

# Sermon on the Mount Part XIX

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[ 0 : 00 ] Let's go to Matthew chapter 5, where we intend to spend our 19th message on the Sermon on the Mount.

And we will conclude chapter 5. We still have a couple of chapters to go. It goes through chapter 7. Great content.

And I would like you to follow along as I read, beginning with this last and most difficult of all of the requirements that are set forth in the Sermon on the Mount.

It starts with verse 43. This has got to be the toughest one of all. You have heard that it was said, you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.

But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, in order that you may be the sons of your Father who is in heaven.

[ 1 : 00 ] For he causes his Son to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you?

Do not even the tax gatherers do the same? And if you greet your brothers only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?

Therefore, you are to be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect. Now, the need for us to love our neighbors and to love our enemies as we love ourselves is bad enough.

But to add to it in verse 48, you are to be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect. That ought to bring us to despair, and I suspect that in thinking minds it would do that.

So, whatever in the world does that mean? God knows that we are imperfect. At least he knows we are morally imperfect. And it doesn't make any difference how saintly a believer is.

[ 2 : 03 ] He still has areas of taintedness with sin in him, and I think this is true of the holiest of all. So, this is one more reason why I say that the Sermon on the Mount is certainly one of the most misunderstood passages of Scripture in all of the Bible.

And indeed it is. So, today we intend to conclude Matthew 5 and take one last look at this most demanding of the six areas that Christ addressed.

It is the law of love. And it is humanly impossible. And here is why it is. All of the Sermon on the Mount is provided by Christ against the backdrop of the law of Moses given by God in the Torah. The Torah is simply the Jewish name for the five books of Moses, Genesis through Deuteronomy. Both the Sermon on the Mount and the Torah ought to bring any honest thinking person to utter despair.

I cannot do this. And if we are honest with ourselves, that's the only conclusion that we can reach. I can't do this. This is too high for me.

[ 3 : 23 ] I cannot attain unto this. So, despite the response of the children of Israel, fresh out of Egypt, when Moses presented them with the law, and they said, All that the Lord has said, we will do.

Remember, when he came down from the mountain and said, This is what God told me to tell you. What do you think of it? And the children of Israel responded to the law that Moses read them, and they said, All that the Lord has said, we will do.

In other words, yeah, we can do that. We can do that. They couldn't. And they didn't. And neither can you. And I know I can't.

This brings us to the question then. Well then, why give the people a law they clearly would not and could not keep? It was never a case that the law was given so that those who kept it would receive eternal life for doing so.

Paul tells us in Romans 3.20, By the works of the law, no flesh shall be justified in his sight. For through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

[ 4 : 37 ] That's Romans 3.20. And right here is where a great deal of confusion arises, even among those who know the Lord. There is confusion as regards the purpose of the law.

And for people who are on the outside and not believers, they are locked into the mode of thinking that responds to the performance base, the performance system.

And they think that you live by the Ten Commandments, you keep the law, and God will reward you with heaven, and blah, blah, blah. And the lawbreakers don't, but everybody keeps the law, and so on.

It's just mass confusion. So why give the law? We are told that the law is perfect, holy, and just. The law is a reflection of the character and nature of God.

God is perfect. The law God gave is perfect. The law is a picture of true righteousness. The law, and I'm talking about the law of Moses encompassed in all five of the books.

[ 5 : 43 ] The law was designed to reflect not only the character of God, but the character of man. Man was fallen, weak through his flesh, which resulted from his fallenness.

Romans 8 says, For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God did, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin.

He condemned sin in the flesh in order that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

Now this is fantastic stuff. This is incredible. It means because Christ fulfilled the law perfectly. Even as he said, I have not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill the law.

That means there was no area of the law that Christ violated. He kept the law perfectly. And he's the only one who ever did. That means that if you are in Christ, spiritually united with him, you are in union with him through the new birth, through the regeneration of your internal spirit.

[ 7 : 14 ] Being in Christ means all that he accomplished, you accomplished. He kept the law perfectly. You kept the law perfectly. Well, we all know that we didn't.

But positionally you did. Because it means everything that accrued to the life of Christ and the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ accrued to you.

It's just as if all of these things were true of you. You were on the cross with him. You died for sin with him. You were buried with him. You were raised in newness of life with him. You were seated with him in the heavenlies.

That's God's viewpoint. That's your positional truth. We all know we're still here on planet earth. We're still flawed, failing human beings. We still do stupid things that get us into all kinds of trouble. We still embarrass the Lord by our behavior sometimes. That's our practical righteousness, which is definitely lacking. So, Christ condemns sin in the flesh in order that the requirement of the law...

[ 8 : 12 ] What's the requirement of the law? Perfect compliance. So that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.

So Christ fulfilled the law perfectly, and all who are in Christ are also fulfillers of the law perfectly. This is called imputed righteousness. It isn't earned.

It isn't deserved. It is given as a gift. The law and man's sin are the problem. Christ is the solution and the only solution.

Until Christ came, Israel had only the animal sacrifices for dealing with their sin. So they sacrificed the animals, and that covered their sin.

But then they sinned again. Now what are you going to do? Another animal. But then they sinned again. Then what are you going to do? Another animal. This went on for hundreds and hundreds of years. The whole sacrificial system was designed to keep man connected with God or reconnecting with God by faith in the righteousness of God being willing to accept an innocent substitutionary animal on behalf of the one who sinned.

[ 9 : 31 ] And each time the animal was sacrificed, the picture that was actually displayed is, this is what you deserve. This is what you have coming.

This animal who is innocent is dying where you ought to be dying, is paying a price that you ought to be paying, is giving up its life that you ought to be giving up.

That's the principle of substitution. That's what Christianity is all built upon. It is the innocent dying for the guilty. Christianity, that is not justice.

That is grace. That is what makes it so radically different. Out of all of the faiths in the world, out of all of the faiths in the world, and I'm talking about Buddhism, Hinduism, Shintoism, Islam, all of the faiths, biblical Christianity is the only one that operates on the basis of grace.

It's amazing. Yes, it is, isn't it? It is, it is amazing grace. So until Christ came, Israel had only the animal sacrifices for dealing with their sin.

[ 10 : 44 ] And they didn't actually take it away. They covered it. They covered it. But you know, it'd pop up again. Another animal, it'd pop up again. And how long are we going to have to do this?

You're going to have to do this until the one final, ultimate sacrifice is made that will put an end to all sacrifices. And we know that, of course, to be the person of Christ.

God knew full well that man would never be able to keep any law that reflected his own, that is, God's character. So he built into the law the principle of expiation, the sacrifice of the innocent for the guilty, so as to atone for human sin.

The law could not give life. It could only reveal sin. We are told in Romans 3, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

But the law can't do anything about it. It just condemns, condemns, condemns. It's guilty, guilty, guilty. But it can't take away the guilt. It just shows you that the offense is there and the penalty is due.

[ 11 : 53 ] The law condemns and brings man under guilt. Christ sets us free from the law of sin and death, and no one else can do this, and no one else ever claimed to do this.

The Sermon on the Mount is given in Matthew 5 through 7 against this backdrop, and it is as demanding as the law of Moses.

It too, that is, the Sermon on the Mount, it too, should lead every honest man to read the Sermon on the Mount and say, I can't do this.

I can't do this. And you can't. You can't keep the law perfectly. You can't observe the Sermon on the Mount perfectly. And people who say things like, I live by the Sermon on the Mount, they have no idea what they're saying, or how far afield they are.

So, this leads the Jew, to whom the Sermon on the Mount was given, in Matthew 5, to fall back on the sacrifices to cover his shortcomings.

[ 13 : 05 ] Ultimately, the law, we are told in Galatians, the law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. That is, the law is a teacher.

The law is designed to tell you, you fail here, you fail here, you fail here, you fall down here, you fumble the ball here, you really screw up things here. And the law shows you all of this, and it is designed to bring you up short, to make you acknowledge your lack of holiness and righteousness. And then Paul says, the law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. We come to Christ by way of despair. We come to Christ because we know there is no help and no hope for us when it comes to being righteous because we just aren't.

We are unrighteous in word and thought and deed. And that is designed, that law, because the violation of the law produces guilt.

Guilt arises from violating a known standard that produces guilt, an uneasy feeling within. And where can I go to get rid of this?

[ 14 : 20 ] How can I get rid of my guilt? And the only way we can rid ourselves of guilt is by having it taken away. And that's the great distinction between the blood of animals that just covered sin and behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.

Removes it as far as the east is from the west. They are sought for and not found. They are behind his back. They are buried in the deepest sea.

All of these things God has done with our sin just because of Christ. So, the law is the knowledge of sin and Christ is the remedy for it.

To the ancient Jew, the law was the schoolmaster, Paul says, to provide an animal sacrifice. In other words, guilt needs to be addressed.

How are you going to handle this guilt? guilt. And the wages of sin is death. Somebody has to die. And if you don't die, then something's got to die in your place because without the shedding of blood, there is no remission.

[ 15 : 39 ] You couldn't bring gifts of gold and silver. It's got to be blood because blood represents the essence of life. We even talk about life's blood.

If you don't have any, you're dead. But the blood of animals was never sufficient to really take away sin.

It took the blood of Christ to do that. The scribes and Pharisees readily understood all of the potential for failure in keeping of the law. So, they came up with all kinds of loopholes through which

to escape the demands of the law and then nitpicky details to obfuscate the law and complicate it even further.

Christ, in the Sermon on the Mount, laid down the law about the law. And actually, what Jesus is telling them is the law is even more demanding than you have made it, he implies.

You have heard thus and so. But, I say unto you, you have heard you shall not commit adultery. But I say unto you that a man who looks on a woman with lust in his heart to commit adultery has already committed adultery.

[16:56] Well, how so? He's already committed adultery as far as God is concerned. Because God reads the mind and the heart and he knows the desire and what's there.

As far as God is concerned, you've already blown it. Now, the Pharisees would interpret this to mean, well, not unless you actually do it physically.

And that's the way we tend to interpret things today too. Because we don't see that the real problem lies in the human heart. because it is out of the heart that actions proceed.

You see, the heart reflects an attitude. The heart is the interior indicator of who and what we really are and then we act out what is within.

And we speak out what is in. Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. So, Jesus is addressing the core issue and he's saying, look, your real problem isn't the physical act of adultery, it is the attitude and the condition of the heart that leads to the real act.

[18:13] So, where does this thing need to be stopped? It needs to be addressed in the heart because if it's addressed in the heart, then the outward action will be acceptable.

And this was the real problem. The scribes and Pharisees have it all wrong and he revealed their errors in the six categories regarding murder, adultery, divorce, taking of oaths, retaliation, and love, the last one and the most difficult of all.

The scribes and Pharisees interpret, their interpretation of these six critical areas was woefully inadequate which led to a phony righteousness.

And that's why Christ said what he did in the key verse that actually illuminates all of the Sermon on the Mount in 520 when Jesus said, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

I don't want to stop here and get bogged down but I have to insert this phrase. When he talks about inheriting the kingdom of heaven, he's not talking about going to heaven when you die as a believer and be present with the Lord.

[19:27] He's talking about that which is going to be established here on the planet, the kingdom of heaven, the millennial reign of Christ which is entirely different. And then, having explained that about the righteousness of the Pharisees and scribes being inadequate, then the coup de grace to the whole thing is the law of love.

Love your neighbor as yourself. Who can do that? It's just not natural. And it would be bad enough to say, love your neighbor as yourself.

That's tough enough. But he doesn't stop there. Love your enemy. Oh, good grief. Isn't the name of the game you kill them?

Especially if you go to war with them, you kill them. After all, if they are your enemies and you are such an incredibly wonderful person, anyone who could be an enemy of yours probably doesn't deserve to live because you're so wonderful.

Right? And then he says, another area of confusion. Let's look at that text if we may.

[20:56] Verse 44. Love your enemies. Pray for those who persecute you. You know, people who persecute you, and we don't know much about persecution here in this country as yet, but the temperature is climbing and Christians are being marginalized more and more, ridiculed more and more, put into difficult circumstances more and more, and it is coming.

And we are supposed to pray for those who do this. And we, are we not tempted to pray those imprecatory prayers that David prayed regarding his enemies?

Lord, break their teeth. Smash them in the mouth. Stomp on them like insects. These are imprecatory psalms.

And really, all David is doing in those psalms is claiming what God promised when he said regarding the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, I will bless those who bless you and I will curse those who curse you.

I tell you, if you've been cursed by God, you are cursed. And that was the lot of many of those who opposed Israel as the seed of Abraham. And all David was doing was calling in God's markers and saying, okay, God, do what you said you would do.

[ 22 : 30 ] Smash them. Break their teeth. That's an imprecatory psalm. But you know what? We are not Israel. And we do not have the liberty to pray like that. And if you are to love these people, love your enemies, the best way to really get to them is to make them your friend.

That would be their just desert, wouldn't it? To be a friend of yours. Is that a way of getting even or well? We don't tend to think of it that way. But that's exactly what, you know, when people offend us and hurt us and wrong us.

Natural tendency is to retaliate, to be resentful, to want to get even. And that too is just part of our fallenness. That's just the way we are.

We would say, that's natural. That's natural. And it is. But what Christ is calling for here is something that is supernatural. We are to be characterized by an entirely different mindset and attitude.

we are to actually love these people. And don't forget the definition of love. Biblical love means you do and say the loving thing to that person whether you feel like it or not, whether you think they deserve it or not.

[ 24 : 02 ] That's what real love is. When you are more concerned about the object of your love than you are yourself. And this is tough.

This is really tough. And Christ goes on to acknowledge that when he says something like, you know, is it difficult to love the lovable?

Of course not. Some people are just so nice they are easy to love, easy to be around. You don't think of having to tolerate them or put up with them.

You enjoy their company. you love these people. Well, who wouldn't? Anybody can love someone like that. But Christ is talking about loving your enemies, those who spitefully use you.

Those who are out to get you. Those who are out to do you in. This is a crowning thing that is supposed to characterize the body of Christ.

[ 25 : 05 ] But so often we just get lost in the mix and we come across like everybody else. Dog eat dog. Payback for payback. Don't get mad. Get even. You know, that's, unfortunately, that's where even most Christians are today because we have so bought into the culture and its attitudes.

We don't want to stand out from them. We want to be like them. We want to fit in. And we're supposed to stand out. And he says in order, verse 45, that we are to do this.

Pray for those who persecute you in order that you may be sons of your father who is in heaven.

Now, that almost sounds like that we're talking about some kind of a performance-based arrangement that if you want to be a son of God, if you want to be a child of God, the way to becoming God's child is to love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

in order that, or so that you may be the sons of your father who is in heaven. That sounds like a works routine, doesn't it? That God will attribute points to your account if you love your enemies. And once you score enough points, you're in. And this is the way the world thinks. But this is not what the text is saying at all. I know it implies that. And that's part of the problem of the confusion that surrounds it.

[ 26 : 36 ] But let me give you another translation here. This is from, let's see, who is this? This is from the basic English translation. Oh, no, I'm sorry.

It's from Goodspeed's translation. And it is far to be preferred. The King James says that you may, or in order that, as a purpose clause, in order that you may be the children of your father which is in heaven.

And Goodspeed's translation says, so that you may show yourselves true sons of your father in heaven.

So we are not to do these things in order to become, but we are to do these things in order to reveal or display our relationship with God.

So that they will be able to see our good works, including the way we treat our enemies and those who persecute us. You know, you know, people, people who are willing and desirous of persecuting God's people are really to be pitied.

[ 27 : 49 ] You know that? These people are really so out of step and out of sync with the Almighty, they have no idea how blinded and far away they are.

We need to pity these people, not return evil for evil. We need to be mindful, but for the grace of God, there go we. Those who will bring themselves to the extent injuring, persecuting, or even killing, are the most blind and pitiful of all.

They are people who desperately need real genuine love. And I'm satisfied that this is something that Stephen displayed when the Sanhedrin stoned him to death.

And Stephen, right before he breathed his last, cried out, Oh, God, do not lay this sin to their charge.

Dying man, just like his Lord on the cross, Father, forgive them. They know not what they do. Gross ignorance, and when Paul persecuted the church, he said, I did it ignorantly and in unbelief.

[ 29 : 25 ] And I don't think he could ever get out of his mind Stephen crying out to God, asking God not to hold those who were stoning him accountable for their sin.

Let me tell you something. That had to make an enormous impression on Saul of Tarsus. Can you believe this guy? Can you believe Jesus on that cross saying, Father, forgive them what they were doing to him, what they put him through, and he asked that they be forgiven?

What love is this? I don't think people could erase that from their mind. And when Christians demonstrate that kind of an attitude, that is what love really is.

Love is best exhibited in loving the unlovable. loving the undeserving, loving the unworthy. Anybody can love the other kind of people.

This is what tough love really is. When you are caring and concerned more for the object of your love than you are for yourself, that's the only way you can say, Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.

[ 30 : 37 ] Not only that, but people who ill treat us. And we all get shabby treatment from now and time and again. Different places, in the workplace, in the neighborhood, at school, wherever, in the family.

But how often do we ever stop to ask ourselves, you know, I wonder what this person has on their plate that makes them act like this or makes them treat me in this way.

I wonder what they've been dealing with. I wonder what they've been subjected to that has made them into the censorious and persecuting and griping and complaining and ridiculing person that they are.

What kind of issues have they had to deal with? I wonder who has wronged them in the past that has made them so bitter and invective and willing to persecute others.

there's a lot of truth to the expression that hurt people hurt people. We've seen that demonstrated so many times.

[ 31 : 50 ] And when he is calling them to this kind of supernatural love, it is the way that God loves.

And let me just share with you with these few verses that are left in chapter 5, because the key is in the context, it always is.

And when Christ caps this chapter off with verse 48 saying, therefore, that is, in light of everything I've said, that's what the therefore means, in light of everything I've said up to this point, here is my conclusion.

You are to be perfect as your heavenly father is perfect. Well, how does the heavenly father show his perfection in this case? It's in the context.

Verse 45, For he, the father, causes his son to rise on the evil and the good.

[ 32 : 54 ] Not just the good. I'm not sure that I would have any trouble voting for let the sun rise just on the righteous and the good and let the others stay in darkness.

Well, matter of fact, they are in darkness anyway, but it's spiritual darkness. But the benevolence of God is such that God not only loves, he loves across the board, so that even the evil get the benefit of God's love.

Even the utterly, totally undeserving get the benefit of God's love, love, in that they too can drink in the sunshine. Not just the good folk, but the bad folk, the unrighteous folk, the dirty folk, the vile folk. You know what? God still lets his sun shine on them as well, doesn't he? And sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

This is God's love across the board. God not only loves the righteous, he loves the unrighteous. In fact, he loves the unrighteous so much that he made it possible for the unrighteous to become righteous through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

[ 34 : 13 ] This is incredible. This perfection means, the word in the Greek is telos, and it means mature or complete.

complete. I like that word complete. It has the idea of coming to fruition, completion, the end game. And this is where we are to be like God, and the illustration that is given is what God does through sunshine and rain, even for unbelievers.

God loves them too and provides for them too. Ergo, we are to be like our heavenly father. We are to love those who hate us and persecute us.

That's a tall order. You better believe it's a tall order. Most of us don't have too much practice at doing this, but this is one of the things. This is what is supposed to make us stand out in bold relief and cause the world to sit up and say, wow, what is it with that person?

Do you see how he treated him? After what he did to him, did you see what he, what makes that guy tick anyway? Where is he coming?

[ 35 : 26 ] How can he do that? Doesn't he know what they said about him or what they did to him? And you see what he responds with? That's not, that's not normal.

No, it isn't. So, whoever said Christians are supposed to be normal? We aren't supposed to be normal. One of my favorite messages delivered years ago by Paul Harvey was, when you are average, you shouldn't want to be average.

Average means you are the lousiest of the best, and the best of the lousiest. Who wants to be average? We are called to be supernatural.

That's what God inside us is supposed to be. realizing as we live our life. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Are we putting on that kind of a show? So that people are sitting up and taking notice? That's supposed to be the norm. I think it was Vance Habner who years ago said the average Christian life is so subnormal that if it ever became normal people would think he was abnormal.

[ 36 : 54 ] That's pretty descriptive. We are too ho-hum. We fit right in too well with the majority and we don't stand out like we should. And this is one of the ways that we're supposed to stand out.

Now we can't do this. I made that clear at the beginning. we can't do this. We can't do this. That's human effort. But the Spirit of God can do that and he wants us to cooperate.

He wants to enable us to do this. This is what Paul meant when he said I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless I live. Yet not I but Christ lives in me.

And the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faithfulness of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. This is supposed to be the Christian norm.

It is a glorious thing. Someone has said all the church needs to do is just be the church. And that would be enough.

[ 38 : 00 ] We know the church is in the world and it's supposed to be. But when the world is in the church it's not supposed to be. And if the world is in the church then the church will be just like the world.

No different. Maybe that's one of the reasons that we're suffering some of the things that we are today in Christianity is because our light has become so dim.

Well I promised you some time for Q&A; and I'm not finished but I quit. And when we come back two weeks from the day we'll undertake chapter 6 and chapter 6 begins with another very enigmatic expressions that causes a lot of confusion and it's do not judge.

What does that mean? Do not judge. So we'll look at that in our next time together. Okay. Questions or comments about whatever. Anyone?

Anyone? Anyone? All right. Shelly up here in front, Scott. She's got the mic.

[ 39 : 20 ] Okay. Thank you. You know that I was a Mormon. I don't want to do this. No, you didn't have to get up but you can if you want. I wanted you to get the mic up to your...

You know I was a Mormon for 35 years and their basic requirement was to be perfect as your father in heaven is perfect and that's what they strove for constantly.

They didn't believe in grace. They believed in works and to be perfect and that was my downfall. I couldn't be perfect. Yeah. Welcome to the club dear.

Yeah. But you know what? This works thing is so ingrained into the heart of fallen man and his warped intellect that he just can't get beyond it and it takes spiritual enlightenment to do it because when Paul said something like you are not under law but under grace, that's just wow.

That is really something. Christianity is the only grace-based faith there is. It's the only one that says you can't do it. God knows you can't do it and he graciously made provision for you so he won't count it against you.

[ 40 : 40 ] He's got a wonderful plus to add to your inability and that is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Marvelous. Other comments or questions? Thank you, Shelley. Up here, Loretta has one.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. What about the people from other religions from other countries that are trying that want to kill us, want to destroy us, and that is their goal? Their goal. How do we love those people? Well, the only way we can love them is by praying for them and by kindly entreating them when we have opportunity to do so.

These people are seriously to be pitied. They are blinded. And 2 Corinthians 4, a very key passage says, if our gospel be hid, it is hid to those who are lost, whose minds, whose thinking process, an ability to reason, is blinded by the God of this age, so that the glorious gospel of Christ does not shine unto them.

Satan, the prince and power of the air, is busily engaged, walking the earth, Peter tells us, like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. And his principal tools are deception and deceit.

[ 42 : 22 ] and he keeps people from seeing the truth and from hearing the truth. And when they attack, like a Muslim attack has happened and the destroying of the twin towers and all that, how do you love those people?

You love them by doing the right thing. And you do the right thing when you defend yourself. And as I pointed out before, this passage, the Sermon on the Mount, does not have national implications. This isn't God's advice to the United States of America and how we should try to treat those countries that want to destroy us. That's an entirely different thing. He is talking here on a person-to-person basis.

He's talking about individuals within a family or within a community and how we are to relate. This has no bearing at all on nations going to war against another nation, in order to defend themselves like we did in World War II or World War I or whatever.

That's an entirely different thing. Other comments or questions? Well, thank you for your patience.

[ 43 : 41 ] I think I can safely say that when we get into Chapter 6, we will cover 6 and 7 much more rapidly than we have, but we had to deal with those six really important pertinent areas.

chapters 6 and 7 will move along much more quickly and we'll be through it before you know it and then we'll be on to some other new material. So would you stand with me please?

Father, we are really grateful for how all of Scripture is connected with all of Scripture and we recognize that we all, certainly myself included, have blind spots when it comes to understanding the record, but you know our heart and you know our desire to know it aright and to teach it aright and yet we recognize that in connection with our flaws, we often overlook truth that is there or fail to bring it out.

And we pray today that if anything has been uttered from this pulpit, that is not sanctioned by you, that it would come to naught and pass away.

People won't even remember it. But whatever has been uttered that is of your doing and in keeping with your standards and your righteousness, we pray that you will take that and seal it to our hearts so that we will remember it the rest of our life.

[ 45 : 15 ] Thank you for these gracious people and for their receptivity to the word and we pray that it may increase and abound. Thank you most of all for that unspeakable gift that was provided for us poor flawed sinners in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We bless you for him in his wonderful name. Amen. Amen.