

Lesson 2: Serious Sacrifices and Generous Rewards

Matthew 10:34-42

- I. **A SWORD THAT DIVIDES** (34-36; Gen 3:15; Mal 3:1-3)—“*I did not come to bring peace but a sword*”
 - A. **The Cost of Peace**—War before Peace
 1. **Promise of Peace** (Isa 30:15; Heb 2:8)—*Ultimately the Messiah will establish a kingdom of peace, but first He must subdue His enemies*
 2. **False Peace** (Jer 8:11)—*Avoiding conflict is not the same thing as establishing peace*
 3. **Fighting for Peace** (Gen 3:15; Isa 32:17; 57:20-21)—*there can be no peace without righteousness*
 - B. **The Reality of Enemies** (36)—Yes, you do have enemies. Don’t be naïve!
 1. **Intimacy of Enemies** (Ps 41:9; Mic 7:4b-6)—*betrayal assumes a preexisting bond*
Conflicting loyalties will divide the world and be serious enough to *split families*.
 2. **Love of Enemies** (Mat 5:44; Col 1:21-22)
- II. **A PRIORITY OF AFFECTIONS** (37-38) “*Whoever loves father or mother more than me...*”
Even the humans who are most naturally dear to you *must not occupy the place of God* in your life.
 - A. **Transcending Natural Relationships**—Family of origin is the strongest naturally occurring bond in human society.
 1. **Father and Mother**—*the first and most essential bond a human infant experiences.*
 2. **Son or Daughter**—*chronologically our first identity*
 - B. **Avoiding Relational Idolatry**—Anything that keeps you from whole-hearted devotion to Jesus is an idol.
- III. **A PICTURE OF DISCIPLESHIP** (38-39) “*Whoever does not take up his cross and follow me...*”

A. **Relinquishing Control** (Luke 22:42; John 21:18)

B. **Embracing the Cross**—Jesus does not encourage fair-weather followers!

1. **Shame** (Heb 12:2) — *loss of respect, social status, reputation...*
2. **Pain**—*physical, emotional, relational, etc...*
3. **Death** (Ps 44:22; Rom 12:1)—*loss of life as you know it* Possible martyrdom; definitely death to self—*my independence, comfort, control and self-focus*

C. **Finding Life**

1. **Abundant Life Now**—*Joy and purpose with Him now no matter what; without Him, nothing in the world can satisfy.*
2. **Eternal Life to Come**—*Unending life with Jesus in New Heavens and Earth, with no more sin, sickness, sorrow, toil or danger*

IV. **A PROMISE OF REWARD** (40-42; Heb 11:6) *Faith in God involves believing He rewards*

A. **Receiving Jesus by Proxy**—accepting, welcoming, befriending, helping, supporting or extending hospitality

1. **Identifying with Jesus**—*identifying with someone based on their character and reputation as a follower of Christ—you revere the One they represent*
2. **Receiving One Another**—*in persecution and right now in fellowship*

B. **Heaven's Measure of Worth**

1. **Little is Big.** *Little ones and little things are significant.*
 - a. **Little Ones**—those considered weak, insignificant, despised by the world
 - b. **Little Things**—small acts of kindness, even a cup of cold water
2. **Motive is Key.** *Small acts of kindness inspired by great love for Jesus are huge.*

C. **Being Worthy of Jesus** (37-38)—*valuing Jesus correctly.*

1. **The Ability of Jesus to Repay** (Phil 4:19)
2. **The Friendship of Jesus Himself** (Ps 63:3)