

1Tim 24-02-21b

We're ready to pick up our study now. We are looking at the practical outworking of Paul's gospel in our lives. The unique features of that gospel.

The first element of the mystery is the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ and of many attacks. He didn't really die. He wasn't really raised.

He wasn't really the son of God. There's any number, I'm just choosing one that seems to me most pertinent for our practical application. Judgment seat of Christ is not gonna be a theology test.

What was the *posi non peccary* and *non posi peccary* aspect of the incarnation? Not gonna be on the test. What is gonna be on the test is, did we represent the Lord Jesus Christ as his body acting, functioning, deciding, endeavoring to be a blessing in the way that he acted and decided and blessed those in his periphery in the days of his incarnation. We are to live as he lived.

And this, when I emphasize the gospel of Paul, it is not to in any way diminish or exclude the witness of the gospels to the Lord Jesus any more than the New Testament ought to be emphasized over the old. All scripture is God breathed. All scripture is profitable for doctrine to reprove us, to correct us and to instruct us in righteousness.

Wonderful, the most fruitful studies I've ever done come out of the gospels in my own life. The parables, the miracles, the example of the Lord Jesus, incomparably great. It's never better than looking directly at the Lord Jesus through those four perspectives.

However, our mission in representing the Lord Jesus as his body in this life is detailed and emphasized in the mystery as it was revealed by the apostle Paul at the Lord Jesus' direct ordination, direct command. So what does it mean? And we're looking at this idea that Jesus was a friend of sinners. And as it says in Galatians 1, 6 through 9, Paul says, I am astonished.

I am shocked that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ. Now, who is him who called you in the grace of Christ? It's the father. We are called to God, the father.

So I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the father who called you in the grace of Christ. God, the father determined that those who come to faith in this age are going to be body of Christ, a gift from God, the father to his son, pictured as a bride in Ephesians, the body, the bride that Christ gave himself for specifically and are turning to a different gospel. Again, I'm quoting Galatians 1, 6 through 9. I'm shocked you're deserting the father who called you in the grace of Christ.

Not the God that called Israel in the Old Testament. The father calls us in the grace of

Christ in this age. And you're turning to a different gospel.

Not that there is a different gospel, there's not. But there are some who trouble you and want to distort the good news of Christ, the gospel of Christ. Even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, the sevenfold revelation of the mystery for the church in Christ, let him be accursed.

As we have said before, before I wrote this letter, I've said it once and I'm gonna say it again in this letter, that's a threefold warning. We've said before, I say again, if anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received from the apostle Paul, let him be accursed. This is serious business.

This isn't a quibbling over theological application. We're either blessed or we are cursed. We will either survive and prosper at the judgment seat of Christ, or we will be condemned.

Our life will go up in flames and we'll be those who are saved yet so as by fire. What is this other gospel? This is the gospel of social justice. This is the gospel of indiscriminate charity.

We will shine a beacon of light to the world by indiscriminate charity. Anybody that's naked, we'll clothe them. Anybody that's hungry, we'll feed them.

Anybody that is sick and afflicted, we will visit them. It may be shocking, as shocked as Paul was that the Galatians would depart from the gospel. You may be shocked that the church in the world has departed from the gospel in indiscriminate charity.

It is not biblical. Find me anywhere in the Old Testament where God said to Israel, go beyond the borders of your land and find the Canaanites, find any of the Hittites, find the Assyrians, find the Babylonians, find the Persians, find anybody and clothe their naked, feed their hungry, visit and comfort their sick, visit the ones that are in prison in these other lands. When God enjoins his people in the Old Testament to look out for the widow and the orphan and those who are oppressed, what is the border? What is the context? What is the condition? Your fellow Israelite.

In the Old Testament, Israelites are assumed to all be in covenant relationship to God. Babies, boys are circumcised on the eighth day. The national sacrifices, the morning and evening lamb, the Levitical offerings that are regularly brought before God are for the entire nation.

Who is my neighbor? He is my fellow Israelite. You have the, who is my neighbor story of the good Samaritan. Where is the Samaritan traveling? He's, you remember where? A little trivia question.

What road is he on? The road to Jericho. Where is Jericho, Samaria or Israel? Israel,

Jericho is not in Samaria, it's in Israel. And there is a Hebrew of the Hebrews in the ditch and the Samaritan is given as an example of looking out for someone who has been placed in his path, who is assumed to be a fellow child of God and he is neighbor to the man in the ditch.

And by the way, the man in the ditch readily accepts the help and the contribution. He doesn't say, I'd rather die than be touched by a Samaritan. There is an assumed identity within the land.

Why isn't it a Roman and a Samaritan that populate that story? Why isn't it a Greek and a Syro-Phoenician? These people, even the Samaritans are assumed to be. This is why Jesus goes to the well in Samaria and talks to the woman at the well. Well, you've got a difference of opinion about which mountain to worship on.

And Jesus says, it isn't gonna matter about geography. Those who worship God, worship him in spirit and in truth, anticipating the age in which we now live. So this is important.

This is not unconditional love. And we have to be careful as stewards of what God puts in our care as to where we put it. And if you're just going to send it out to abstract unknown destinations to be spent in abstract and unknown ways, most of the time for advertising and administrative costs, how much of any dollar actually gets to the people who are pictured in the TV ad? It's worth looking.

Some charities have come under fire. As wonderful as they look on TV, better than 90% of every dollar goes to, other than the supposed beneficiaries, it's overhead, it's utility bills, it's advertising costs, it's transportation, it's cameramen to shoot these ads and the rest of it. And so you figure, well, I actually gave about 7 cents out of my every dollar I contributed to actually help someone.

And you say, well, but they need the infrastructure so that they can help them. I don't know how that infrastructure works. I don't know how much of it is just self-perpetuating.

And I don't know why. If there's a man in the ditch, I can see him for myself. If I'm the Samaritan, I can say, here is someone, I've got means, motive and opportunity to benefit this individual.

He is my neighbor because he's near at hand. And I know everything about this man's situation that I need to know to be a blessing to him. Let me give you an idea here as we move forward.

What is it that we should be doing in light of the incarnation? If we are the body of Christ, what should we be doing? We covered this to some extent on Sunday. And that is in John 14. Remember, the one who loves me will keep my words.

Remember that in John 14, 15 and following? If you love me, you'll keep my words. This

is gospel and it's true in the church age. We're not diminishing the words of the Lord Jesus in any way, we are endeavoring to follow them in the light of the revelation that he entrusted to Paul to communicate to us.

So what are those words? I'm gonna be looking for how we're treating people in the world, okay? I found a list, somebody has gone through and compiled all of the imperatives that the Lord Jesus gave. Teaching them to observe whatsoever things I have commanded, right? That's the disciples commission. It's not the great commission, it's the disciples commission.

So if we are them, then we ought to know the words of the Lord Jesus and follow them, right? Well, what exactly are, now there are many other lessons you can draw from the parables and the miracles and so on, but what are Jesus commands? I've got 34 of them and I'm just going to list them. The commandments of Jesus. I found these wonderfully listed for me at trustinginjesus.com and it's a wonderful list.

So I'm gonna give them to you real quickly. The first one, Mark 11 25, when you stand praying, forgive. If you hold anything against anyone, forgive him so that your father in heaven may forgive you your sins.

This is a word of the Lord Jesus. Solid, should we be doing this? Bear no grudge, be reconciled to the extent that someone's willing to do so. If you hold anything against anyone, forgive him.

Your forgiveness hinges on being a forgiving person to others. That's Mark 11 25, 26. Number one, when you stand praying, forgive.

Number two, remain in me and I will remain in you. John 15, four, remain in me, abide in the vine. No branch can bear fruit by itself, must remain in the vine.

You can't bear fruit unless you remain in me. So number two, abide in Christ. Number three, Matthew 5, 14, you're the light of the world.

Matthew 5, 16, let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and glorify, praise your father in heaven. You are the light of the world. Now, he compares it to a city set on a hill, right? Specifically, details matter, examples are important.

A city on a hill cannot be hidden. So picture yourself, you're out in a valley, you're looking up at the hill and you see a wonderful, brightly illuminated city. That's how your light should shine to men.

What is the brightly illuminated city doing for the guy down in the valley looking at it? Absolutely nothing. It is an illuminated city on a hill. If I want the benefits of that city, if I want to share in the glory and the blessing of that city, what would I do as a man down in the valley looking up at the hill? I would climb the hill.

I would seek entrance to the city. I would want to become a functional and beneficial part of that city to benefit and be benefited, right? Standing outside looking at the hill, looking at the city, the city's not doing anything. When he says, let your light so shine, light is shining.

The source is visible. He doesn't say, let your largesse and the overflow of your crops be distributed to the world. He says, let your light shine.

That light is passive to the observer. If you want to benefit from the light, you got to go where the light is, right? You are drawn to the light. Go join with those who live in the light.

If we walk in the light, if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us, 1 John 1, 7, right? Walk in the light, go join the light, be a part of the light and that light should shine. But it is an example.

It is not a direct action of benefit. I'm going to go clothe and feed and comfort and visit and party with or whatever people down in the valley. No, you're a light that's not under a bushel.

It's set up where it can illuminate and people can be drawn to the light. Let your light shine before men. That's number three.

Number four, settle controversies quickly with your adversary. This is Matthew 5, 25. Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court.

Do it while you're still with him on the way. Otherwise he might hand you over to the judge and the judge hands you to the officer and you may be thrown into prison. Don't be party to unresolved conflict.

Settle it. That's number four. Number five, get rid of whatever causes you to sin.

If your right eye offends you, pluck it out. If your right hand offends you, cut it off. Matthew 5, 29 and 30.

It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into Gehenna, to be judged, wood and stubble. Separate from that which causes you to sin. This is a command of Jesus Christ.

Is this a worthy word for us to follow? Of course. Number six, do not swear at all. Swear not at all.

Neither by heaven, it's God's throne. Not by the earth, it is his footstool. Neither by Jerusalem, it's the city of the great king.

Don't swear by your head. You can't make one hair white or black. Let your

communication be yes, yes, no, no.

Anything more than this comes of evil. Matthew 5, 34 through 37. Your word should be your bond.

You shouldn't need to try to reinforce it by invoking God or invoking your relationship to God. Your word should stand alone. Your integrity should be visible to all without having to try to reinforce it.

People that put a cross on their business card or wear a cross around their neck as a part of their business pitch violate this command. If you've got a good product, let the merits of the product stand on its own. If you're functioning with integrity, you don't need to put a cross on your truck or on your business card or say, well, I'm a Christian.

That's invoking the throne of heaven as though people ought to give you more attention because you're invoking God. It's wrong. Don't ever put a cross on your business card.

Don't ever endeavor to get customers by, well, you know, let's have a club here. Christians will deal with Christians. Your word ought to be good.

Your business ought to be good. Your services and products ought to be sound and that ought to speak for itself. Don't invoke heaven.

That's number six. Number seven, do not resist an evil person. You've heard it was said eye for an eye, tooth for tooth.

I tell you, do not resist an evil person. Someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. Matthew 5, 38 and 39.

This is a word of the Lord. Crusading against evil. We are to be flexible in non-essential things.

Somebody striking me is not cause to react. React. That's a non-essential.

Somebody striking me on the cheek. If somebody asks me to carry a pack for a mile, take it too if you need to. Your example ought to be, I'm not here to defend myself and to make an issue out of myself and I'm going to make a big noise if you do something to me.

I am an example of someone who isn't interested in my own welfare ahead of following the words of Jesus Christ. And if it costs me pain, if it costs me labor, so be it. And that's number eight, going the extra mile.

Giving more than is demanded. Someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak also. Someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.

Give to the one who asks you. Do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you. This is not without condition.

You don't just open your home and say, hey, all you homeless people, come on in, raid the pantry. And we've seen this in its context, but this is a word of the Lord. Number nine, love your enemies.

You've heard it said, love your neighbor and hate your enemy. I say, love your enemies. Pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your father in heaven.

Now, what is the context here? Pray for those who persecute you. Who is going to persecute a follower of Jesus Christ? Fellow Jews. Your enemy is in the household of the people of God here.

He doesn't say love the Romans. He doesn't say love the Greeks, love the Egyptians, love some far off parties that come caravanning through. This is love your neighbor.

This is an extension and a detailing of the love your neighbor as yourself. And if your neighbor happens to hate you for some reason and is an enemy to you, he's wanting to move the fence and claim land that doesn't belong to him. He's rationally or irrationally opposed to you for some reason, you treat him with love anyway.

Why? He is your neighbor. Do good to those who hate you. To be your neighbor and hate you, they've got to know you.

They've got to live next to you. This is not abstract people in far off lands. Be a son of your father in heaven.

Be sons of your father in heaven. He causes his son to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. What is the context of this? God doesn't create artificial centers of blessing.

There is a general grace for sunshine and rain. And what is the thought here? Don't pick a fight. Don't enter into a fight that somebody else picks with you.

Many of the people that the rain fall on hate God or disrespect him or are disinterested in him altogether. God doesn't suspend the rain every time somebody rejects him. Why? Rain is needful for those who do love him, who do honor him, who do have a relationship with him.

And they get blessing by association. The rain falling on the just and the unjust, the sun shining on the just and the unjust. Notice who it shines on first and who it rains on first.

The just. This is a principle of blessing by association. So if you are just, if you are going to be a son of your father in heaven, those who are near you ought to find that to be a blessing, not a hardship.

That's the principle. It's not, well, look, you know, we should send money out to the unwashed nations of the world and people I don't even know because it's rain falling on the unjust. The issue is just and unjust, isn't it? It doesn't say God causes his rain to fall on all men because they are made in his image.

It's just and unjust in a given controversy. This is in the context of somebody that's got a bone to pick and they're an enemy. And that controversy, you should endeavor to be a blessing to the person who is trying to stir up trouble.

Don't throw fuel on the fire. Blessing by association is the idea there. So that is number nine.

Number 10, give, do your acts of righteousness to be seen by God, not to be seen by men. This is Matthew 6.1. Be careful not to do your acts of righteousness before men to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your father in heaven.

Don't model righteousness for others. Don't, I mean, there's a direct command here. Don't do righteousness and pose and act out righteousness because you're trying to get somebody else.

You're gonna preach at them non-verbally with your example. You're gonna model the Christian life. You're gonna disciple them.

You're gonna mentor them and bring them along. So I'm gonna ape what I consider to be good behavior. Jesus said, don't do that.

Do what you do to be seen by others. To be seen by your father in heaven. Same thing in number 11.

When you pray, this is a continuation. These are all out of Matthew 6, five through seven. When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites.

They love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they've received their reward. All they're gonna get is that, and honestly, a lot of people can spot self-righteous hypocrisy and the reward they're getting is actually the disrespect and the disdain of people who can see through their charade.

And they've got their reward. Their reward is God doesn't approve of them and the people looking at them don't really approve either. They've deluded themselves into thinking that they're gonna be well thought of.

When you pray, go into your room, close the door, pray to your father who is unseen. Your father who sees in secret will reward you. When you pray, don't babble like pagans.

They think they will be heard because of their many words. Repetitious prayer, you don't need it. You don't have to keep pestering the Lord like the woman with the unjust judge.

If you really trust God, you can mention it once. Isn't it great that if you're gonna order something from Amazon, you send the order in once and a day later, a little white van pulls up and there it is. I didn't have to order six or seven times from Amazon before it came.

You give them an order, they will charge your credit card and send that thing out. They are anxious to let you know that as soon as you let them know, they're gonna respond. They're gonna get it there quick.

They want those stars. They want those good ratings. Well, how much more our heavenly father? Do we think he's not gonna respond unless we just pester him and repeat the prayer over and over again? I very seldom mentioned something to God more than once.

Somebody's in a bad situation. Somebody's in the process of bereavement or illness or challenge of whatever kind. I go to my father in heaven and I pray on behalf of that person.

I render intercessory prayer and I figure God's got it. I have asked him to accomplish his will for his glory and fulfill his purpose and to bless those involved both in the center and in the periphery of that situation. I give a very detailed prayer.

I bring to bear everything I know by way of what God can do for his glory and the benefit of his people in that situation. And that's it. Very seldom, not unless the situation changes and I've got some fresh argument to bring to bear.

Will I go back to the father with a second prayer? Don't need to. God heard me the first time. It's kind of an insult to think that, well, maybe he's busy and he forgot.

Let me just remind him again. It's a lack of faith. I've got a lot more faith in God than I do in Amazon.

And I only send Amazon one order. I send God one intercessory prayer. I will tell you now that all of you for whom I pray, it's when I get fresh information, there's a fresh situation, fresh challenge, fresh opportunity, fresh set of decisions to be made.

I am right there at the throne of grace and we do this for each other. But don't discount God's attention. He doesn't have ADD.

He heard you the first time. And that's what this says. Don't babble like a pagan.

They think they will be heard because of their many words. Remember Elijah on Mount Carmel? These guys are slashing themselves and demonstrating. How many times did Elijah pray? Once.

One prayer, one act of obedience with the altar and the water and the wood. God took

the top of the mountain off for that one prayer. These other guys danced around all day and nothing happened.

Repetition is a human fiction that it's gonna somehow be effective. So that is number 11. Number 12, this is how you should pray and you have the disciple's prayer.

Our Father, hallowed be your name. Give us today daily bread. Forgive us as we forgive those who sin against us.

If you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. If you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins. One of the most overlooked truths of the Christian life is if you have an unforgiving spirit, if something keeps coming up and you're unhappy with somebody about something, guess what? 1 John 1.9 is of no use to you.

Psalms 51 and 1 John 1.7 is of no use to you. Not only if we harbor sin in our heart, God will not hear us. If we fail to forgive, we are not forgiven.

And in fact, you remember the parable of the two servants, the big servant that's forgiven a huge debt and he's got an underling and he doesn't forgive the underling a small debt. It's one of the scariest things in the word of God. The master unforgave the first servant.

Unforgave him and threw him into prison until he paid every penny. What's the likelihood of that from prison? Got to stamp an awful lot of license plates. Jesus said the master unforgave the debt of the unforgiving servant.

That scares me to death. I don't want to hold anything against anybody. Whatever you've done, God be with you.

To your own master, you stand or fall. I don't want any part of that. I have so many sins for which I need forgiveness.

I can't afford to risk A, not being forgiven or B, becoming unforgiven. What's worth that? Harboring some kind of a grudge, savoring some old bone I keep digging up. And well, that person, that action, that thing that happened.

Oh my gosh. If you're not scared by this, you're not listening. So forgive, that's number 12.

Number 13, when you fast, this is Matthew 6, 16. All these out of Matthew 6. Do not look somber as the hypocrites do. They disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting.

This is of a piece with praying to be seen by men, doing acts of righteousness to be seen by men. This is self-abnegation. This is denying the truth of God.

Self-denial, I want everybody to know my hardship, the burdens I'm bearing and what I'm denying myself because I'm such a righteous person. When you fast, don't look somber. They disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting.

I tell you the truth, they've received their reward in full. And again, we have a human instinct for seeing through hypocrisy and fake righteousness. We just, we have probably because we've seen it in ourselves and it takes one to know one.

And it's pretty easy to spot and people fool themselves if they think they're pulling the wool over anyone's eyes. Number 13, fast without fanfare. Number 14, do not store up treasures on earth.

Don't get too invested in this life. The things of this life, possessions, accomplishments, career, relationships. Do not store up for yourselves treasure on earth.

Moth and rust destroy, thieves break in and steal. Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven. Moth and rust do not destroy.

Thieves do not break in and steal. Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. And I will tell you that part of the attack on the incarnate Christ, on the body of Christ and what he does and with whom he does it and for whom he does it, part of that is investing in the earth, in the world, in society.

We'll make society better. We'll build the kingdom. We'll reflect the kingdom.

We'll show the kingdom and people will be drawn to the kingdom for kingdom values and kingdom people. And they'll be drawn to the king through the kingdom that we reflect and that we build. Jesus says, don't invest in this world.

And that means, and that includes trying to build a kingdom here and trying to be kingdom. The kingdom is not yet. Remember the disciples asked Jesus and John, when will you restore the kingdom to Israel? Says, not now.

It's not you and it's not now. In a nutshell, that's what he says. And it's not for you to know the times and seasons.

Well, if they were supposed to be a part of restoring the kingdom, it would be for them to know the time and the season because they've got to bring it about. Well, Thomas, you've got to be a kingdom man and you've got to have kingdom values and you've got to reflect kingdom truths and recruit kingdom people and live out the kingdom. This kingdom stuff is nonsense.

The kingdom that Jesus talked about, we've studied it in detail, is Israel's kingdom, not ours. We have a new covenant founded on new and better promises. And our kingdom is not of this earth.

It is a heavenly kingdom and it is the kingdom of the father and everything for us is preparation as individuals. We'll see that coming up. Do not store up treasure on earth.

That's number 14. Number 15, do not worry about your needs. Again, Matthew 6, 25 and 26.

Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink, about your body, what you will wear. Life is more important than food. The body is more important than clothes.

Look at the birds. They sow not. They don't reap.

They don't store away in barns. Your heavenly father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? 16 is like unto it, Matthew 6, 34.

Therefore do not worry about tomorrow. Tomorrow will worry about itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

That's number 16. Number 17, seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Not the kingdom of God and social justice.

Not the kingdom of God and abstract charity. Not the kingdom of God and the betterment of the human condition. Not the kingdom of God and relief for the oppressed.

His righteousness. You wanna know that one of the biggest attacks on this is they are taking this word, dikaiosune, and retranslating it as justice. Seek the kingdom of God and his justice.

Seek his justice. Listen, you don't want his justice. You know what God's justice would do to you and me and to the rest of the world? Remember what God told Moses during and after the golden calf incident? I'm gonna wipe these people out.

That's God's justice. No, we want God's righteousness because God can bless his righteousness. Jesus Christ has been made unto us righteousness.

Jesus Christ is our righteousness. He's not our justice. And the cruel, deceptive, misrepresentation of dikaiosune as justice to defend and to justify social justice warfare, social justice warriors.

Well, I'm seeking God's justice. And justice means the oppressed should be relieved and the naked should be clothed and the et cetera, et cetera. So wrongheaded.

Seek the kingdom of God and God's righteousness. And all of these other things that the world worries about and that immature believers worry about, you concentrate on God and being righteous. Be perfect as I am perfect, God says.

Embody the righteousness of Christ. All these things will be added to you. Number 18, do

not judge or you too will be judged.

This is Matthew 7, one and two. However you judge others, that's how you will be judged. With the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

These overlap so much with love your enemy. Do good to those who hate you. Be a source of blessing even when others are trying to be a curse to you.

Err on the side of self-sacrifice. Err on the side of if you want something I've got, take it and here's some extra. I don't want to in any way get near selfishness or lack of faith in God.

God will supply my needs. If I give you my coat and cloak, God will bring me another one. I will forgive.

I will overlook. I will be reconciled. I will do anything I can to minimize conflict, minimize curse and maximize blessing.

Maximize reflecting the presence of Christ. So do not judge. Number 19, guard what is sacred.

Do not give what is sacred to dogs. Oh my goodness. How can I do this unless I can identify what a dog is? Is there any such thing as a dog? Not in the minds of these kingdom now, you know, I'm a Jesus follower and I accept everybody.

They're all the image of God. If you take that approach, who's a dog? Nobody. Nobody's, how dare you? Dog, what's the matter with you? Prejudice person.

Do not give what is holy to the dogs. Do not throw your pearls to swine. Swine? Who is a swine? Who is a dog? Those who have willfully rejected the truth of God.

Read Romans chapter one. If you do, they will trample your pearls under their feet. They will turn and tear you to pieces.

You are not going to love them into acceptance and into harmony and into fellowship and into relationship with God through Christ by throwing your pearls and giving them what is holy. You've got to reserve and guard and protect what is holy. And you've got to keep your pearls to yourself or you are only gonna make matters worse.

Leave them in God's hands. Guard what is sacred. That's number 19.

Number 20, this is last one we'll cover tonight. Matthew 7, 7, ask, seek, knock. These are commands of the Lord Jesus.

He doesn't say, get that other guy to ask. Go grab that guy's fist and pound the door with it and get him to knock. Argue and prevail with somebody and get them to seek.

You ask, you seek, you knock. God will answer those promises. Everyone is accountable for their own asking, their own seeking, and their own knocking.

You can't do it for someone else. You can't can or bottle your faith and hand it to someone else. You can't take that seeking note out of your soul and stick it into somebody else.

Every individual is accountable to God to ask, to seek, and to knock. That's number 20, Matthew 7, 7. We'll begin with number 21 next time. But these are the words of Jesus Christ.

If anyone loves me, he will keep my words. And I will tell you that the next 14 of these are no different than the first 20. Where did you see, feed the poor, clothe the naked, visit the ones who are sick and in prison, commit abstract charity.

We're going to cover in the next one, number 21, we're going to cover what about the judgment on the sheep and the goats. You talk about the naked and the sick and in prison in that. That's where we'll pick up this coming Sunday.

But if you don't get anything else out of this study, there is another gospel and it is ubiquitous. The Christian world is being carried away by another gospel. It is the gospel of, I will do.

It is a gospel of works. It is vindication, justification. I am spiritual.

I am a Jesus follower because look what I do. We're going to see this coming Sunday that the exhortation for New Testament believers is to not do, but is to become. Become, this is where that facet of the mystery, the indwelling of Christ, the indwelling of Christ is designed to make us like Christ.

And we will know where and how to bless, where and how to feed, where and how to be of benefit to others because we have the mind of Christ. You can't jump straight to the action and ignore becoming. And these, notice these first 20, just these first 20, look at what they are.

This is how you should be. This is how you should act. It is sacrificial to self and beneficial to those in your immediate periphery, right? And it is all about an attitude.

Let this mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus, who emptied himself, form of a servant, likeness of men, sacrificed himself. This is the reason God has honored him. This is Philippians, right? Philippians chapter two.

That's the concentration. That's the focus. We will have the good sense.

We will know where and how to make all of these decisions with regard to those in our periphery, our situation, our stewardship. All of these will come to us because we have

become Christ-like in our thinking. That is an essential step that cannot be skipped.

And it is essential to the doctrine of the mystery that we get from Paul. We'll see more of it this coming Sunday. We'll close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit to lead us in it and through it, to impress it on our hearts, to help us to see its pertinence and application in our own life, our own walk before you. We pray that we can represent your son, the Lord Jesus Christ, fully and effectively through the things that we learn, that we will be convicted, we will be corrected and rebuked and instructed in righteousness through these things that we look at.

We pray it in Jesus' name. Amen. So that you can stop it, write it down some more.

Thank you, Sam. Oh, thank you so much for being with us. It's a joy to see your smiling face.

I'm here with Lanell tonight. Hey, Lanell. It is great to see you.

Yeah, it's good to see y'all too. We've been looking at y'all and it's like, oh man, I miss y'all so much.