

EXPECT TO BE CALLED FOUR-LETTER WORDS

Christ prepared His disciples by warning them of coming persecution. He tells them to expect it and how they should respond when experiencing it.

Matthew 10:24 (NKJV)

24 “A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master.

Christ is laying down a general principle here. A ***disciple*** is a “***learning follower***”. A disciple by definition is not above his teacher. The first prerequisite for a disciple is to have a “teachable heart”. A disciple is a follower, and that by nature means a true disciple is not above the teacher. A disciple assumes the position of a learning follower.

Nor is a servant above his master. More literally this reads “nor a ***slave*** above his ***lord***”. The word “lord” (Gk. “kurios”) means master. In both illustrations the disciple and the slave are in the subordinate position.

And then Christ makes this application...

Matthew 10:25 (NKJV)

25 It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household!

The goal of the disciple is to become like his teacher, and likewise the slave may seek to emulate his master. But the disciple does not expect to rise above his teacher and the slave does not expect to rise above his master.

And the point being made in context is that we as Christ’s disciples/slaves are never going to rise above Him. Christ therefore says...

“If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household!”

Christ is the Master of the house (the household of faith), and if they have called Him “Beelzebub,” how much more should we likewise expect this same type of treatment. We are not above it. We are not above what they did to Christ.

Christ is telling us that if they treated Him like this, we too, as His disciples/slaves, should likewise expect to be similarly mistreated. We are

not above our Lord. We are not above how they treated Him and in fact we should expect even worse treatment since we are below Him.

We saw back in Matthew 9:34 that the Pharisees said that Christ cast out demons by the ruler of demons, which would be Satan. In 12:24 the Pharisees again said that Christ cast out demons “**by Beelzebub, the ruler of demons.**” (cf. Mt. 12:27; Mk. 3:22; Lk. 11:15, 18-19).

Here in 10:25 Christ says that they have called Him “**Beelzebub**”. This title “Beelzebub” (or in older manuscripts “Beelzebul”) is slightly altered in form from “**Baal-Zebub,**” which was a deity of the Philistines, which literally means “**lord of the flies**” (cf. 2 Kg. 1:2-3, 6, 16).

The slightly altered form seems to have been done contemptuously because “**Beelzebub**” literally means “**lord of dung**”. Whether “**lord of the flies**” or “**lord of dung**”, it is clear that the Jews used this as a pejorative term in reference to Satan.

It is hard to imagine a more offensive term than to call the HOLY Messiah the god of dung. What Christ is saying is that we should not think we are above it. We should expect that those hostile to Christ will also label us in extremely offensive ways. This should not come as a surprise to us – after all, they called Jesus Beelzebub, meaning “the lord of the flies” or “the lord of dung” as an insulting term for Satan.

As Christ’s followers, we should not expect better treatment in a Christ-hating world. Depravity strikes out against biblical love and truth! We need to realize the truth of this as Christ’s followers! Therefore, we should not be surprised when people insult us in the most defaming of ways! It goes with the turf of being a “Christ-follower” (disciple).