

Matthew 20-07-12b

Thank you Dan and Anna-Lynn and Lori for that wonderful reminder, perfectly chosen without any prior collusion, the solid rock. All other ground is sinking sand. You think about that picture of the disciples crossing the sea toward the destination of God's deliverance and domination of evil in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

One of the first things to remember is that there are steps to be taken in that journey. The disciples are not passive because there is water coming into the boat. If you're a sailor and there's water coming into your boat, what do you do? You bail, right? Now, if the water of the chaotic sea represents evil, what does that connote for us? What does it suggest for us? I can't control the raging sea.

I can't control the waves. I can't control necessarily even where I am as God's wind is driving all of us forward to His ultimate destination. But if evil slops over around my feet, if it's within my reach and I can scoop it up and bail it and toss it out, that's what I should do.

That's my part. What is the disciples part in the storm on the sea? Instead of being afraid, instead of running to the stern and waking up the master and saying, don't you care that we're perishing? What should you do? This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine. Brighten the corner where you are, all these songs we learned as at least some of us did as kids.

Brighten the corner where you are. You can't brighten the whole world, but you can brighten your little bursting radius, your little area of influence. If water is coming into the boat at your location, pick up something and bail, scoop it up and toss it out.

This evil is not going to be around my feet. This evil is not going to be in my part of the boat. Boat's not going to sink because I've failed to address the evil that came within my purview and under my control.

Not in my household, not in my conversation, not in my thought life, not in my panic stricken human efforts to try to deliver myself right. Think about it. If the evil is coming into the boat where you are, bail it out.

That's all you have to do. Not in fear, not in panic, not wishing you weren't in the boat or that God wasn't moving his plan forward in a rapid fashion. Just it's moving fast and some of this water is slopping in.

What can I do? I can keep it away from me. I can keep it out of my part of the boat and that's all I have to do. Trust the Lord and bail.

Don't get swept overboard. Don't get blown out of the boat. There's a lot of windy people doing a lot of windy talking about a lot of windy weightless topics.

Don't get blown out of the boat. Just bail. Let's turn now to Matthew chapter 12 where we resume our study in the gospel of Matthew.

And as I said, don't rip out any of the previous pages because we need to turn back a little bit, but you remember what's happening here. He sends out the 12 in chapter 10. We had the John the Baptist evaluation and the evaluation of the messenger in the first part of chapter 11 and the evaluation of the response to that message that was initiated by John and continued by Christ and the disciples.

Woe to you, Corazin and Bethsaida. That was in the last part of chapter 11. Then we finally have this challenge in verse 27.

All things, and by the way, this, you can't believe what I go through for you. I feel like Roger Miller, you know, what all I'd go through for you, anything. Well, uh, you, you have to, you have to know those songs, roller skating, a Buffalo herd.

And, and, uh, if you want me to, and, and, and some of those, but you would not believe the stuff. I'm, I'm want to read you something. Now look at this verse first.

All things have been delivered to me by my father. No one knows the son, except the father, nor does anyone know the father, except the son and the one to whom the son wills to reveal him. Does this seem unusually deep, complex, difficult, vexed? Is this a hard problem at all? I want to read you something, uh, only because you normally don't have to read it.

Although this verse is of central importance for Matthew's Christology, its meaning is much disputed. Lose notes that in an attempt, this is L U Z. He's a commentator in an attempt to defend the authenticity of this passage. And especially this log on some modern scholars in particular, Jeremiah's have steadily reduced the meaning of the words.

What in particular does the verse say about Jesus? The question must be refined into the following. What would Jesus have meant by the words? Assuming of course, that he said them or something like them, what did the evangelist mean by them? And what did his community make of them? What might be made of them by later theologians of the church to the last name group, the theologians of the church, the words may well be taken as pointing to such things as the deity and pre-existence of Christ to the doctrine of the Trinity. Although the text does not of course, directly mention these things, leaving that aside, we may fairly conclude that as often happens in his narrative, the evangelist means to say more by his text than the historical Jesus may have meant.

If in interpreting the present passage, the self-consciousness of Jesus is used as a criterion, a minimalist reading will be the most plausible. The text of Matthew, however, will first of all reflect the intention of the evangelist. It cannot be doubted that the

evangelist has a very high Christology and that gives a raft of references for that.

The present verse is obviously a high point in which the evangelist points to the Jesus who alone is to be put with God as the one through whom he reveals himself to humanity. This passage is thus part of a trajectory within the New Testament that contributes to the conclusions of later theologians who are constrained to draw conclusions that the evangelist himself was not in a position to do. Now, let me tell you what all that means.

What that means is that the commentators and this group of commentators is basically saying, well, the historical Jesus probably didn't say this. And if he didn't say it, he didn't mean as much by it as Matthew means. And Matthew may or may not have understood what he puts down in the mouth of Jesus, but he certainly didn't read into it what later people read into it.

So we're like three steps removed from the truth because Jesus didn't really know what he was saying. And Matthew didn't really know what Jesus was saying. And we don't really know what Matthew was saying, but see, you don't have to wait through all of that.

And the problem is compounded by people who come to this with a reformed perspective because they're seeing predestination that the son is going to arbitrarily decide to whom he is going to reveal the father. Do you see that? All things have been delivered to me by the father. No one knows the son except the father good so far.

No one knows the father except the son and the one to whom the son wills chooses to reveal him. So Jesus is just going to throw a dart at the phone book. And when it hits your name, he's going to reveal the father to you, but it's, it's, it's the reformed idea of predestination, the inscrutable unknowable reasons why Jesus would choose some and not others to reveal himself to that's, that's what's on the board here.

Well, in my opinion, this is poppycock, hogwash, musty old tennis shoes. There is a reason why Jesus reveals the father to some and not to others. Remember Mark chapter four, he taught in the morning and he did not speak to them without a parable.

He did not speak to them without a parable, which makes it a little bit hard to understand unless you are asking and seeking and knocking those who were of that disposition came to him and he explained all the parables. His disciples came to him and he said, this is the parable of the sower and the seed. And he explained the other parables as well.

We only have the explanation of the sower and the seed, but it's an example. And in the afternoon, Jesus explained all of these parables to those who asked him, who wanted to know what they meant, who weren't just throwing up their hands and saying, well, this guy, he's like Nostradamus. Nobody knows what he means by what he says.

And they just walked away. So this is not arbitrary, capricious, inscrutable choosing. To whom does Jesus decide to reveal the father? People of faith, people who are humble, not impressed with their own intellect, not satisfied with their own conclusions and their own answers, aren't worshipping their own smarts, but they want to know the truth.

One of the biggest impediments to knowing the truth is being impressed with your own brain, because it leads to the arrogance that Paul talks about in Corinthians. Knowledge puffs up, thinking you know, thinking you see, thinking you've got it all figured out, and your God becomes your feeling, your decision, your thought about a thing. Oh, yes, I trust my inner compass.

And people like that ought to spend some time around Alzheimer's patients who think they know what's going on, and they don't. But their level of conviction that they know what's happening is every bit as high, every bit as strong, every bit as certainty inducing in their mind, as someone who is in the prime of life, but has a lot of smarts, is able to put things together, pick things up, cleverness. We're going to see Jesus talk about this.

But the ones to whom the son chooses to reveal the father are those who truly want to know. Anybody else is going to misunderstand it, is going to twist it, is going to reject it. This knowledge is only powerful, is only pertinent, is only meaningful to those who want it.

It's like manna collected right after it fell. On that day, it's good. And if you're seeking it, and you go out and find it and collect it, it is nutrition.

It tastes like honey. But if you pick it up later, if you try to keep it too long, if you misuse it in some way, if you mishandle it, remember manna would spoil. People that tried to keep it over and use it in ways that God told them not to, it would spoil.

The manna of the Word of God is sweet and nutritious to those who follow God and are seeking it. So then he concludes chapter 11 by saying, come to me, you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Come to me, you who labor and are heavy laden.

The word labor here is *kopiaio*. We talk about something being copious. It comes from this word, a copious collection.

It means somebody did a lot of work to put it all together. *Kopiaio*, K-O-P-I-A-O, *kopiaio*. And it's important because labor, *kopiaio*, and then the next word, heavy laden, this is, I mentioned this last time, I think it's *fortizo*.

And you get the idea of effort, efforting, you're *fortiazoing*. But the picture here, these words were commonly used, a beast's of burden. And the picture here is you're an ox pulling a heavy cart.

You've got, this is a load of boulders that are being carried out of a field so that you can plow it or something. And, or you're a, you're a donkey and you've got a big heavy burden. They used to use mules for artillery and they would put artillery pieces, these big cast steel things with big base plates and ammunition and such on these mules because motorized vehicles couldn't make it through the rough terrain, but the mules could.

You want to talk about heavy laden. You look at these black and white pictures of these mules wending their way up these mountain trails and that's laboring and heavy laden. And Jesus says, come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, I will give you rest.

I will give you rest. The word for rest here is anapazo. We get the word pause from the last part of that word.

You can, you can take a break. And ana means up or again. So this means like to rest up.

I will give you a resting up, a restorative experience. Why? Well, he says, you're laboring and heavy laden. I will give you rest.

Take my yoke. So you're going to undo that burden and you're going to put on another burden. This is not a burdenless life.

It is exchanging the fruitless, laborious, burdensome life for a different kind of effort, a different kind of work. You're not removing a yoke. You're exchanging the yoke.

He says, come to me. I will take that burden and that heavy load off of you, that work. I'll take that work away.

Put my yoke on. You're still going to have something to do. It's still going to require something from you and pay attention.

Now there's a lot of people, some formerly, others currently who think that Christianity is not anything but grace. And you just, you're just carried along. I'm just going to wait.

God will, Oh Lord, fill me, use me, pull my strings. I empty myself, come in, take me over, run me like a robot. I just yield myself.

It's yieldedness Christianity. I'll yield. I'll just go completely limp and you pick me up and use me like a rag doll or a puppet or, you know, just, I make myself available.

You do everything. This is not the biblical picture. Jesus says, look, if you're working hard and you've got a heavy burden, lay that aside.

Come to me. I'll give you rest from that. You are relieved of that fruitless work for which you don't have the strength, but you take my yoke on you.

Now, what would you do if you had an animal, you put a yoke on them and they didn't move. I passed some Amish people the other day, uh, going along in their, in their buggy. They had to, had a team of horses and everything.

Well, if they put the, I've got a horse collar hanging out here on the deck, you can walk by and look at it. You put that on the animal. Why? Well, doesn't that look nice? It's for work.

You do something with it. It's got a purpose. If I put that on an animal and he just plops down on the ground, that's pointless.

Take my yoke. Jesus says, you are going to effort. You're going to do something, but it's going to be a different kind of work.

It is going to be bearing a different sort of burden. And this one is transformational. It is completely new and different.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me. This is the effort to learn, not the effort to try to accomplish the task. Make the effort to learn.

Where do you work? Where is your yoke? The discipline to come to Bible class, to concentrate, to assimilate, to meditate, to reflect, to chew on, to pray over, to pray through, to pray up the things we learn. Lord, help me to remember this. Help me to do this.

Shine the light of your word on my path so that I can place my feet securely. Your word is a lamp to my feet. It's a light to my path.

I want to be the Proverbs 2 person that inclines my ear, that applies my heart, that lifts up my voice. Here is me, Lord. I am crying out for understanding.

You've promised that if I lift up my voice for understanding, you'll grant it. I need understanding. I want to know what to do in my circumstance, my situation.

I want your glory to reflect off of me in the way I live my life. I've got this yoke from the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the work I want to do.

I want to learn from him. I want to follow his example of faith and obedience. I want to take up my cross and follow him.

Take up my yoke and learn from me, Jesus says, for I am gentle and lowly in heart. Now, I have mistakenly, for most of my Sunday school trained life, imagined a burrow or a donkey or something taking its yoke or a young ox or something taking on its yoke, but it's humble and willing to bear it. Pay attention to the pronouns and the picture here.

Jesus says, take my yoke upon you. He's the owner. He's the farmer.

He's the person getting work done and deciding which beast is going to do what work. He is putting the yoke on the animal for its particular task. And he says, take my yoke upon you and learn from me.

I will train you how to pull, how to turn, how to work in a team, whatever your particular assignment is in that yoke. Learn from me why I am gentle and lowly in heart. I am a kind master.

I am not putting this yoke on you to whip you, to beat you, to overwork you, to be insensitive to you, to work you with no water, with inadequate food, with inadequate shelter. I am meek and lowly in heart. I sympathize with you.

This work is going to be for your good. Well-trained and well-maintained and cared for horses and cows love their life. Horses, particularly when you care for horses and it's time to go out for a ride, they can't wait.

You would say, oh, but don't they want to be free and go to that island where the Mustangs roam and there's no men and don't they just want to live the wild carefree life? These horses are cared for. They don't have to worry about where their food comes from. They are groomed.

They are doped with stuff to keep the horse flies off. They're checked and vaccinated so they don't get diseases. Their hooves are kept clean and often shod.

And when it's time to go out for a ride and you put that saddle on them, you think, oh, a saddle, that's going to be the weight of a man on them. That's so unkind and unfair. The horses love it.

The horse will come and grab the bridle and bring it to the guy and say, hey, put this on me. Let's go for a ride. I love that stuff.

My yoke is easy. My burden is light. It becomes enjoyable.

You do it with enthusiasm instead of laboring and being heavy laden. It's a joy. You ever had a task and in the midst of it, you say, boy, I love this.

If you've got a really great lawnmower and you've got a lawn before you and you go out there and that lawnmower is just hitting on all two cylinders or whatever it is. And the blades are sharp and the controls are tight and you've got a full tank of gas and the thing is just singing along. It's a joy.

You can see where you've been. Are you working? Yes. But you look at the result and you say, oh, I love this.

People that garden, it's a lot of work, but they love it because they see the fruit and it's gratifying. This is the kind of yoke that Jesus gives us. Take my yoke upon you and learn

from me because when I put a yoke on you, I am doing it in humility.

I'm doing it in gentleness of heart. I'm doing it because I care about you, because I know what will benefit you the most and will benefit the kingdom of God. The most will prepare you for those future kingdoms of the son and of the father will help you reflect the glory of God.

Now reflect the glory of God in the future. He knows what is best. He's not doing an arrogance.

He's not doing it in insensitivity, just the opposite. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me. You will find rest for your souls.

Notice verse 28, I will give you rest. You're not going to have a troubled heart. The task is not going to be so daunting that it crushes you, that it depresses you, that it scares you, that you want to turn away and do something else.

What does it say at the end of verse 28? I will give you rest. What does it say at the end of 29? You will find rest for your souls. This is resting work.

You've got the yoke on and it's restorative. It's restful. Take my yoke upon you and you will find rest.

It's counterintuitive. Why? Verse 30, my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Wish I had time.

I could show you all kinds of wonderful things in the Greek. If you want to do an interesting study, just go to your Strongs and look up each of these words, labor, heavy laden, easy and light. It's a wonderful study.

Maybe I'll just give you one of these. My yoke is easy. This is a wordplay in my view, at least in Greek.

Now Jesus may have said this in Aramaic, but in Greek, which is inspired, Jesus says, my yoke is Zugos, Z-U-G-O-S and U becomes Y. So you've heard of a zygote. Well, it's named for its shape. It means yoke.

Zugos, zygos means yoke. So the state of reproduction going from an egg to a blastocyst to a zygote to a, you know, whatever else. But what I want to get to is my yoke is easy.

The word easy is Christos, C-H-R-E-S-T-O-S, one letter off from Christos. And you've heard me say many times when you go over to Peter and he's quoting, he says, taste and see that the Lord is good. Some manuscripts say taste and see that the Lord is Christ.

And this same mix up, I believe has occurred in Philippians for me to live as Christ. I

think the original said for me to live is this word, for me to live as Christos, for me to live is good. It's beneficial.

There's a good, better, and best idea. And this is sort of in the better range. My yoke is better.

It doesn't really mean easy. It means better. So for me to live is better and to die is a game.

This is I think what Paul said in Philippians. Anyway, Christos. And my burden is light.

This means that when you have this burden on, you can still be quick and agile. You can move easily. You're flexible.

It has the idea of something that because it is light, it is agile. It has great ability because it's not weighted down, laying aside every weight and the sin that besets us, let us run. Well, you can run so much better.

You know, people buy the lightweight shoes. They buy the lightweight shorts. They shave their hair so they don't have wind resistance.

They do everything they can to be light. And the burden that the Lord Jesus assigns us enhances our agility and our quickness and our usefulness and how quick we travel. So it's a wonderful word study.

But in the time that remains to me, I want to, as we come to chapter 12 and we've got this wonderful pericope of the disciples harvesting grain with their hands on the Sabbath. And Jesus is going to give a very interesting reply to that. But I'm going to save that for next time.

And I want to flip back to Matthew chapter 10. Now we looked at this earlier. Do not worry.

Do not fear. Do not fear. Do not fear.

Do not fear. Remember that? Do not worry in verse 19. Do not fear in verse 26.

Do not fear in verse 28. Do not fear in verse 31. Fear is your enemy.

God has not given us a spirit of fear. If you find yourself fearful, that's a warning light on the dashboard. Where is your peace? Where is your faith? The Lord's in the boat.

Peace be still. Don't let your soul be like the sea. So there's something that I did not talk about here in this portion of chapter 10.

And that is back in verse 15. Remember he was giving them practical instructions. And he said in verse 11, whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy and stay

there till you go out.

We're talking about practical things to do in our current situation, our current times, right? So recognize it's a windstorm. That's number one. A lot of windy people doing a lot of talking.

It's a wind that is blowing, but it is blowing human history forward toward the time where people without faith are going to have their blinded minds fooled, fooled completely. This is the Antichrist selling the big lie. This is a birth pang.

This may be one of the last great big birth pangs. I can't imagine it getting much worse than this unless people actually start turning each other over unto death. So far, you just get character assassinated that nobody is actually turning their parents in and having them executed yet.

But you watch what happens if some of these people actually get the reins of power and they are power hungry. They are power mad. Their God is their emotion.

They are thankless. Read what men will become in the latter days according to the apostle Paul. Go back and read Jude again.

We've covered all these passages. You know from the word of God that these times must come. Well, here they are.

Don't panic, but what should we do? First of all, recognize the season, recognize the signs of the times. These are the times of the close of the church age, number one. Knowing that, number two, John 14, one, let not your heart be troubled.

You believe in God. You believe in Christ. Base your thinking on that.

Rehearse, review, reflect on your promises, your principles, and your doctrines. Be steady. Be steadfast and immovable, not giving up your hope.

I don't know the reference for that. You can look it up. Be steadfast and immovable.

Don't give up your hope. Don't be a fearful disciple. Just get your bucket and bail.

Make sure there's not evil in your part of the boat, right? That's number two. Number one, it's a windstorm. Don't panic.

Number two, if there's evil in your vicinity, bail it out. Number three, do not fear. We have here in verse 10, I mean in chapter 10, and in verse 14, whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet.

If you're associated with people who are buying this virulent strain, this mind virus that is

going around, COVID virus is not the danger. It's the mind virus that is coming in right behind it. That's what to watch out for.

And if you're going to wear a mask, figuratively speaking, you need to be wearing your spiritual mask. Don't let the mind virus get in. If people are not interested in your words, which ought to be words that reflect scripture, words that reflect hope, faith, love, spiritual integrity, divine viewpoint, those are your words.

If people aren't accepting those words, get out. I say again, if you're a part of a chat group, if you're a part of a fellowship, if you're a part of a confraternity of some sort, you're having regular conversations and people will not receive your words, will not hear them, depart from that house or that city and shake the dust off your feet. Don't get infected with their virus because it will infect you.

It'll start eating. Now, I'm the last one to say that, you know, I can only, there are people who think, well, I've got to preserve my faith and I'm not going to listen to any arguments against it. I don't want to listen to the other side.

You know, from experience, we always listen to the other side and we evaluate it. But once we determine that the other side is dripping virulent evil, we don't have to keep listening to it. I've heard enough of that.

I don't have to listen to it and keep on evaluating it. After going once or twice, it's heathen and tax collector time, right? If somebody's got ought against us, so interesting. It's not, if I've got something against someone else, if they've got something against me, well, guess who's got something against you now? Turn on your TV, look at your phone, watch social media.

There's any number of, of tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of people that have got ought against us. Well, the local representation, that the part of that, that touches you, the water that's coming into your boat right now, touching your feet. If you, if they will not receive you or hear your words, bail that water out of the boat, get out of that city and shake the dust off your feet.

Separation is in order. Once you see that these people have closed their minds, the God of this world is blinded. Their minds get out.

Your continued presence, your continued contact is not going to do them any good. And it could do you harm, shake the dust off your feet. Now, this is interesting.

Verse 15, assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city. Leave them to God, leave them to God. Verse 23, when they persecute you in this city, flee to another.

When they persecute you in this city, the first city was one where they won't listen to

you or accept you. Here, they're persecuting you. When they persecute you in this city, flee to another.

Assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes. And this is a fun verse to look at here in verse 23. You will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

The word gone through doesn't mean gone through. This is the word teleo, T-E-L-E-O. Teleo, I've told you this before, telomeres are the little bindings on the end of your DNA strands.

It means the end. It's the little cap on your shoelace. It's the finish.

Tetelestai, Jesus said on the cross, it is finished. That's the double T at the beginning. That's the mark of the perfect.

It has been finished. Tetelestai, when you double the first letter there, tetel, that's the mark of the perfect. It has been finished.

But it's from this word finished. So it doesn't mean you will not have gone through. It says you will not have finished the cities.

You will not have finished the cities. Then you have the next word here. It says before the Son of Man comes.

It doesn't mean before it means until this is the word haos. Write it down. H-E-O-S, haos.

It is an adverb of time until this is what it means. You have seen this word before. I have talked about it before.

You may be recognizing it and may be ringing a faint bell because if you turn over here to Acts chapter one, verse eight, the Lord Jesus, just before He disappears out of sight, you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you. Don't give that beginning short shrift. Where does your power come from? Why have you the ability to do all things through Christ who strengthens you? Because the Holy Spirit has come upon you.

You are sealed. You are marked. You are indwelt.

You are filled. You are gifted. You are baptized.

You are regenerated by the Holy Spirit of God. He is your possession. He is your constant companion.

He is the paraclete. He is the comforter. He never leaves you nor forsakes you.

He is what glues us to Christ. Our Holy Spirit baptism places us in Christ. He is the

connective tissue that plants us permanently and forever in the body of Christ.

The Holy Spirit is the source of power. If you feel powerless, if you're having trouble staying off fear or working in a positive light to take advantage of these wonderful circumstances to lay hold of righteousness by faith, it's a word problem and a spirit problem. How does the power of God come into the life of the believer? The Word of God and the Spirit of God.

Power will come upon you when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you shall be witnesses to me both in Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria. What does it say in your New King James? And to the? No, cross it out. Chaos.

The word in Acts 1A is chaos. What did I just tell you chaos means? Until the end of the world. You disciples are going to be witnesses to me both in Judea, Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria until the end of the world.

That's what the verse says. It is also used over in Acts chapter 13. Just give this to you real quick.

Verse 47, Paul and Barnabas grow bold and are preaching in verse 46. It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first, but since you reject it and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. Now verse 47, for so the Lord has commanded us, I have set you as a light to the Gentiles that you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.

It says ends plural there. No, this is the Telos singular to the end, to the finish. And it's, it's chaos.

I don't have time to show you all of this, but it's until the end of the earth, even in Acts, the witness of the Jews to the Gentiles will stand until the end of the earth. You can even go back to the Septuagint of Isaiah 49, six, and you've got chaos and Telos involved in all of this. So you will not have gone through is not what it says.

You will not have finished the cities. We have a task to witness. We have a task to shine as a light, and that task does not finish until God brings this history to a conclusion.

You always have a mission. You always have an opportunity. You always have a positive task to operate in faith, not fear to shine as a light, to bail your part of the boat, bail out the evil, eschew the evil cling to what is good.

Be somebody that people want to ask a reason for the hope that is in you. How do you do it? It's the word of God and the spirit of God. We don't do this of ourselves.

The energy and the ability doesn't come from us. God has given it to us. Why are you fearful? Where is your faith? I say, well, I don't know, but I'd sure like to find it.

Well, how do you find it? Keep yourself in the love of God. You do that by the word of God and the spirit of God. It's prayerful.

It is reflecting. It is making sure we're going to see in chapter 12 of Matthew. Next time, the Lord Jesus, when they start challenging him about what he is doing in his times, and it doesn't match what society expects, your disciples are doing what they should not do on the Sabbath.

He's going to take them to the scriptures and he's going to tax their knowledge of the scriptures. And he is going to proclaim himself priest and King. It's a great passage.

We'll see it next Sunday, but we'll close here for this morning in a word of prayer. Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for your spirit.

We thank you most of all for the Lord Jesus Christ who died for us to remove our heavy burden and the endless work that we could never finish, that we can never accomplish in our own strength. And he has replaced it with a spiritual task and spiritual opportunities that give us rest, that give us encouragement, that give us divine strength, divine enablement, divine purpose, divine reward, and blessing all coming from your gracious hand. We pray that as we reflect on these things, your Holy Spirit will make them meaningful and pertinent.

Shine the light of your word on our path individually and collectively so that we can be those who cause others to seek for you. We want our light to shine. And as others see the way our life is lived, see the divine energy showing forth, they want that for themselves.

We pray that you will stabilize us and give us encouragement in these days. And whatever be tied, we know that you have us securely in your hands. And we look forward to the day when the Lord Jesus calls for us and we meet him in the air and are given the opportunity to view those realms in which you yourself dwell.

We thank you for that privilege. We thank you for that hope. And we pray these things in Jesus' name.

Amen.