

Sermon on the Mount Part XLIV - Addendum #1

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[0 : 00] Turn in your Bibles to the second letter of Timothy, and we'll be looking at chapter 3, verses 16 and 17.

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Well, for the 44th time, would you open your Bibles, please, to the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew chapter 5, 6, and 7 incorporates some of the greatest content ever penned by mortals whom God used as he inspired them to write the record.

These three chapters comprise probably the most famous of all of our Lord's sermons, ranks right up there with the Olivet Discourse, which has to do more or less with prophecy in Matthew 24 and 25.

And as has often been our case in the past, I need to get on the record up front a few propositions for you to consider before we actually engage the text.

[1 : 34] So let me just make note of a few items, if we may. I just call them propositions because I don't know what else to call them, but they will precede our actually getting into the text.

We have labored from the beginning, from the onset of considering the Sermon on the Mount, to distinguish between the Jewish people living under the law of Moses, both during Old and New Testament times, because a distinction must be made and maintained between Israel, who functioned under the law of Moses, and the Christian church that functions under the dispensation of the grace of God.

The law of Moses is where the Jew was at the time Jesus was here and taught. The dispensation of the grace of God is where the church now is.

It did not even exist during the time Christ was here for his three-year ministry, but did not come into being until the raising up of the Apostle Paul and special information that was completely apart from the law of Moses was given to Paul to give to the church.

And the result of that is the several epistles we find in the New Testament, written by Paul the Apostle, who, by the way, was raised up specifically to be the Apostle to the Gentiles.

[3 : 08] And Paul took the revelations that God gave him and wrote of them, and we have them as epistles or letters to these various churches.

It's very, very important to note this distinction. And when it is ignored, nothing but confusion will be the end product. Efforts to take things that are peculiarly Jewish, as instituted under the Mosaic law, and then to somehow try and Christianize them by transferring them into Christianity, should be avoided.

Jewish rituals employed in worship involving animal sacrifices, holy vessels, priestly ceremonial garb, feast days, new moons, Sabbath keeping, and several other like things should be left for the people and purpose God intended, namely Israel.

But let me inject here also, in reality, these things are no longer incumbent even upon Israel today. While there are Orthodox Jews, in particular the Hasidim, who think of themselves as functioning and operating under the law of Moses, they do not in actuality at all.

[4 : 30] In fact, they have long since given up animal sacrifice. And if you know anything about Judaism, that was a very core item in Judaism, was animal sacrifice.

But of course, that has gone by the wayside. And for all practical purposes, the Jewish people today, whether they are Hasidic, Orthodox, modern, or Reformed, they really are in a state of limbo. They are not under the law of Moses, because it has been rescinded as a result of the new covenant. And they are not members of the body of Christ. They are just, as I said, they are just in limbo.

They are as much out of it as is any unbelieving Gentile. Yet, within the pages of the Old Testament and the earlier portions of the New Testament, consisting of the four Gospels and at least one-third of the Acts of the Apostles, there are timeless truths communicated that have a moral bearing upon the people of God, whether Jewish or Christian.

These are cross-dispensational. They are morally and spiritually timeless. Thus, they are applicable to all who are in a relationship to God.

[5 : 53] And these abiding principles are to be implemented by all. And by the way, it's interesting that in our class this morning that was taught by video with Les Feldick, he was talking about this very issue, just coincidentally.

And he gave an excellent illustration, and I'm going to borrow it from him, because it is so apropos to what we are talking about now. In making a valid distinction between the Old Covenant and the operation of Israel under the law of Moses, and what we are under today in the dispensation of the grace of God, for it's been made very clear that we are not under law, we are under grace.

It's amazing how many Christians don't understand that. They don't even know what it means. And they are robbed of the blessing and benefit that they could have and enjoy, but it just escapes them because they just don't understand.

So what we are saying is that the Bible is a progressive movement, a progressive development of God revealing himself and his purpose and plan more and more as you go through the Bible.

When you look at Genesis, you have the very least that we know about just about anything.

Genesis is the very beginning, and there we get the revelation of God in a very elementary form, if you will.

[7 : 19] But as you move on through the Old Testament, more and more is revealed about God by God and his plan and program, his standards, values, his agenda, etc.

But it is gradually revealed. It isn't all plunked down in the book of Genesis. It develops throughout the Old Testament. Then when you get into the New, the development continues.

There is still a progression of revelation that is being given. And the Gospels, the four Gospels, represent a radical update to the Old Testament because all the Old Testament could talk about was the coming, the promise, the prophecy of a Redeemer.

And we know, of course, that will be the seed of Abraham, and it will be and was Jesus Christ. But when the New Testament opens, he's here. That's quite an update.

No longer is it just promise and prophesied. The Messiah is on the scene. And John, the baptizer, identifies him. But the upgrade continues on.

[8 : 27] And as you go through the Acts, the Gospels are updated with new information that wasn't available during the time of the four Gospels. And as you go into the Pauline epistles, you get more information that was an update from the book of Acts.

And you know, of course, where the ultimate update is. It's the book of the Revelation. That's the end of the story. That is redemption accomplished and applied.

That's when everything is wrapped up. So we've got a progression, a movement, a development, an unfolding from Genesis to Revelation.

And if you don't recognize that and try to make it all fit into the same mold, you've got real problems.

Because this won't fit with this, and this won't fit with that, and this is a contradiction to something.

Well, it's hopeless. And this is why many people say the Bible is so confusing, and I think it's got contradictions. Well, if you don't understand the progression of Revelation, you'll see contradictions.

[9 : 35] Because, for instance, with the animal sacrifice, who commanded that these animals be sacrificed anyway? God did. And I'm not going into his reasons and rationale for it, because we've studied that before.

But that was a demand. That wasn't a suggestion. God required those animal sacrifices. But today he doesn't. Why doesn't he?

Things have changed. God hasn't changed, but the plan and program has changed. And the illustration that Les Feldeck gave is, suppose you are making out a will.

And you sit down with your lawyer, and you tell your lawyer all that you want this relative or this person to receive, and you name them, and you put them in the will, etc.

And then you lock it away, and you're safe. And 15 or 20 years later, things have changed.

Situations have changed.

[10 : 34] People have changed. Some people may have even died who were in your will. So you know what you need to do? You need to upgrade your will. So you go back to your lawyer, and you say, I need to update my will.

Some of the things in the old one I want to remain, but other things I want to really change, because circumstances have changed. And you have a new will, and it's dated and signed, and everything is nice and legal, and they are put away in the strong box.

And by and by, you die. And it's time to get out the wills. There's two of them. Can you imagine trying?

Can you imagine the lawyer trying to work on the basis of responding to both of the wills? That would be maddening.

You wouldn't be able to do it. It would create all kinds of contradictions. In the first place, this person that he mentioned here, he wanted to have \$5,000. He's dead. So what are you going to do?

[11 : 35] You take the instrument, the document that was the latest recorded will. That's the valid one. That's the updated one.

And that's the one you go by. So where are we today? What is the updated will for us? It is that which applies to the gospel of the grace of God.

It is not the gospel of the kingdom. Now let me return to my prodigious propositions. In this present session, we will attempt and we will try to identify items in the Sermon on the Mount that do not apply to Christians today.

In the next session, we will extract from the Sermon on the Mount several items of moral value and see how they are always in vogue for application.

And we've made the point a number of times that everything in the Bible is for us, but not everything is to us. And that in and of itself is worthy of note.

[12 : 55] So before actually engaging the text, I must remind you of certain key features to be borne in mind while considering the Sermon on the Mount.

And here they are. First, since Jesus made it clear he did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it, he first had to explain that the demands under which the religious establishment had placed the people, the people of Israel, was in fact a distortion of the law that God gave by Moses.

That's what they were supposed to be operating by. And Jesus took them to task because of the way they had twisted and changed the law of Moses.

And it was, of course, tremendously confusing and discouraging to the people. Secondly, while the official establishment of Israel, the high priests, the chief priests, etc., scribes and Pharisees, while the official establishment made great efforts to reduce the law to pettiness, regulations, and rituals in their perverted way of honoring the law, Jesus cut through all their burdensome details by delivering his own meaning and interpretation of the law.

The religious establishment consistently obligated themselves to the strict letter of the law while Christ interpreted and applied the law from the spirit with which it was given and intended to be followed.

[14 : 33] Three, the establishment thought their attention to detail and nitpicking provided acceptance with God. But Jesus said, unless your righteousness, and here he was talking to the whole crowd, we don't know how many people there were that gathered there, but there could easily have been a few thousand who heard the message on the Sermon on the Mount.

And probably right up there in the front row, or at least strategically intermingled among the crowd, was the scribes and Pharisees and the chief priests. They always stood out like a sore thumb, because you could tell who they were just by the garments they wore.

You could see them coming a mile away. And what Jesus is saying as he addresses the whole multitude of these Jews is, addressing the body in general, he said, Unless your righteousness exceeds that, is better than, is more than, the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Now, that had to evoke a lot of concern and questions in the minds of the people. For the simple reason that the religious establishment was the be-all, end-all.

I mean, these were the people who were obviously right next door to God. They were so holy and so righteous and so connected with God. If anybody has an in with God, they do.

[16 : 00] That's the religious crowd. And Jesus makes the statement and says, Unless your righteousness exceeds theirs, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

People are thinking, good grief. If these guys aren't going to make it, what chance is there for us? That's the question that had to be floating about.

He is making a clear demarcation between the law as the scribes and Pharisees interpreted it and the law as it was intended to be interpreted by God.

And the difference was vast. In fact, they had interpreted it in such a way as to make it a burden to the people. They run themselves ragged trying to dot all the I's and cross all the T's and do this right and do that right.

The preciseness of this, the way you were supposed to wash your hands, all of the rest of that nonsense. They were all add-ons. They weren't in the law at all. And their philosophy was, if God requires three things of you, if we can somehow stretch that into six things, that'd be twice as good. [17:12] You know, more is better. But not always. And certainly not in cases like this. And they had actually obfuscated, confounded, confused, complicated the law of Moses so that these people were just in bondage.

And Christ came to cut through all of that nonsense, and he is doing it here in the Sermon on the Mount. The establishment, let me move on for time's sake.

The kingdom of heaven is the principal theme of the entire Bible, including both testaments. Did you get that? I don't know how else, maybe if I pound the pole.

The kingdom of heaven is the comprehensive issue of the whole Bible, Genesis, the Revelation.

The kingdom of heaven is the effect, it is the end result of the redemptive work of Christ. He came to fix a ruined world.

[18:19] And he did it through the shedding of his blood, which provided him the right to lift the Adamic curse. And once Israel is on track, the kingdom of heaven will come to earth.

That's the end game. That's where everything is headed. We are not now in the kingdom of heaven. Righteousness does not cover the earth as the waters cover the seas.

We've got tons of injustice and unrighteousness everywhere you look. Anybody who could labor under the assumption that we are now living in the kingdom of heaven just isn't looking around.

This isn't it. This isn't even close. This is a fallen world. It is full of sin, evil, injustice, heartache, and last of all, death.

But those will not be characteristics when the kingdom of heaven is established because Jesus Christ will establish it. And it will be the kingdom of heaven come to earth.

[19:27] It will be here on this planet. That's the end game. But I get ahead of myself. The kingdom of heaven is the goal of God to be accomplished by the Messiah.

The kingdom of heaven is to be brought to earth to restore it and renew it from the fallenness to which Adam and his sin has brought it. Moral and spiritual fallenness still holds the entire world captive to Satan, who has become the ruler of this world.

He is the prince of the power of the air. Christ came to undo the fallenness caused by Satan. But it must be done through the involvement and leadership of Christ and the nation of Israel.

And there's the rub. Christ has contributed his part. Israel has not. Because Israel's part consists in the beginning of embracing Christ and the part that he did.

But Israel as a nation has never done that. They still haven't done that. This is why they are in spiritual limbo now. They are neither fish nor fowl. They are not old. They are not new.

[20:44] They are just floating. They have no certain place where they can put the sole of their foot to rest. And that's because of their rejection of the Messiah.

It is because of the divine promises given to the fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which God has pledged to fulfill due to their unconditional nature.

Consequently, the phrase, the kingdom of heaven, is used repeatedly in the Sermon on the Mount. And it's not only in Matthew.

It's in all of the Gospels. John the Baptist came preaching the kingdom of heaven is at hand. What does that mean? What did they understand that to mean? I'm telling you, it was electric.

When the Jews heard John the Baptist preaching the kingdom of heaven is at hand, that was a major wow. That means that God is poised to make good on his promise to renew and restore the earth.

[21:48] The kingdom of heaven is right around the corner. And everything that is broken is going to be fixed. It's going to be wonderful. And those who identified with John in his message came to John's baptism and were baptized of him as a preparatory rite, getting ready for the establishment

of that kingdom.

But it didn't come. And it still hasn't come. And the Jew is still in limbo. Consequently, the phrase kingdom of heaven used repeatedly in the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere in the four Gospels is really the central issue.

The kingdom of heaven is not to be confused with the realm where God dwells when Christ refers to our Father who is in heaven.

Nor is it to be confused with the heaven to which Christians go upon death and we say they are absent from the body, present with the Lord. Well, where are they? They are in heaven, present with the Lord.

That's not the kingdom of heaven. That's heaven where Christ is. The kingdom of heaven is an earthly proposition. It's going to be right here on this planet. A refurbished, reformed, rejuvenated planet.

[23 : 03] Where Christ is now, that heaven is in the heavens while the kingdom of heaven is here on planet Earth.

And it is not now in existence. But it will be realized when Christ returns and establishes it. This time, it will be with the full cooperation of the nation of Israel.

They will not be a rebellious people like they were when Christ was here the first time. And one reason they won't be is because this will occur at the end of the time of Jacob's trouble.

That's another way of saying the time of the Jews' trouble. And the time of the Jews' trouble is going to be the tribulation. Oh, flipsis, said Christ.

The tribulation, the great one. Open season will be declared on Jews and they will be persecuted worldwide. We're seeing a tinge of that beginning right now.

[24 : 05] Especially in Europe. The last place where you should find anti-Semitism is in Europe. But that's where it's fomenting right now.

Interesting, isn't it? And when Christ returns, he will be returning for the explicit purpose of rescuing and delivering his people.

Israel will have their back to the wall. They will be right on the edge of extermination. There will be efforts to finish what Hitler began.

And they are surrounded by hostile neighbors who want that to come to pass. And just as Israel is on the brink of annihilation, Jesus Christ returns.

And Israel will look upon him whom they pierced. We're told in Zechariah. They will look upon him whom they pierced and they will mourn.

[25 : 16] They will mourn for the sins of their ancestors who rejected this lovely Messiah. And they will embrace him. And he will go forth and do battle for them.

And he will subsequently defeat and subjugate all of the enemies of Israel. These will be comprised of nations gathered throughout the world for an assault on Jerusalem.

The launching pad will be Armageddon. The plains of Israel and the Antichrist and all his horde will come down from the north. And Armageddon, Christ will come up from Basra.

And they will conflict before the city of Jerusalem. That's where the last great battle will take place. And Israel will then be where they are supposed to be.

All throughout the Sermon on the Mount, one contrast is made after another with phrases like Jesus saying, You have heard. You have heard.

[26 : 15] You have heard. And then he goes on and he quotes what it is that they have heard. And then he countermands it, contradicts it with a, But I say unto you, in other words, you have heard, but what you heard was wrong.

And I'm correcting it. And I say unto you. And those people are sitting there looking at each other and saying, You hear what he's saying? I mean, who is this guy?

Who does he think he is? God? Yes. Yes. That's why they were so taken with what he was saying. Because he made himself to be the authority. Nobody had ever spoken like that. But he did.

And he had the right to. Amazing. Who does he think he is? How dare he do such a thing? And this resulted in great controversy among the people.

[27 : 22] Wow. Now listen. Great questions and controversy among the people while awakening great embarrassment, resentment, and hatred from the entrenched religious establishment.

I think as you looked out there over that crowd and you saw those scribes and Pharisees and chief priests and all of their regalia that made them stand out from everybody else, I think you could see

the veins popping in their forehead and in their neck.

They were livid. And this man is criticizing us. He is suggesting that we have led the people astray. Well, they most certainly had. With impunity. And now he is calling them to question. Their efforts to eliminate Jesus would soon be getting underway.

And they would culminate in his arrest and trials and ultimate crucifixion. They could and did arrange for his death.

[28 : 37] But they could not arrange for him to stay dead. Could they? So let's go to the text. Matthew 5. I'm just going to glean through here.

We'll be looking at a number of things and be going rather rapidly. I just want to point out some things to you because I know that it does not suffice to say there are things in the Sermon on the Mount that you don't have to be concerned about or consider needing replicating.

And the logical question then is, well, what are they? So I'm just going to give you some examples, if you will. Look at chapter 5. And let's take verse 22.

Chapter 5 and verse 22. Here is a formula that Christ gives for dealing with delicate issues where people are in disagreement one with another.

And in verse 22, he says, well, we need to start with verse 21. You have heard that the ancients were told, you shall not commit murder, and whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.

[29 : 51] But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court, and whoever shall say to his brother, Raka, shall be guilty before the Supreme Court, and whosoever shall say you fool shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell.

Does that make much sense to you? Well, it doesn't to me either. But if you were a Jew living then when Jesus said those things, it would make a lot of sense because you not only understood what he said, but you had a culture into which you could fit it.

We don't. What is Raka? What is this court here that he's talking about? Well, we have courts too, but can we transfer that court into our court?

Is it the common pleas court or the superior court or what? None of this confutes. It's not intended to be carried over into a Gentile setting. This is a Jewish thing in a Jewish setting for Jewish people under the Jewish law.

We are not to try and take these things and somehow convert them to Christianity and make them applicable for us today. But that doesn't keep people from trying. Example is, for instance, the Sabbath.

[31 : 06] When is the Sabbath? The Sabbath starts Friday night, sundown, and it goes until Saturday night, sundown. The Sabbath is a Jewish institution.

It's one of the Ten Commandments. It was instituted by God. There were plenty of good divine reasons behind it. And they were required to observe the Sabbath and not do any work on that day, etc.

And so on. And that was for them. But what is our Sabbath? Here in the body of Christ today, what is our Sabbath?

Most Christians would say, well, this is it. Our Sabbath is Sunday. Well, the word Sabbath means seven. Sunday is not seven.

Sunday is the first day of the week. We don't have a Sabbath. The body of Christ never has had a Sabbath. We do not observe the Sabbath. We attend church on Sunday, not because the scriptures require that, because they don't.

[32 : 12] The scriptures only require not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together. It doesn't say do this every Sunday morning at 10 o'clock or 11 o'clock. And why do we do it? Tradition?

How do we get started in an 11 o'clock Sunday morning service? Started in Europe. By the time, you see, what they did, they tried to Christianize, they tried to upgrade the Old Testament Jewish economy, Christianize it, and make it applicable for Christians in that day.

So, and by the way, today, Roman Catholic popes are generally accused of changing the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday. And that really, historically, is not true, but they take the blame for it anyway.

We don't have a Sabbath. We never have had a Sabbath. And Paul addresses that in Romans chapter 14. He says, one man esteems one day above another. That's the Sabbath keeping. Another man esteems every day alike. Let everyone be fully persuaded in his own mind. And he said that because there were Jews and Gentiles functioning together, and they had real differences

of opinion regarding that.

[33 : 19] So, in that cultural setting and in that historical setting, there were all kinds of problems that surfaced that were very confusing to them.

And you know something? They still are. People are still mixed up about this. So, we have the Sunday. We call Sunday our Sabbath. And years ago, we established the blue laws.

I remember if you lived in Philadelphia, you couldn't watch the Philadelphia Athletics or the Philadelphia Phillies play baseball game on Sunday because that was the Sabbath. And it was a law in the city that professional baseball couldn't be playing.

Well, you see, this is all part and parcel of the same confusion. This just does not compute. And we try to make it because – and the efforts behind it are honorable because there are good people, sincere people, who really want to do the right thing and really want to please God.

And they look at these things, and it becomes very difficult, and they just don't know what to do with it. So, we end up with all kinds of confusion, and we end up with all kinds of denominational differences and distinctions as a result.

[34 : 29] Let's take another quickly. 538 through 42. You have heard that it was said, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

But I say to you, do not resist him who is evil. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. And whoever shall force you to go one mile, go with him too. Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you. You ready to do this?

I could, within probably ten minutes, send a dozen deadbeats to your front door who will hit you up for a loan.

Are you prepared to come through? Why not? Because you know better. You know that there are people who just scam you.

[35 : 34] What's the meaning of this? This is in a Jewish setting where these people functioned and operated under the Mosaic Law. And they held one another to it.

And they operated on the basis of its directives. And you cannot make this, you cannot baptize this Christian and make it that. So that we are under obligation to do this today.

This is for a set people in a set place at a set time. Not to be replicated by anybody else who reads it. In fact, there's a place here that, well, it's just while we're still here in this chapter.

Look at chapter 5 and verse 47. And if you greet your brothers only, what do you more than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Why does he plug them in there? Because he's trying to make a contrast. He's trying to show you that you, not you, but the you to whom he's speaking, that you as a Jew, you have certain obligations under the Law of Moses that Gentiles don't have.

[36 : 53] You see, he's making a very obvious legitimate distinction himself. When he contrasts the you, meaning, of course, children of Israel, with Gentiles, who are not children of Israel.

They are pagans. And he's chiding them for saying, the Gentiles carry on like this. You're not to be like them. You are to be the special people. And then verse 7 of chapter 6.

Oh, my. This one is one that, when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetitions as the Gentiles do.

What did the Gentiles do? How did they pray? They prayed memorized prayers where they just recited them over and over and over again. And they would develop phylacteries or beads.

And some, well, this was more true of the Hindus, they would devise a prayer wheel. And you say your prayer on this little wheel. You spin the wheel.

[37 : 55] And however many times the wheel spins, that's how many times you get credit for praying. Isn't that neat? You see, this is just nonsensical stuff.

And Jesus said, don't use repetitious prayers where you pray, where you just wrote, memorized something, and pray the same thing over and over and over and over again.

And that's exactly what we do. Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. And there are churches that would not complete their service if they didn't say the Lord's Prayer.

They would expect the roof to fall in or something. You've got to have that in every service. You are Christian, aren't you? And yet, could anything be clear that we are not to do this?

This is not the Lord's Prayer. This is a model prayer that Christ gave the disciples when they asked him, teach us to pray.

[38 : 55] And he is saying, okay, fellas, how about something like this? And he offers this as a model, as a suggested prayer. The verse right before says, don't do this over and over and over again.

And yet, if you talk to most Christians in most churches today, they would consider you an awful, evil, blasphemous person to criticize their saying the Lord's Prayer over and over and over again. It's as automatic as... In chapter 8, I'm sorry, chapter 6 and verse 10. Part of this prayer is prayer for the kingdom to come.

What kingdom is he talking about? He's talking about the kingdom we were mentioning earlier, the kingdom of heaven coming to earth. Their prayer was for it to happen, for it to come. And we know, of course, it still hasn't come.

And are we to pray for the kingdom of heaven coming to earth? Is that the essence of our prayer? No, no, not really. We're certainly not opposed to that. And we are admonished to pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

[40 : 03] And they could certainly use it. But our prayer, our principal prayer, is not whatever you ask in my name, that I will do. That was something that Christ gave to his disciples.

He was talking to them personally. He wasn't talking to you. He wasn't talking to me. What is for me and for you is the principle that is given under inspiration by Paul in Philippians 4.6.

That be anxious for nothing, but in everything, with prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God will garrison your hearts about. Keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

That's to be our attitude in prayer today. It isn't give me prayers. It isn't prayer for miracles and all kinds of things like that. That was under the Jewish dispensation because the Jew seeks after a sign.

We are not to demand signs. We are to walk by faith, not by sight. And walking by faith simply means we believe on the basis of what God has told us. I don't think I'm going to get through this.

[41 : 17] I know you're shocked. I don't think I'm going to get through this. I know you're shocked. I do want to cut this at the right place, though.

Chapter 6 and verse 30. I'll be as quick as I can. Verse 28. And why are you anxious about clothing? Now, ladies, I want you to listen to this.

Why are you anxious about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow. They do not toil, nor do they spin. Yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory did not clothe himself like one of these.

If God so raised the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more do for you so you don't need to go to Kohl's or Macy's next week to look for a new outfit?

And all the men said, in all seriousness, this has got nothing to do with us.

[42 : 18] This is in connection with God's provision and care for his covenant people in a special place at a special time. In the same way that when they wandered in the wilderness for 40 years, 40 years in the wilderness, their sandals didn't wear out.

That was a supernatural provision by God. How many pair of sandals do you think you could go through in 40 years walking out there in the desert? And God preserved their sandals.

That was because they were a special covenant people in a special relationship with God for a special place in a special time. And we don't fit that bill. That is not us.

It never has been us. And then look at verse 32. For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek. And what he's doing is reminding them, you are not Gentiles. Don't you let the things that upset Gentiles and concern Gentiles invade your peace and prosperity.

[43 : 27] You have a different connection with me that Gentiles don't have. Well, I'm not finished, but I've got to quit.

I want to make a clear break as possible between this and next week's message, which has to do with what are these things in the Sermon on the Mount that are ours?

And we are to extract them and build them into our life. And I think you'll be able to see the logic and the rationale for it and also the importance, because there are some beautiful, beautiful things. They are principles. I call them abiding principles because they are applicable no matter when you confront them or where you confront them. They are valid and they are for us today. And we'll delve into that next week.

And there are probably six or eight. And with this background material out of the way, we'll be able to get right at it next week. So would you pray with me, please? Father, once again, we marvel at your word and the way that it's put together.

[44 : 36] And our heart's prayer is that people will simply recognize how it is put together and why it is as it is. And why we don't offer animal sacrifices and why we don't keep the Sabbath and why these differences and understanding them really matter.

We want to be obedient to everything that we're supposed to be obedient to. And we want to be able to disregard things that are not applicable for us, but that would simply weigh down the soul with minutia and details and pettiness.

We want nothing to do with that. We want to focus on what you want us to focus on. And we recognize that even with what we have shared this morning, our understanding, my understanding, is still really inadequate.

Because the nature of your word is such that it is inexhaustible in its depth. Yet, we are responsible to get from it what we can.

And we are so pleased for what you are willing to reveal. Most of all, we thank you for a loving Savior who is at the center of all of this, whether it's Jewish or Gentile.

[46 : 02] Christ came to do for us what we could not do for ourselves. And we're so glad he did.

We want to maximize our salvation, enjoy it, appreciate it, and be obedient to it to the extent that we can.

Thank you for all your love and grace showered upon us. We commit further understanding of this passage to you in Christ's wonderful name. Amen.