹If you welcome a prophet because he is a man of God, you will be given the same reward a prophet gets. And if you welcome good and godly men because of their godliness, you will be given a reward like theirs. ⁴²And if, as my representatives, you give even a cup of cold water to a little child, you will surely be rewarded.

In conclusion, Jesus Christ takes what is done to His faithful apostles, prophets and righteous people, whether in kindness or in unkindness, as if it were being done to Himself, and regards Himself as being treated just as they were being treated—good or bad. Those who are truly rich in kindness may be poor in this world to the point that they are not able to do more, but their kindness shall be accepted even if it is only giving a cup of cold water to a little child. There will always be faithful ones in this world, and Christ will be with them always, even to the end of the world.



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