

Day 1

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

A Faith Journey Divides Families

³⁴ "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.

Q1. *I did not come to bring peace, but a sword*: WOW! I thought Jesus was the “Prince of Peace” ([Isaiah 9:6](#)). His comment is almost war-like. Why is Jesus talking about “*a sword*”?

Hebrews 4:12 [NIV-1984]

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Ephesians 6:11-17 [NIV-1984]

[The Armor of God]

¹¹ Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

John 1:1-2 [NIV-1984]

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning.

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Q2. ***Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth:*** If you were a Jew in Jesus's time, what did you expect the coming Messiah to do for the Jewish nation, and Jews in general? (War or peace? Prosperity or poverty? Governance by Jews or continued subjugation by Rome? Mercy or cruelty? Love or hatred? Etc.)

Q3. ***Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth:*** In the [StudySheet/Lesson 4: Matthew 4:1-25, page 9](#) about the 'Temptation of Jesus' we answered a question: Did the devil have ownership rights to the world so that he could give it to Jesus? (How do you answer it today?)

Ownership rights? Yes? Maybe? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Q4. ***I did not come to bring peace, but a sword:*** ① Does Jesus's use of "sword" indicate a fight? ② If yes, generally speaking, this is a fight between *what* versus *what*? ③ Are we, who believe, involved in this fight, too? ④ What is the Believer's "sword"? ⑤ How are we, who believe, to use this "sword"?

① Does Jesus's use of "sword" indicate a fight? Yes? Maybe? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

② G D VERSUS E L

③ Are we, who believe, involved in this fight, too? Yes? Maybe? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

④ What is the Believer's "sword"? THE W D OF G

⑤ How are we to use this "sword"?

Lesson 19: Matthew 10:34-42

Day 2

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

³⁵ For I have come to turn 'a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law — ³⁶ a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.' [\[Micah 7:6 \(↓\)\]](#)

Q5. *For I have come to turn 'a man against his father . . . a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.'*: This is difficult teaching. Why will there be enmity (hostility, antagonism) between members of the same family, the same household? (Hint: see Matthew 10:22 ↓)

Micah 7:6 [NIV-1984]

For a son dishonors his father, a daughter rises up against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law — a man's enemies are the members of his own household.

Matthew 10:21-22 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

[Previously in this chapter, Jesus taught:]

²¹ Brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death, ²² and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

Q6. *For I have come to turn 'a man against his father . . . a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.'*: Does this world dislike Jesus's Church and its members? If yes, why?

Yes? Maybe? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

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Day 3

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

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; ³⁸ and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

Q7. *Anyone . . . is not worthy of me:* In these two verses Jesus repeats this phrase three times. Is any person "*worthy of [Jesus]*"?

Yes? Maybe? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Q8. *Anyone who loves his [parents] or [children] more than me:* Doesn't the Bible teach us to love our parents, our children, our spouse, our neighbors?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Matthew 22:39 [NIV-1984]

[Jesus taught:]

And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

Q9. *Anyone who loves his [parents] or [children] more than me is not worthy of me:* Would you willingly sacrifice your life (i.e., die) for your children? (Is it because you [agapé love](#) them?)

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Matthew 22:36-40 [NIV-1984]

³⁶ "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

³⁷ Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

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Q10. *Anyone who loves his [parents] or [children] more than me is not worthy of me:* What is “the greatest commandment in the Law” [from Matthew 22:36 (↑)]?

Exodus 20:3-17 [NIV-1984]

[The following are the first four commandments:]

- ① "You shall have no other gods before me.
- ② "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.
- ③ "You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.
- ④ "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Q11. *Anyone who loves his [parents] or [children] more than me is not worthy of me:* How would you summarize the first four of the Ten Commandments?

1 John 3:16 [New Living Translation (NLT)]

We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So, we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters.

Q12. *Anyone who loves his [parents] or [children] more than me is not worthy of me:* Does Jesus really want us to “love” Him more than my children, my spouse, my parents?

Yes? Maybe? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

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- Q13. *Anyone who loves his [parents] or [children] more than me is not worthy of me:* ① What would Christianity look like, if every Believer loved Jesus more than self, more than family?
② How might that impact the world? (We have to start with ourselves.)

① What would Christianity look like . . . ?

② How might that impact the world?

- Q14. (**Personal:** share your examples as you are led) *Anyone who loves his [parents] or [children] more than me is not worthy of me:* When Jesus looks into your heart, your soul, how does He know that you “love” Him? (Hints: Does He know your heart because: You follow rules? You pray? You volunteer? You tithe? You preach/teach/outreach to the unchurched? You study the Bible? You are a good person? My good outweighs my bad?)
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Ephesians 1:13-14 [International Children’s Bible (ICB)]

¹³ So it is with you. You heard the true teaching — the Good News about your salvation. When you heard it, you believed in Christ. And in Christ, God put his special mark on you by giving you the Holy Spirit that he had promised. ¹⁴ That Holy Spirit is the guarantee that we will get what God promised for his people. This will bring full freedom to the people who belong to God, to bring praise to God’s glory.

- Q15. *Anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me:* What does “take [up] his cross” mean for Believers?
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 The commentator Peter Pett observed:

“It is at this point that a disciple has to choose what he will do. If he would be ‘worthy’ of Christ (deserving of His interest and saving concern) then he must put his love for Christ before his love for his father or mother. He must put his love for Christ before his love for his son or daughter. Still filled with love for them He must go forward in love to obey Jesus’ words. He must take up his cross (dying to his old life) and follow Jesus. The taking up of the cross refers to the fact that when a man was sentenced to crucifixion he himself had to take up and carry the crosspiece of the cross on which he was to die. Thus, to take up the crosspiece signified deliberately taking the way of death. In this case it is used to parallel the choice between Christ and relatives. So here he is choosing to die to his relatives and the ways in which they want him to walk rather than forsake Christ. This may result in actual death through martyrdom, but not necessarily. The emphasis is on a dying to the old life and its claims upon him, for now he is following Christ, and Christ alone.” [Public domain. Pett, Peter. "Pett's Commentary on the Bible ". <https://studylight.org/commentaries/eng/pet/matthew-10.html>. Accessed: 06-30-2026.]

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Day 4

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

³⁹ Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

Q16. *Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it:* In [StudySheet/ Lesson 3: Matthew 3:1-17](#) we studied baptism. Through the rite of baptism:

① What is 'put to death'? ② What is 'made alive'?

① What is 'put to death'?

② What is 'made alive'?

John 1:1, 4 [NIV-1984]

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . .

⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of men.

John 3:14^b-16 [NIV-1984]

^{14b} so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵ that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶ "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

John 10:10-11 [NIV-1984]

¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

¹¹ "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."

Q17. *Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it:* To what "life" is Jesus referring?

John 3:1-8 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]

¹ There was a man named Nicodemus who was one of the Pharisees. He was an important Jewish leader. ² One night Nicodemus came to Jesus. He said, "Teacher, we know that you are a teacher sent from God. one can do the miracles you do, unless God is with him."

³ Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth. Unless you are born again, you cannot be in God's kingdom."

⁴ Nicodemus said, "But if a man is already old, how can he be born again? cannot enter his mother's body again. So how can he be born a second time?"

⁵ But Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth. Unless you are born from water and the Spirit, you cannot enter God's kingdom. ⁶ A person's body is born from his human parents. But a person's spiritual life is born from the Spirit. ⁷ Don't be surprised when I tell you, 'You must all be born again.' ⁸ The wind blows where it wants to go. You hear the wind blow. But you don't know where the wind comes

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from or where it is going. It is the same with every person who is born from the Spirit.”

 From the commentators at Got Questions Ministries:

“Jesus has said a startling thing: Those who will not take up their cross and follow Him are not worthy of Him. He had not yet died on the cross, so the disciples would not have associated this with His death, at least not yet. Still, the cross was always about death. Jesus was teaching them to willingly participate in dying to themselves, freely giving up their own lives to follow His difficult path ([Matthew 10:38](#)).

“Scripture teaches that Christ's path is the path to finding true life ([John 10:10](#) ↓). Dying to self is about finding the best possible life, both on earth and especially in eternity. Some will refuse to believe in Jesus; they will not follow Him. Such people may find "their" lives: their own worldly definitions of success or achievement or getting what they want. In truth, though, they will lose "true" life. They will forfeit eternity. Whatever life they find in the here and now will come at the cost of losing the life that is abundant forever.

“Those who do willingly lose their lives by dying to themselves for His sake, however, will find eternal life. In fact, following Jesus is the path to the life that is true and lasting.” [© Copyright 2002-2026 Got Questions Ministries. All rights reserved. <https://www.bibleref.com/Matthew/10/Matthew-10-39.html>. Accessed: 07-02-2026.]

Q18. ***Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it:*** What does Jesus mean “Whoever finds his life will lose it”?

Q19. ***Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it:*** Do I have to be persecuted and killed for my faith in Christ Jesus to “find [life]”?

Yes? Maybe? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Q20. (Apologetics) ***Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it:*** I thought Scripture promises that once I declared Christ Jesus as my Lord and Savior, I was marked by the Holy Spirit as a Believer for eternity ([Ephesians 1:13-14](#)). I’m a Believer; if “*Whoever finds his life*” means I now truly enjoy my life in this world, does “*Whoever finds his life will lose it*” mean that I can lose my eternal standing with Christ Jesus?

Yes? Maybe? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

 The commentators at “Contending for the Faith” provide this explanation:

“Having instructed His disciples to follow Him even to death, Jesus now continues the same thought. With a play on words, Jesus shows them once again that spiritual life is far more valuable than physical existence.

“The word "life" (psyche) has many variations of meaning (see Arndt and Gingrich 893). It can refer to literal life on earth in its external, physical aspects, of the soul as seat and center of the inner life of man in its many and varied aspects or of the soul as seat and center of life that transcends the earthly.

“Here the idea seems to be that he who will save his life (physical psyche) by denying Jesus, in reality loses his life (spiritual psyche). Although paradoxical, the thought is similar to that found in verses 32-33. How one responds to persecution directly affects how God views him in judgment.

“While the truth of this verse certainly applies to martyrdom, it is not limited to it. Jesus notes in Luke 9:23 that

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a person should take up his cross "daily" and follow Him. This is impossible if literal martyrdom is required. While one might verbalize a willingness to die for Jesus, the real test of loyalty is in living for Him.

"By worldly standards, "real living" means charting a course for Pleasure Island. Little commitment is required, and the fare costs nothing. The ticket is only "one way" but what a trip! Captain "Flesh" is at the helm, his ship "Indulgence" is a beauty, and every leisure is supplied. But Jesus again reminds us in this verse that the storm of God's judgment is coming. Perhaps to some degree in this life, but certainly in the next, we shall face the consequences of our hedonism. For those who live for self, sure death waits beneath the waves. Only those barks [i.e., a sailing ship or an oared vessel] whereupon Jesus is pilot shall find safe passage into the heavenly harbor." [Editor: Charles Baily, "Commentary on Matthew 10:39". "Contending for the Faith". ©2026 by Contending for the Faith Publications, 4216 Abigale Drive, Yukon, OK 73099. All other rights reserved. <https://www.studylight.org/commentary/matthew/10-39.html#verse-mhm>. Accessed: 07-02-2026.]

Day 5

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

God Rewards Kindness

⁴⁰ "He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me.

Q21. ***He who receives you receives me:*** ① To whom is Jesus speaking? ② Who is "me"? ③ Who is "the one"?

①

②

③

Q22. ***He who receives you receives me:*** What does "receive" mean in this verse? (Is it limited to 'gracious hospitality'?)

Q23. ***He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me:*** What is the promise in this verse?

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⁴¹ Anyone 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.

Q24. *Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward:* The Old Testament is filled with stories of great prophets. Is Jesus now telling His disciples that they are on the same level as the “*prophets*” of old?

Yes? Maybe? No? (Thoughts?)

Matthew 5:12 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Matthew 6:1-4 [New Living Translation (NLT)]

¹ “Watch out! Don’t do your good deeds publicly, to be admired by others, for you will lose the reward from your Father in heaven. ² When you give to someone in need, don’t do as the hypocrites do — blowing trumpets in the synagogues and streets to call attention to their acts of charity! I tell you the truth, they have received all the reward they will ever get. ³ But when you give to someone in need, don’t let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. ⁴ Give your gifts in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

 **Reward?!?!?** What does Jesus mean with “reward”?!?!?!

The Bible states in [Romans 10:17](#) “*faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ*”.

And in [John 14:6^b](#) “*No one comes to the Father except through me.*”

In [Ephesians 2:8-9](#) we read, “*I mean that you have been saved by grace because you believe. You did not save yourselves. It was a gift from God. You cannot brag that you are saved by the work you have done.*”

Clearly, the Bible teaches that our faith, our belief – and marked as a Believer by the Holy Spirit – comes through Christ Jesus. So. Why is Jesus talking about “reward”?

Our faith is a result of a transaction in which we declare our belief in the saving grace of Christ Jesus and the Holy Spirit then indwells our soul and – according to [Ephesians 1:13-14](#) – marks our soul as a Believer and guarantees our right as an adopted child of God ([Romans 8:15](#)).

Now, picture in your imagination a thick over-sized, black leather-bound book with your name embossed on the cover and the binding. Entries are made in that book every time you do something good, or pray, or give money to someone in need, or demonstrate mercy, or preach the Word, or teach with an attitude of Christ Jesus, or outreach to a nonbeliever, or listen to the grieving, or comfort an invalid, or greet newcomers at church, or decide to ‘turn the other cheek’, or . . . and on and on.

In the Great White Throne Judgment in Revelation 20:12^b we read, “*The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.*”

Jesus spoke truth. He did not say meaningless things. He did say, “Reward”? It is one of those mysteries that will be eventually revealed to us. When He said that we would be rewarded, then, perhaps, we will have jobs in Paradise that will reflect the Jesus-honoring effort, devotion, love, and servanthood we provide to this world – this world where our temporary bodies currently reside. (For me personally, this is a scary thought. I know my sins. And I will enter Heaven only through the grace of Christ Jesus. Paul’s words from Romans 7:19 are so true for me: “*For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want [to do] is what I keep on doing.*”)

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Day 6

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⁴² And 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."

Q25. *If anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple:* Are we to take Jesus's instruction literally, or does "a cup of cold water" symbolize 'anything'?

Q26. *If anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple:* Jesus has been discussing "rewards". Are "rewards" for anyone? Or only a select few?

 M Y D S C P S

Matthew 25:31-46 [NIV-1984]

³¹ "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

³⁴ "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom pre-pared for you since the creation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me some-thing to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶ I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

⁴⁰ "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

⁴¹ "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

⁴⁴ "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'

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⁴⁵ "He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'

⁴⁶ "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

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