

1Tim 24-04-24b

We're ready now to continue looking at our responsibility when it comes to dealing with people. There are practically none of us that don't have to interact with people on a daily basis and to have specific, clear guidance from God on what is required of us and to not be misled into thinking that we have responsibilities and requirements that we don't have is so valuable. And this is why we're looking together at the scriptures that give us that guidance.

So for those who are our neighbors and for whom we have the obligation to express this respect, respect, non-confrontational, non-judgmental, non-vengeful, non-grudge-bearing love to see a need and meet it. This goes to the guidance in the law that if you see your brother's ox is out and it specifically says, and you don't know who it belongs to, you know he's a brother because he lives in the land, but you don't recognize the animal, you don't know how far away the person is who lost it, but you see that somebody has lost something. And the law says, keep it until you can figure out to whom it belongs.

So in that sense, finding this lost object makes this previously unknown person a neighbor because you have a point of contact and that creates responsibility to do what you would have done for you. Somebody found something you lost. I think all of us have made phone contact with the lost and found someplace where we stayed and said, hey, did you find this thing I lost track of? I left a garment, there's no end of things I've heedlessly left behind.

I remember when I was traveling incognito for the military back in the days of Beirut, the early 80s, and I found myself in Rome and there's a picture of me standing on top of St. Peter's Cathedral in a reversible jacket that was really handy because the weather in the Mediterranean can be cool in the mornings, hot in the afternoons. And so this was a really great jacket. And somewhere just before that trip was over, which was very hectic, I ended up leaving that jacket in the trunk of a Mercedes rental car that our team of six used and shared.

And there was all kinds of baggage and stuff going in and out. And I realized too late that this really great jacket was in the trunk. And I thought, well, I hope some Italian guy gets some use out of it.

But a wonderful thing is if you lose something, especially something valuable, you hear stories of people who find wallets stuffed with money and other things and they track down the owner and return it. That's what you would want done for you. That's what we do for others, even when they are strangers.

And so to do good, to lend expecting nothing in return, your reward will be great. You'll be sons of the Most High. This was Luke 6, 32 through 35.

Strangers in Deuteronomy chapter 10 and verse 19. Once again, this is tied to our relationship to God. Our contact with Him is the source and the motivation for this.

So Deuteronomy 10, 19, for the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, mighty, and awesome God. Showing no partiality and accepting no bribe, He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and He loves the foreigner, giving him food and clothing. So show your love for the alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt.

Let me present you with a conundrum. Suppose wherever you are right now on your property, somebody who has come across the border in recent months, shows up, maybe there's a kid with them, and they're wandering around with no place to stay, no food, nothing to give their children by way of sustenance, and they wind up being in your yard or in the alley behind your backyard, and they're just kind of huddled there in need. Let's say further that you're violently against the government allowing people to swarm over our border, untracked, unidentified, unstopped.

You're against that as a policy, but these people have showed up and they are on your property, and they are in need of food, clothing, possibly shelter. What should you as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ do? Do you act based on your abhorrence for the felonious lack of a border we have down South? What does scripture say? Behold, if the alien crosses your border, thou shalt get out thy sword and hack him to pieces like Agag. It doesn't say that.

What does it say? God shows no partiality, accepts no bribe. He executes justice for the fatherless and widow, and he loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing. So show your love for the alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt.

This of course is talking to Israel. So contrary to what we might instinctively want to do, call the cops, there's illegal aliens on my lawn. What is just? What is justice? You can actually do both, right? You can say, come sit here on these lawn chairs, let me bring you some food.

You're obviously hungry. Let me bring you some water. Let me bring you something for your child.

It's a cold day. You obviously don't have adequate clothing. Here's a jacket.

Let me call someone who can take care of you. Find an agency that has the resources to handle them in a legal and proper way, long-term, right? That's justice. Let the authorities know that there's somebody here, that it doesn't have documentation, that doesn't have a legal standing to be here, and let your tax dollars do their work.

Find an agency or a charity or somebody who can get them properly wired together with justice. At the same time, justice and mercy. Mercy says, don't let them sit there starving

and say, well, serves you right for jumping the border and not making an adequate plan.

Don't let their personal needs go unmet, but at the same time, seek justice. And it isn't right to harbor or shield somebody who's here illegally. The authorities need to know that they are here.

They need to be properly taken care of by whatever the justice system currently says is lawful in our country. But at the same time, when I was hungry, you fed me. When I was thirsty, you gave me to drink.

If they do get taken to a shelter or whatever, and they don't know anybody in the community, there's the possibility to go and see them and see that the system has properly taken care of them and possibly go and advocate. How is this different from marching in the street and waving a sign or ranting on social media? How is this different? What has happened when these people show up on your lawn? What circle of love are they now in? Neighbor, man in the ditch. Well, Jews and Samaritans, we don't get along.

We have great differences of opinion about vital things, but we err on the side of doing unto others as we would have others do unto us. I don't know the ins and outs and motivations of why they ended up in this situation. I seriously doubt that somebody who shows up on my lawn is trying to become a terrorist.

Those guys have plans, they go places, they quickly get out of sight. This is somebody who's been caught up in opportunism or whatever else it might be. They wanted to come to America for whatever reason, with whatever pretext, they're here.

If they are needy, Christians who are seeking to live in the light of God's word and God's love will feed the hungry, give to those who are thirsty, clothe those who are in need of it, and at the same time, look for justice. Justice and mercy, that is neighbor love. If I found myself, especially if I was a minor and had been brought somewhere by people whose motives I didn't understand, I find myself in a foreign country, I would hope someone would be kind to me and would look out for me and put me in a proper place where proper care, proper plans, proper future can be determined.

But to be hateful towards someone because we don't like the policy by which they got here is not scriptural. So God, and this again is Deuteronomy 10, 17 through 19, show love for the alien. You were an alien at one time.

Remember while we were yet enemies, Christ died for us. Leviticus 19.34, the stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord, your God.

Another one of those verses. What is the authority behind this policy? I am the Lord. I determine the policy.

And I say, if there is an alien, now this isn't an illegal alien per se, but you will not discriminate on the basis of ethnic origin. If this is someone dwelling in the land, you will give them the benefit of the doubt that they are here because they want to be with the people of God, and they want to worship the God of Abraham. That's why they're here.

And if you don't know for sure why they're here, doesn't matter. The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you. How could this scripture have guided white people in the South in days gone by and all the way up to the present? Well, these people are from Africa.

They're an alien. They're of a different race, of a different culture, different habits, different predilections, different way of talking, different way of interacting with each other. They dwell in our midst.

What should the attitude of a Bible-believing Christian be toward people of other ethnic or racial origins? Read your Bible. How can people in the South go to church on Sunday? How can they have gone in the past and have the attitudes that history records? The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you. No better and no worse.

The colorblind society that Martin Luther King anticipated and envisioned that were a part of his dream has given way to opposite kinds of racism. Now we will overcompensate. We can put an ethnic designator on a day or a channel or a month.

We can have organizations that tout minorities and we can put their color or their identification on it, but you can't do the same thing and say white. Can you have white history month? That's not colorblind and it's not scriptural. You do not prefer one over another.

They should be equal, truly equal. And you don't gain equality by favoring one over another and saying, well, I'm just, it's tit for tat. They used to be underappreciated.

Now we're gonna overappreciate. It's a deception. It's not scriptural.

To love one's neighbor as himself is much more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices, Jesus says in Mark 12, 33. To love one's neighbor as a testimony, as a witness to fearing God, loving Him, serving Him, worshiping Him. You could say, well, I'm gonna offer sacrifices and burnt offerings.

That's how I'm gonna show that I belong to God and I appreciate Him. Jesus said, to love one's neighbor as oneself is much more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices. Love your God, love one another, love your neighbor, love your neighbor.

And the aforementioned principle in Exodus 23, verses four and five, if you meet your enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. Again.

Notice, you meet the animal that has gotten out and has gone astray.

So what is the owner to you now? A neighbor. You have personal contact. You find this ox, you find this donkey astray, you will bring it back to him again, even though he's an enemy.

Deuteronomy 22, verse one. If you see your brother's ox or sheep straying, you must not ignore it. You're not allowed to just ignore it and pretend you didn't see it.

You're not allowed to do nothing. Your brother's ox or sheep is astray, you must not ignore it. Be sure to return it to your brother.

This is a different kind of brother than we find in one another love. This is your neighbor. So these scriptures and others like them define our conduct, our policy, our attitude toward those with whom we come in contact.

We are never authorized to return evil for evil, ever. Do not return evil for evil, but return evil with good. That's a summary of neighbor love.

What about those who are outside? This is the outside ring. Some of these people are oppositional. They are actively hostile.

This is our Matthew chapter seven. Do not give what is holy to the dogs. Do not cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet and turn and tear you in pieces.

You try to preach. Notice that this is in the realm of spiritual things. You are giving what is holy.

You have pearls. This is that which is precious in the spiritual realm. Don't try that.

This is why Jesus said to those who are outside, everything is in parables. In Mark chapter four, verse 11, the mystery of the kingdom of God. This is what is holy.

This is the pearls. Jesus says to his disciples, the mystery of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to those on the outside, everything is expressed in parables. How would you put this in layman's English? What is it that Jesus spoke to them in parables? What is a parable? It's an example story, right? And that example has a spiritual truth.

They hear the example, but they can't grasp the spiritual truth because the carnal mind doesn't understand the things of the spirit, right? So we can set an example. We can be an example. We can do what we do as unto the Lord and not unto men.

And we make no attempt to explain it. Unless someone is asking us a reason for our hope, unless they are seeking, but if they're oppositional and they're critical, we don't defend ourselves. We don't justify ourselves.

We don't try to vindicate that this is really righteous and good. Our life is often a parable to those who are outside and who are hostile. And to those who are outside, Jesus said, let the parable be a parable.

Let the puzzle be a puzzle. Let them try to figure it out. Don't go trying to explain it.

Can you imagine Jesus giving a parable and the crowds are scratching their heads? And so Jesus says, well, here's what I was trying to say. They wouldn't get the explanation any more than they got the parable. In our age, especially with the Holy Spirit, if you're going to understand it, God, the Holy Spirit will lead us into truth.

He will give us insight. And if we're puzzled, we go to him or go to one another's where the Holy Spirit is. And it's a Holy Spirit from faith to faith, from spirit to spirit.

And that's where we get our clarity. Our goal as a society or as a fellowship or as individuals is to purge from our midst that which defiles, that which corrupts. Remember the general rule of thumb, as goes the nation of Israel in the Old Testament, so goes the individual believer in the new.

They had a temple. We are the temple. They had the shadows.

We have the reality. They had responsibilities in the physical realm. We have responsibilities in the spiritual realm that will work out.

I will show you my faith by my works, but it starts with faith, not just mechanical obedience. So those who are speaking lies and deceptions, prophets and dreamers in Israel must be put to death because they have advocated rebellion against the Lord your God. We have people today who are wolves in sheep's clothing, who claim to be representing the church, claim to represent Jesus and God and the Bible and so on.

And they're preaching heresy, blasphemy, twisted and distorted teachings as though they come from the scriptures. What are we to do? In Israel, you are to take these guys out and purge the evil from among you. Socially speaking, spiritually speaking in our lives, when there are those who embrace falsehood, twisted and distorted Christianity that has no foundation in the Bible, what is it to, how do you purge the evil from among you? You cut off fellowship, you cut off contact.

To stone somebody to death in Israel, you have no further contact with that person. They are gone permanently. Prophet or dreamer must be put to death because he advocates rebellion against the Lord your God.

And if someone advocates a departure from the faith, a departure from belief in God himself or what his word teaches or what we ought to be and do as Christians, this insidious, cancerous, malignant kind of teaching, no further contact, stone it out of your spiritual life. If a man or woman among you in one of the towns the Lord your God gives

you is found doing evil in the sight of the Lord your God and transgressing his covenant and going to worship other gods like science or social activism, social justice, this is righteousness, embracing political causes and such, bowing down to them or to the sun or moon or any of the host of heaven, which I have forbidden. If it is reported to you and you hear about it, you must investigate it thoroughly on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

A man guilty of that shall be put to death. This is Deuteronomy 17, verses two through seven. Purge the evil from among you.

And notice this is inside Israel. He doesn't say, if you hear that Moab is worshiping idols, go over and destroy Moab. If you hear that the Ammonites are engaging in heinous behavior, if you hear that the Philistines are worshiping Dagon, if you hear that the Amorites are sacrificing children to Molech, go over there and stamp them out.

It's not in scripture. It's in the land. What is the analog for us? If someone is bringing evil, if by gossip or maligning or judging or constantly harping on politics or social issues is bringing sin into the camp, is defiling and is seeking to establish a basis for thought and opinion and action that is not scriptural, that doesn't reflect a righteous and holy God who is supreme in our lives and a Lord Jesus Christ who is the head of all things to the church, if they are bringing in some other gospel, some other righteousness, some other set of priorities, purge the evil out of the Israel of your soul.

Arms length or more out of my inner circle, out of my realm of fellowship. I'm not spending time talking to you because you are bringing evil into the camp. You are cultivating rebellion.

That notion that there is a priest and a judge in Israel, we have the word of God that guides us. We have the spirit of God to enable us to discern, lead us into truth. In Israel, they would go to the Levitical priest and to the judge.

This is Deuteronomy 17 verses eight through 12. And as a result of that in verse 13, those who act presumptuously and refuse to listen, those who can't keep their mind off earthly things and are intent upon dragging it into your heart, into your soul, into your conversation, into your relationship with them. These who act presumptuously and refuse to listen to the priest who stands there to serve the Lord your God or to the judge must be put to death.

We don't literally put people to death in this age. We put them to death in terms of separation. We separate, no further contact.

We don't run around like an Arab or a Jew that has somebody convert to Christianity and say, you are dead to me, but functionally it is the same. No further contact with someone who drags you away from your faith, your peace, your joy, your hope, the fruit of the

spirit, your equanimity, your ability to worship God in the beauty of holiness. Contact with this person is contaminating.

It is defiling. It drags us down. It's depressing.

It's discouraging. It's distracting. It's disheartening.

You have got to cut that off, purge the evil out of Israel. Any such influence, it could be a TV channel. It could be a social media feed.

It could be something that every time you look at it, you suddenly find yourself far from the Lord. You're not in that green pasture beside the still water. You're being dragged into the valley of the shadow of death.

Got to let it go. Got to cut it off, purge it out. It has to be on the outside, not even a neighbor.

Neighbors, you can treat with respect. Neighbors, you can do the golden rule. It's not close.

It's not family love. It's not Holy Spirit at both ends, but it is cordial. It is civil.

It is courteous. It is respectful. It is non-confrontational.

It is non-judgmental. It isn't grudge bearing. It isn't vengeful.

There are people that you have to push even beyond that circle because they are radioactive. And the more distance, the better. Those who are stubborn and rebellious, such as a son who doesn't listen to his parents were to be brought before the men of the city and stoned to death.

Purge the evil from among you. All Israel will hear and be afraid. And this is a part of our witness and our example that we do not walk in the counsel of the ungodly.

We don't stand in the way of sinners. We don't sit in the seat of the scornful. You remember this from Psalm 1. The opening of the book of Psalms, blessed is the man who does not maintain contact with the ungodly, the sinners and the scornful.

Those who have a scornful attitude toward God and his son, the Lord Jesus Christ, no contact. That's the word of God. Doesn't matter who it is.

Those who are a glutton and a drunkard who are caught up and soaked in the world and the things of the world, the attitudes and the viewpoints of the world, distance. This is Deuteronomy chapter 21, verses 18 through 21. Stubborn and rebellious son, disobedient, glutton and a drunkard is to be stoned to death.

The application of that in this age, you don't literally stone him to death, but there is a

very great distance placed. By the way, in this regard, while you're in Deuteronomy 22.5, those who want to say that neighbor love includes being kind to those who are living in perversity, who have sexual preferences that are strange, who have personal identity problems. Deuteronomy 22.5, a woman must not wear men's clothing and a man must not wear women's clothing for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God.

It is an abomination in God's sight. If you love God and you represent God on this earth, then what he considers abomination is what we consider an abomination. We don't tolerate it, we don't excuse it, we don't embrace it, we don't welcome it, we don't encourage it, we don't bring it into our fellowship.

There are churches all around the country who think that it is love because they've got one another love mixed up with neighbor love, with policy toward those who are outside and they believe that love should be unconditional toward everyone and you should embrace and enfold anyone regardless of whatever perversity they are practicing and what they have chosen. Deuteronomy 22.5, cross dressing and of course, a fortiori, anything that goes beyond cross dressing to actual trying to physically change and trying to get implants and surgeries and whatever else, it is an abomination to the Lord your God. Promiscuity is an abomination to the Lord.

This is all in Deuteronomy chapter 22. We are not to try to love people and accept people and compromise God's standards. God doesn't do it, why would we do it? So as we've seen in Colossians 4.5, we are to walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, making the most of the time.

Don't waste time, we redeem the time. Colossians 4.6, the next verse, let your speech always be with grace. What does that do to people who are getting into shouting matches and ad hominem discussions and arguments ad nauseum with those who have political or social opinions with which we differ and we think that we're on a righteous high ground because we know what the word of God says.

Let your speech toward those who are outside, always, the word always is right there in the verse. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt. It's always interesting when salt comes up, you know, the covenant of salt, if the salt has lost its savor, wherewith will it be salted and so on.

What does it mean that your conversation is seasoned with salt? If you eat too much salt, what happens? Ladies especially know this, you eat too much salty food at once, what happens? Bad things, you can get puffed up, you can get dizzy, you can start feeling real strange. Seasoned with salt, not covered in salt, not replaced with salt, it's nothing but salt. When something is seasoned with salt, what is it? It's still the food, the conversation is still the conversation, the subject is still the subject, the topic is the topic, opinions are exchanged, experiences are shared.

What does it mean to be seasoned with salt? If something is seasoned with salt, can you tell? Have you ever eaten some butter that's unsalted and then eat the butter that's salted? Can you tell the difference? When salt is present, what do you know? Hey, there's some salt here. This New England boiled dinner has no salt in it, where's the salt? I need some salt. When salt is present, I taste it, it doesn't overwhelm what's going on, but you know that it is present.

Our faith, our dedication to God the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ in the power of the Spirit ought to be evident in the way that salt in a dish is evident and it ought to be pleasant. It ought to be at a pleasant level. It's not so salty that you can't tolerate it, but it's not so bland that you don't know that there's any salt to be had.

Seasoned with salt. Our conversation should always be with grace. We don't push our faith, but we don't hide our faith.

It is like salt. It's detectable. You know it's there, but it doesn't overwhelm.

It doesn't off-put. We don't have an off-putting level to where people say, well, that's a holier than thou. That's one of those Bible thumping.

You can't get three words in before they quote a verse at me. But our conversation always should be characterized by two things. Any conversation with those who are outside, this is specifically toward those who are outside.

Again, Colossians 4, 5, and 6. Real easy to remember. 4, 5, 6. Colossians 4, 5, and 6. Walk in wisdom. Be wise.

Pay attention. Be sensitive. Don't waste time.

Redeem the time. Let your speech always be with grace. It's not harsh.

It's not confrontational. It's not oppositional. It's not argumentative.

It's not unkind. It's not thoughtless. It's not discourteous.

It's not bitter. It's not acrimonious. Always with grace.

Always seasoned with salt. If anybody talks to us for 10 or 15 minutes and doesn't know we're a believer, there's something wrong. I had a new piano customer yesterday and drove all the way to Bartlesville, met this lady, Oriental lady.

Beautiful home, two-story, sweeping staircase, many wonderful things, really nice piano. And we're talking and I'm asking her about the piano and so on, and she says, oh, I'll let you go ahead and tune the piano. I haven't finished my scripture reading.

And I said, oh, it's just a little grain of salt. I'll be in, I'm gonna finish my scripture reading

while you're tuning the piano. So I find out without any, it's so gracious, so subtle, as it were.

Well, I'm reading the scripture. I can take that or leave it. I said, oh, well, do you just read on your own or are you following some sort of a plan? Well, that led to a discussion.

This lady is from a Catholic background, but I will tell you she is the most enthusiastic, dedicated, Holy Spirit attuned person I've met in a long time. And we had an extra hour or so of conversation because she was so excited about her faith. And about what she was learning in scripture and what God was doing in her life.

She's 80 years old. Her husband is gone. She's by herself, but she's just excited to be a believer.

And Catholic, she is in the word and she's prayerful. She's such a wonderful witness and the light of Christ shines right through. But it just started with a conversation that had grace seasoned with salt.

And if I had been an unbeliever, it would not have put me off in any way. Oh, well, so you've got a Bible. Well, that's great.

You go read that. I'll do my job. I'll be out of your hair in an hour and a half.

But this is our opportunity in the world to have what Dr. Criswell calls in one of his sermon titles, the attractive Christ. It's not an off-putting faith. It is attractive.

It does in conversation and in life what salt does for a meal. It compliments it. It makes it better.

It makes it desirable, makes it tasty. Seasoned with salt so that you may know how you ought to answer each one. If you approach in grace with just a slight flavoring, a delicate salting, Paul says, you will know how you ought to answer each one.

Each one may be different. Some will be responsive. Some will take a clue.

Oh, you're one of them. And they'll steer the conversation in a different direction. Fine.

Grace, just a seasoning. Don't be throwing salt at them. Don't be casting pearls.

Don't be giving what is holy to someone who has no capacity. Colossians 4, 5, and 6. We've seen this before in Ephesians 5, 15, and 16. Pay careful attention to how you walk.

Pay careful attention to how you walk. We often just kind of get on autopilot and we're not really paying attention. You can end up on YouTube walking into a lamppost.

Pay careful attention to how you walk. Not as unwise, but as wise. Wisdom is knowledge with sensitivity.

When and how to speak it. When and how to apply it. Redeeming the time because the days are evil.

In 1 Thessalonians 4, we've seen this. Paul transitions seamlessly from one another love to outsider love. About brotherly love, you have no need that I write.

But to those who are outside, aspire to live quietly. Attend to your own matters. Quietness, tend to your own knitting.

Tend to your own matters. Work with your own hands as we instructed you. Then you will behave properly toward outsiders without being dependent on anyone, without intruding in anyone, without interfering with anyone, without getting into conflict and dispute with anyone.

Our closing scripture tonight is 1 Peter 3, beginning at verse eight. Finally, all of you, and these are so interesting in Greek because this is listed as a one another passage, but one another is not there. All of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another.

Having compassion for one another is just one word in Greek and there's no for one another, there's no prepositional phrase at all. These are single adjectives in Greek and they are words of being. I wanna read you these quickly in Greek.

They are single words that are verbs turned into nouns. This is what we should do as equality, what we should be as equality. And I like the translation that says be, you notice it's in italics in your Bible.

But these are finally all of you, this is all of us who are believers and in the fellowship, homophrones is the first one, be of one mind is just one word, homophrones, phrono is the word to think. The next word is sympathies. You turn the U to a Y and we get sympathy, sympathetic.

So single-minded, homophrones, sympathies, sympathetic ones, this is sensitivity, this is wisdom with discernment. Philadelphoi, brotherly love ones. It doesn't say loving one another as brothers, it just means we are characterized, we are philadelphoi, we are brotherly love ones.

The world will know you are my disciples because you love one another. You splashnoi, this is good guts ones. Splachnos is your guts and eu means good.

It says tenderhearted, but it's your instincts, your gut reaction is seeking the good. Typainophrones, this is, once again, phrono means how you think and it's typaino, this is humility. Your thinking, your thoughts, your opinions are characterized by humility.

Not repaying evil for evil or insult for insult. On the contrary, blessing because to this you were called so that you may inherit the blessing. This is the quality of people we should

be and it should be observable to those who are outside.

Well, I hope these studies on love have been helpful to discern what the target group is so that we know what kind of love to express, to be wise, to be non-confrontational, never returning evil for evil, loving our enemies, doing good to those who hate us, praying for those who spitefully use us. Our response is never negative. It is never violent.

At best, we are passive, live and let live. When opportunity arises, do good to all. That's it in a nutshell.

Well, we'll be back to finishing the mystery doctrines. We have a couple left to go from Paul dealing with the rapture. This is the next one coming up after the blindness of Israel.

We have the mystery of the disappearance of the church. That's a fun one and that's what we'll look at next time. We'll close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the clear and explicit guidance you give us so that we know how we can live to be pleasing in your sight, to reflect your glory and to properly represent the Lord Jesus Christ as his body on this earth. We pray that God, the Holy Spirit will give us insight and discernment to make application of what we have learned to fully witness and shine the light of your glory on this earth so that those who are seeking you can find you, those who ask us a reason for our hope can be given a worthy answer through the power of your spirit and the wisdom from your word. We thank you for these things and we pray for your guidance and direction in our lives in Jesus' name, amen.