

# 7/9/23-Series: 'MORE THAN' (#6)

## Pastor Nate

This world  
vs.  
God!

- Proposition: What if God's word said we were supposed to hate people... of course, NO!! But there ARE some 'so-called' Christians who do hate.....even deriving their identity through such. Take this proposition one step further...what if God commanded you make an enemy of your Mom! What!?! But today's passage says, in effect, that very thing. How could people close to you evolve into your enemy?
- On flip side, we are a Christ-based Church...which means looking at EVERYTHING through the centrality of Jesus as our ultimate focus and everything He teaches...no matter how difficult.

Jesus is  
#1!

- Our "ONE MORE" Series is about comparisons and particularly reflects on the superiority of Jesus. But what do we do when something or someone else emerges that would, in effect, take His place as #1.

There is  
An Ultimate  
Choice---

For disciples  
AWD  
US!

- Math 10: 34-36 "Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. Whoever loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take up his cross and follow Me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."
- A difficult passage!! Note that He is speaking to his twelve apostles... preparing to send them out to do ministry (2x2) in His name. You will face opposition and persecution.....for purpose of unsettling/shocking them. But, still, as the 'Prince' of Peace", why harshly 'bringing the sword' - - potentially causing conflict with friends and family?

Be Prepared  
to PAY  
a Price!

- Jesus, as the ultimate 'man of peace and love' wants that for all of us. But peace can sometimes only happen at a cost- - through conflict- - standing up to opposition, etc. So Jesus, again, not only wants His disciples to be ready.....HE WANTS US TO BE READY. Mirroring the disciples, we are ALL called to disciple and to do ministry. We should ready ourselves to accept the costs and consequences.

The Old  
Test. Affirms  
Jesus' Warning

- Another layer of meaning Jesus is conveying (as He quotes from Micah 7:5-6)- - Put no trust in a neighbor; have no confidence in a friend; guard the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your arms; for the son treats the father with contempt, the daughter rises up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house. So the disciples would have recognized Jesus' language to them and understood the context of the Syrian empire besieging the city of Jerusalem hundreds of years before. The besieged people began to get desperate...turning on each other, sometimes becoming enemies.

Your Walk  
May Cost--  
Stay Strong!

Even in  
Family,  
Jesus #1!

Even Under  
Pressure!

HOWEVER  
Difficult!

A Personal  
Choice w/  
High Stakes

Nothing Subs  
For Christ!

He is Our  
Supreme  
Source!

- So Jesus is saying to the disciples that, as you go out to minister in His name, it may happen that your own friends and family might turn on you. He is, again, preparing them - - in the extreme - - to stay strong! And, again, he is sending the same, exact message to us.
- All of this is juxtaposed alongside the notion that family is a fundamental building block, established by God, for our lives...where we can embrace love, acceptance, provision, etc. **HOWEVER, WHILE FAMILY IS FUNDAMENTAL, IT CANNOT BE SUPREME. THERE IS ROOM FOR ONLY ONE IN THAT POSITION - - GOD.** There can be no competition for first place!
- Families place expectations on us (buckets) that might push us away from Jesus and true scriptural faith: 1. Religious, and 2. Cultural.
- Re: #1 (religious), may (or not) set aside whatever represents the religion or idol of that family to accept Jesus (Pastor tells India trip story where young converts to Christianity were disowned by their parents). Families - - in old times and today - - may embrace or inject a particular, historical brand of tradition or faith into their religious practices. Eg. baby baptism - - 'an outward expression of your inward faith in Jesus' - - nonsensical for a baby!
- Re #2 (cultural), Pastor Nate offers the example of college students on a trajectory/pathway toward Christ, pushed away by family for goals (scholastic achievement, major selection, etc) they saw as superseding Faith.
- Math 10:39 - - "Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." Jesus wants it all! He wants you to love Him so much that nothing else can take his place. Said another way, you might have to lose your life in order to find real life in Him.
- And - - to put this in perspective - - if we love Jesus MUCH MORE, there is nothing we can really lose.
- Micah 7:7 - - "As for me, I will look to the Lord. I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me. He is the 'ultimate'....He will hear you....He will save you.
- Mark 10: 28 - - "Peter began to say to Him, "See, we have left everything and followed you." Jesus said "truly I say to you, there is no one that has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive one hundred fold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come, eternal life." Jesus is saying, we might have to sacrifice much, but the reward, in Him, is so much greater.
- In this life and in tough times, lean on and support our Church!