

May 5, 2019

**The New Testament!**  
**Matthew 10:16**  
**"Sheep in the Midst of Wolves"**

**Matthew 10:16 (ESV)** "Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves."

**Introduction**

Today will begin to look at what it is like to be devoted "followers of Jesus"

For the preacher, for those attempting to see souls saved, for those working to advance God's Kingdom these verses will be of great interest

**"Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves."**

Behold what, "I am sending you out"

So because of where they were going and whom they would be dealing with they needed to be...

Wise as a snake and innocent as a dove

Spurgeon says, "*we are to be martyrs, not maniacs; we are to be simple-hearted, but we are not to be simpletons.*"

*So what will be the character of the follower of Jesus?*

1. Sheep in the midst of wolves

The world is a \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ place

Followers of Jesus are \_\_\_\_\_ to this evil

We must remember we are still \_\_\_\_\_

Charles Spurgeon says the only weapon of a followers of Jesus, "are that they are weaponless"

2. Wise as serpents

**Genesis 3:1 (KJV) Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?**

The serpent was shrewd, subtle  
**so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves**

But yet we must be \_\_\_\_\_

William Hendrickson wrote, *"the keenness here recommended...involves insight into the nature of one's surroundings...circumspection, sanctified common sense, wisdom to do the right thing at the right time and place and in the right manner, and a serious attempt always to discover the best means to achieve the highest goal."*

3. Innocent as doves

Not a moral purity which is understood but a

purity and \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

Straightforward and without \_\_\_\_\_

**John 1:47 (KJV) Jesus saw Nathanael\_ coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!**

A person of integrity

**Titus 1:7 (KJV) For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre.**

This is something we will not achieve in the flesh  
We must be "in" Christ, Christ must be in us,  
and we must be walking closely with Him  
The greatest task a man could endeavor to  
begin, the winning of souls, dictates that we  
take care as we go about our work

4. Walking this out in real time and life!

So how are we to pull this off?

**Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves"**

Pray, pray, pray!

If we want to do good

If we want to have even moderate success

If we want this innocence coupled with wisdom

If we want this

If we want discernment in every situation

What we want to do is to stay away from  
extremes

What we want to do is to stay balanced

**James 1:5 (ESV) If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.**

If we do this, if we pray without ceasing

We will not become cowards, who are not willing to speak and not willing to confront the lost  
We want to be on guard against a spirit of laziness and cowardice  
On the other side we don't want to create needless offense  
We don't want to needlessly stir up opposition  
**Ephesians 5:15 (ESV) Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise.**  
Surely we are for the most part sluggards when it comes to praying  
Especially when it comes to praying for knowledge, judgment, and a sound mind  
Let us pattern our lives after Him, let us be people of prayer and walk in His steps

### **Summary**

The truth of this text should be pondered by all who try to do good in the world

For the man with no interest in living for the Lord, working to advance His Kingdom through His church these verses will have little interest

To the ministers, to those who seek to win souls and to those who labor in the local church these verses ought to interest them

This was the time of the apostles but it applies to the work of advancing God's Kingdom even today

Are you willing to go?

Then you must be familiar with your surroundings and your "real" enemy

1. Where are you going?
2. So who are we to be?