**Sunday 25th June 2023 Matthew 10: 24-39**

***24****“The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master.****25****It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household!*

***26****“So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known.****27****What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs.****28****Do 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.****29****Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care.[*[*b*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+10&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23447b)*]****30****And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.****31****So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.*

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

***34****“Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.****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.’[*[*c*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+10&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23454c)*]*

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

**Notes**

In this passage Jesus talks about the difficulties we may face if we decide to follow him. He mentions being arrested and handed over to the authorities, being betrayed by family members and those we are close to. He says don’t be worried or frightened about such things, but instead warns us to be mindful of the one who can destroy us spiritually. He tells us our Father in heaven cares for tiny sparrows and assures us we are worth far more than them. Finally, he finishes with this remarkable phrase: “*Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it*.”

Which leads us to the question “what is life?”. What does Jesus mean when he talks about finding life, and more to the point what does he mean by losing it? He is surely talking about more than life and death itself in the medical sense, since we are already alive – yet He refers to us finding life.

Jesus is saying that anything we might value over and above following him will not lead to true contentment. One of the things – it is not the only one – that we might be tempted to pursue, or at least seek to retain what we have – is money. But Jesus says it’s not worth it. Instead, we should look to our spiritual values first. Recognize that as Christians we are called to a life of simplicity and generosity. That is where true contentment is to be found. Not in money. Not in possessions. Not in other things we might be tempted to value. Once we understand that deeply we find ourselves released to give away more freely what we have, and in doing so we find life.

**End**