

Proclaim on the Housetops Fourteenth Week in Ordinary Time Saturday, July 13,
2019 Gn49:29-32; 50:15-26a; **Mt 10:24-33** (It's a mission that's going to endanger
them, but they are not to be afraid.)

**“What I say to you in the darkness, speak in the light; what you hear whispered,
proclaim on the housetops.”**

This is chapter 10 of Matthew's Gospel, and it records the gathering storm. Earlier in this chapter **Jesus** has sent out his disciples two-by-two; he has called his apostles. But here there is indication that he **has failed to persuade the crowds**. They were fond of the bread, for example, but not of the words. They wanted their bodies fed, but not their souls. **And already there is indication that there is going to be persecution**. “Therefore do not be afraid of them.” He is warning his disciples that they are going to be in danger, but that nonetheless they should be ready.

As he now is going to instruct them privately, they will have to eventually share that private instruction because “Nothing is concealed that will not be revealed, nor secret that will not be known. So what I'm saying to you now in the darkness privately, you must speak in the light; what you now hear me whispering, you now have to proclaim on the housetops.” So this is their mission, and **it's a mission that's going to endanger them, but they are not to be afraid**. They are not to be afraid in spite of the obvious dangers. So he says, “Do not be afraid of one who can destroy only the body, but cannot kill the soul.”

Now this is something that most people misread because they don't understand **in the Bible there is no such thing as an immortal soul**. This idea is a philosophical idea adopted by most Christian theologians over the centuries, but not in the Bible. **In the Bible the soul is mortal**. It can be destroyed. It can be killed. And the image of Gehenna is the garbage dump outside Jerusalem; that's **Gehenna**, the Valley of *Hinnom*, *Hinnom* in Hebrew. The fires never go out because there is always more garbage. There is never any end to garbage. But it's **an image of the**

total destruction of the human person to be thrown out like garbage. And Jesus says that's what you ought to be afraid of. **You ought to be afraid of your capacity to completely waste your life away,** the only thing worth fearing. **But physical danger no, not at all. Why? Because the Father is aware of everything.**

Now is this a prediction of the resurrection? Not quite—not quite, but it is **a promise that those who follow in his footsteps will be cared for and will not suffer any kind of eternal loss.** It is a promise of that. “Everyone who acknowledges me before others, I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father.” He is truly the mediator. “But whoever denies me before others, I will deny before my heavenly Father.