

Matthew 20-12-13b

Let's return now to our study. We're looking at the kingdom of heaven. And this makes a difference.

If you can remember that it is not a synonym for salvation, not a synonym for salvation. The kingdom of heaven, as some of you have astutely figured out by now is in fact the millennial kingdom. It is the kingdom from heaven.

It is the kingdom that has been promised in Old Testament scripture. It is a promise to the faithful in Israel. And we know this as we continue to look at scriptures in Matthew that tell us its nature, the qualifications to enter it, the qualifications to be great within it.

Resuming, we've already seen chapter one, verse one, verse 21. We've seen chapter two, verse two, verse six, chapter three, pretty much quite a few of the even numbered verses in chapter three, three, two, three, six, three, eight, three, 10 and three, 12. We saw this in chapter four, verse 17 and chapter four, verse 23.

We've seen it in chapter five, verse three, verse 10, verses 19 and 20, where whether or not your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the Pharisees determines what happens in the kingdom. That one bears looking at one more time. The one who does and teaches other things is going to be in trouble, least in the kingdom.

Whoever does and teaches the commandments, one jot and one tittle of which is not going to pass away. Jesus goes on to say in verse 20 of Matthew five, I say to you that unless your righteousness exceeds that of the Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. This is key.

I've saved this for now because unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the Pharisees, those who want to try to see all of this as perseverance of genuine saints, your wheat and not a tear, which is where we're going today, want to say that, well, this has to be the righteousness of God that is an assignment that you get at salvation. You are given God's righteousness because there's none of us that do with righteousness. No, not one.

We are all as an unclean thing. All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. We fade as a leaf.

Our niceties like the wind have carried us away. So the only righteousness that God is going to be pleased with is his own righteousness that only comes at salvation. That's the righteousness that exceeds the righteousness of the Pharisees.

This, you can see how somebody with a set of presuppositions could make this work after a fashion. I am going to point out some things as we continue that I think make that an untenable view. But 520 is key.

I say to you, unless your righteousness exceeds, it doesn't say unless you have God's righteousness, which exceeds, does it? It says your righteousness has to be better than a Pharisee's righteousness. You have to be performing works, not just being assigned. It isn't something that is given.

There are people who argue that we are, they go to Paul where he says, whereas by one man sin entered the world and death by sin. So the death passed upon all men because all have sinned. And by the sin of the one, many were made sinful.

Then by the sacrifice of the last Adam, many are made righteous. And he says, we're made the righteousness of God. And there are verses that could be taken that way.

He made him to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. So context is the key. And I don't have time to look at that context because our subject is the kingdom.

But as we're going to see, righteousness is in two different stages of our deliverance. It comes in two different forms. And one of them is positional.

One of them is legal or forensic. The other is experiential and practical. One of them is an act of God.

The other is based on our response to that act of God. So we can be made the righteousness of God in him, being in Christ as a church age believer. And this qualifies us for certain exemptions from judgment, such as eternal judgment.

It does not automatically qualify us for every good thing. In the same way that you could be messing up the following and the teaching of the law in Matthew 5, 19, breaking even the least of the commandments and teaching others that way, which was an indictment of the Pharisees of whom he is going to speak in the next verse. The Pharisees are breaking, they're priding themselves on tithing the spices in their cabinet and so on, but they are whitewashed tombstones and they have broken the first great commandment and the second, which is like unto it because they don't love God with all their heart, soul and strength.

And they are not loving their neighbor as themselves. But Jesus says, even if you break the least of the commandments and teach others to do so. And this is how we know he's talking about the Pharisees.

Do the Pharisees believe in God? Just like Jews of any number of generations before them. And that's the basis of Old Testament salvation. Hebrews 11, six, the one who comes to God must believe that he is and that he rewards those who diligently seek him.

Did the Pharisees believe that God lived? That there was a God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Yes, they did. Did they believe that he would reward those who diligently sought

him? Yes, they did. In the same way that Jacob believed that if he would wrestle with God's messenger all night long and not let him go, he could get a blessing.

This was not lack of faith. It wasn't lack of salvation. It was a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

A zeal for God, but ignorant. And as Paul says in Romans, that zeal led them to seek to establish their own righteousness and overlook the righteousness of God, which is by faith. And this is living faith.

This is ongoing faith. You can be saved and be outside the kingdom. We've seen this in our recent signs of the times study where God says to Israel, I will cause you to pass under the rod.

I will bring you out of the nations, but not everyone is going in. Remember that? I'm going to sort you like a shepherd sorts his flock. Some of you are going to pass under the rod and go into the millennial kingdom.

Others will be denied. Now, how can they be denied unless they are saved and raised, but they are not qualified for the kingdom? And Jesus is going to go on to talk about that. Let's resume our study now in chapter eight.

We've seen the first seven chapters. I gave you all the way through 519 and 20. We saw in chapter six, verse 33, seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

Lilies of the field, Solomon and all his wisdom. You remember that? Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. You have to seek the kingdom.

Seeking is not a part of salvation. God does the seeking. Jesus said, I am come to seek and to save that which was lost.

He has lost his own people. His own people are like the 100th sheep that has strayed from the 99. And he has gone, it's his sheep.

It belongs to him. It's not from another fold. He didn't find a wild sheep or goat and domesticated and bring it back.

He didn't evangelize it. It was in his fold. It's a part of his flock.

It has strayed and he has gone to get that lost sheep and bring it back. Remember, these are the parables of lost things in Luke. The lost coin, the lost sheep, the lost son, the prodigal.

And all of these are losing something that is already a possession and is part of a set. The coin was part of a set. The son has got a brother and they all live in the father's house.

The sheep is part of a flock that is kept in a fold and it strays and goes away. I am come to seek and to save that which was lost, not lost in the salvation sense. And it is so important.

I cannot tell you as I have been reading Christians, seminary trained pastors discussing the concepts of justification and redemption and reconciliation and propitiation and slaughtering them like sacrifices, mis-dividing the word of truth. And the tragedy of it is you fall under the condemnation of 519 and 20 where because you misunderstand scripture as a student of the word of God, if you then go and teach others also, it is the blind leading the blind and they both fall into the ditch. Now, I'm not saying that all biblical knowledge is gonna die with me.

What I will say is that it doesn't take a rocket scientist. It doesn't take a THD and a guy with 19 letters after his name to look at the word of God and see when it clearly states that works are involved in entering the kingdom of heaven, that it cannot be salvation unless you wanna believe in salvation by works or you want to twist works into being incontrovertible and inseparable evidence of salvation, which scripture does not teach. And when you do teach that and you teach it to people, believers lose their sense of need for change of mind.

I'm fine. It's locked in. I believed in Jesus.

So all things are mine in him. I'm gonna walk the streets of gold. I'm gonna have access to the tree of life.

I'm gonna drink the water from the river of life. I'm going to sit on a cloud and play a harp and everything's gonna be great. And I'm going to be visiting with all the great old saints and everybody will be happy over there.

The Bible does not teach that. And one of the reasons people think it teaches it is they do not make a careful study of concepts that are taught, clearly taught. I don't have to be a genius to show you for yourself what scripture says.

If the kingdom of heaven is something that Jesus is going to tell people that he has been teaching all day, they need to seek. And he's not saying if you don't enter the kingdom, you're headed for the lake of fire, then it's not salvation. And it's important to understand that it's not salvation because the kingdom we have been promised is also not a synonym for salvation and it is possible to miss it.

So as we come to chapter five, 19 and 20 that we just looked at, and then in chapter six, verse 33, where Jesus says, seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added unto you. If you seek the kingdom, God will take care of your provision. Take no thought for what you eat, what you drink and what you wear.

Now we always take thought, don't we? But do we take excessive thought? Do we worry?

Are we burdened with care? We have been seeing in the parable of the sower and the seeds that the cares of this world can choke the word and make it unfruitful. So when he says take no thought, he means take no undue thought. You can't not think and you'd starve to death.

Can you not think about sticking your fork in your food and shoveling it into your mouth? Can you not think about putting your clothes on and taking them off and having them laundered and mending them when they tear and such? It's of course silly to be overly literal and say, take no thought. I'm not allowed to think about, you know, food, drink and raiment. When he says, don't be excessively careful.

The old King James said, be careful for nothing. Doesn't mean don't be careful, but don't be full of care over anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known to God. When you're resting in God, you're not worrying.

You're not excessively thoughtful about what you eat, what you drink or what you wear. So seek first the kingdom of God, instead of seeking food, seeking security, seeking possessions, seeking financial wellbeing, seek the kingdom. You're already a believer.

You're already trusting God for provision. So if you're seeking the kingdom, you can't be seeking your salvation when you're already saved. Excuse me, I'm gonna wet my whistle.

See, I took a little thought for what I drank. So 633, then you go to 719, talking about the tree that does not bear good fruit is gonna be cut down and burned. This is what springs up from what is planted.

What is the fruit of your life? This is not your eternal destination. But if God sows into us and expects a harvest and it's an Old Testament allusion, you have the vineyard. Let me tell you a story about my vineyard.

I edged it about, I worked on it, but it bore wild grapes instead of good grapes. It did not produce what it was supposed to. Let me tell you what I'm gonna do to my vineyard.

I'm gonna take away its hedge. It's gonna be trampled and destroyed. This is not loss of salvation.

This is loss of blessing and reward and opportunity as those who are productive in God's plan and purpose will receive. So notice verse 21 in chapter seven. Seven.

Get me a piece of candy, por favor. Chapter seven, verse 21. I'm jumping around a little bit here to be sure I cover each one of these because these are all of the references to kingdom up to our passage.

And in chapter seven, verse 21, Jesus says, not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord

shall enter the kingdom of heaven. But what? Not everyone who enters the kingdom of heaven, but he who what? Does the will of my father. Does the will of my father.

Salvation or millennial kingdom. Not everyone who says, Lord, I recognize you as God's authority. Not everyone who says that is going to enter, but those who do the will of the father.

You can't go with salvation by works. Therefore this kingdom is something else. So 633, 719, 721.

Now we come to chapter eight, verse 11. When the centurion says, you don't need to come under my roof to heal my servant or my son. Say the word, I understand authority.

Jesus says in verse 10 of chapter eight, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel. What kind of faith has the man just expressed? I believe you are the Christ, the savior of the world, or I believe you can heal my servant at a distance. What faith is Jesus commending, praising? It is belief in what Jesus can do, not who he is.

He hasn't confessed his sins. He hasn't done any of the things that are often traditionally associated with salvation. He isn't beating his breast saying, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

What does he say? I understand your authority, and I know that you can make my servant slash son well with a word. Jesus says, that's greater faith than I have found anywhere in Israel. And of course his disciples are standing right there, which should give them pause.

Look at verse 11. And I say to you, many will come from East and West and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, where? In the kingdom of heaven. Who are the greats? Who are the most prominent people in the kingdom? Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Remember chapter one, verse one, son of David, son of Abraham. Where is he in chapter two, verse two, where is he that is born King of the Jews? Many others will come and sit down in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But the sons of the kingdom, notice sons of the kingdom, those to whom it was promised, those to whom it rightfully belongs, sons of the kingdom will be cast into outer darkness.

Cast in outer darkness is a synonym. It's synonymous with the concept of the ax that is laid at the root of the bad trees that are bearing no fruit or bad fruit. It is the same as that tree being cut down and burned.

It's a severe penalty and it's designed to scare. It is designed to instill fear. And that fear is one of the concepts that carries forward in observation, interpretation, and application.

Go to the book of Hebrews. Let us fear. Since a promise remaining of entering into his

rest, entering into his rest.

Any of you should seem to come short of it. Entering into rest. This is warning.

This is encouragement. This is opportunity for believers. I know I'm stressing this.

I'm beating it into the ground, but I am telling you, blessed are your eyes because they see, blessed are your ears because they hear this truth. Most of the Christian world today doesn't get this, doesn't understand that there are three coming kingdoms. Is that right? How many coming kingdoms are there? There's two.

Let's see if you're paying attention. Most believers do not understand and they think there is a third kingdom and that we are in it now. And they say, we're doing kingdom work.

We're recruiting kingdom soldiers. We King Jesus this, and that the Lord is already seated on his throne. That's the third kingdom.

This was taught by those who embrace progressive dispensationalism that when the Lord Jesus ascended and sat down at the right hand of the father, he is sitting on the throne of David, but that is somehow our throne. And progressive dispensationalism is a mashup in the true sense of the word of covenant theology and God's promises to Israel and New Testament promises. And so Jesus is our King because he's sitting on David's throne in heaven.

You cannot progress. You cannot refine your understanding. You cannot have the Holy Spirit motivate, cleanse, encourage, guide, lead with blurry, mashed up, mixed up, back up the dump truck and unload the bricks in a pile instead of building a wall, building a house, being built up in your soul with a proper understanding of the truth.

We are not in a kingdom. We're not in the invisible kingdom. Jesus isn't an invisible King of an invisible kingdom sitting on an invisible throne right now.

And he is not our King. He is the King of the Jews. He is the King of Israel.

He is the King of the kingdom of heaven. There are those who will be in that kingdom and those who will be outside. So chapter eight, verse 11, I say to you, many will come from East and West and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

What is he saying? There are Gentiles under the Old Testament model of salvation who are going to qualify for the kingdom and to enter that kingdom and to sit down in it. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob stand for themselves and their faithful descendants. Paul is going to draw this point out when he says, you know, all Israel is not Israel, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called, that it is the faithful who are the true sons of Abraham.

And everyone is a son of Abraham by faith in that sense. But he's using faith there in

contrast to works, in contrast to those who think by keeping the law, they can qualify. It is not by keeping the law, it is by faith.

So the sons of the kingdom in verse 12 will be cast into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, not cast into the lake of fire. They're still around to weep and gnash their teeth.

This is another one of the ways people mix up outer darkness with the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. That's what scripture says.

If it's the second death, how much weeping and gnashing of teeth can go on there? The dead do not weep, the dead do not gnash their teeth. Scripture says being cast into the lake of fire is death. It's the second death, which is like the first death in the sense that it ceases all operation, all conscious thought and action, existence is no longer pertinent in the present time when you die.

Same thing at the second death. So to be cast out is a different thing and there's going to be sorrow, there's going to be kicking oneself or standing in front of the rear end kicking machine for about a thousand years. That's 8.11. Chapter nine, verse 35.

Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages. This is after he's restored the girl to life and healed the mute man and so on. You can peruse the rest of chapter eight and chapter nine.

You get to 35. Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, healing every sickness and every disease among the people. Healing every sickness and every disease.

Change of mind away from dead works and faith toward God. This is the foundation, healing their spiritual diseases. As he preaches the kingdom of heaven, people can change their mind and start bearing fruit in keeping with that change of mind.

He saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them in verse 36, because they were weary and scattered like sheep having no shepherd. They are sheep, they belong to God, but they're unguided. They are wandering.

They don't follow a purpose. They don't, they're not on a schedule. The shepherd is not there.

He says, the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Harvest is plentiful.

There are plenty of people who are ready to change their minds about the good news of the kingdom. Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out workers so that they will not be leaderless and shepherd less. They need teaching, not evangelism.

This is not harvesting souls that if somebody doesn't go harvest them, they're going to be eternally lost. These are people who need to be encouraged, who need to be taught, who need to be shepherded. Poimane Cai de Daskalos, pastor and teacher, shepherd and teacher.

One of the spiritual gifts in the church. That's what the people need. Pray the Lord that he will send out laborers.

We do not convert people to salvation, but people who are asking and seeking and knocking, God will provide laborers who will give them what they need so that that harvest of righteousness by faith, living righteousness, not positional righteousness, righteousness that is by faith, that just shall live by his faith, can be obtained by God's people. So that's 9.35 and following. You come to chapter 10, verse five through seven.

Chapter 10, verse five. Jesus sent out the 12. Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, not enter a city of the Samaritans because the kingdom of heaven is for Israel.

If Jesus was sending out evangelists, does he not want the Samaritans to be saved? Does he not want the Gentiles to be saved? This hardly makes sense, but the Samaritans and the Gentiles have not been promised the Old Testament covenant kingdom, the Davidic covenant, the Mosaic covenant, the promises made to Abraham and to Isaac and to Jacob and to their descendants. Do not pertain to the Samaritans or to the Gentiles. The kingdom of heaven is for Israel.

Now, who first delivered the message, the gospel of the kingdom? We saw it back at the beginning. It was John, right? John chapter one. Who was the second person to preach the gospel of the kingdom of heaven? Jesus, chapter three, right? Now, Jesus sends out his disciples.

In chapter 10, verse six, go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. This is not salvation lost. This is wandering lost.

They need guidance. They need shepherding. They don't need conversion.

As you go, preach saying the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons freely. You have received freely give.

This is something they have received and that they can give. Humans do not give each other salvation. They can give each other speaking the truth in love.

They can give each other the good news from God. We don't give each other salvation. Freely you have received freely give.

Chapter 11, verse 11. Assuredly I say to you among those born of woman, there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist, but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is

greater than he. What has John done thus far? He has been the last great Old Testament prophet.

He has preached the gospel of the kingdom, the message of the need for repentance to enter the kingdom, right? And that call, that faithfulness and obedience is great, but to arrive at the kingdom and be in it, even if you are the least in it, you're greater than the greatest of God's servants who is still anticipating it and isn't in it. John is anticipating the kingdom. God has sent him to preach the coming kingdom, but the least of those who are in the kingdom are greater than John.

There's nobody greater than John outside the kingdom, Jesus says. In the kingdom, even the least has it better than the greatest outside the kingdom, before the kingdom, outside it in time. The next verse, from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence and the violent take it by force.

They're trying to lay hold of the kingdom the way Jacob tried to lay hold of his blessing. I will not let you go until you bless me. I will gain it by my own strength.

I have a zeal for God, but not according to righteousness. Failing to lay hold of the righteousness of God and seeking to establish their own. They're trying to take the kingdom by force, by violence.

You can't get there by force. All the prophets and the law prophesied until John, this is 1113. Next verse says, if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come.

If you are willing to receive it, he is the forerunner of the promised kingdom. I will send you Elijah the prophet, last part of Malachi before the great and terrible day of the Lord, which ushers in the millennial kingdom. It says all about the physical millennial kingdom, the fulfillment of covenant promises to Israel.

That's what the kingdom of heaven is. Now, in the short time that we have remaining to us, you can put with this three verses in chapter 12. 12, 28, and we just saw this recently, so I don't have to go over it.

If I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? They'll be your judges. But if I cast out demons by the spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. If God is manifesting supernatural signs, then the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven, as it were, has come upon you.

And with the kingdom, by implication is the king. And the king has the authority to cast demons out of his kingdom. And he's manifesting that authority before the kingdom ever gets here.

How else can one enter the strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he is able to bind the strong man? They should have learned something about Jesus in that

context. You go to verse 33 of that chapter. Either make the tree good and its fruit good.

This is the third time we've seen good tree, good fruit. Or bad tree, bad fruit. Tree is known by its fruit.

Brood of vipers, how can you being evil speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. Point of application for us, if we want to enter our kingdom, we have got to bridle our tongue. James talks about this.

The tongue is the toughest part to master, and it is set on fire by hell itself. The one who can control what he says. Don't have to say everything you know.

Don't have to tell every tale. Don't have to express every thought, every emotion, every opinion. Be quick to hear, James says.

Slow to speak and slow to wrath. It's in James chapter two, look it up. Every brother, everyone in the faith should be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.

Quickness and slowness. You want to be a good tree? The fruit of the lips should be good. Apples of gold in pictures of silver, as Proverbs puts it.

That's chapter 12, verse 28, verse 33. And then verse 37, by your words, you will be justified. And by your words, you will be condemned.

Is it verbal confession that gets you saved? You can say, well, Romans 10, nine and 10. If you confess with your mouth, the Lord Jesus. By your words, this is the pattern of words.

This is your lifestyle. This is how you speak, how you talk, what you say, what you focus on, what's the substance of your conversations. Jesus warns his people that they're not going to enter their kingdom if they don't watch their words.

By their words, they're going to be judged. We saw this in the criteria for the judgment seat of Christ, didn't we? That it's thoughts, it's actions, it's words. Every word is going to be judged.

By your words, you will be justified. By your words, you will be condemned. This is the nature of our conversation.

So it cannot be talking about justification and condemnation for salvation. This is, are you qualified for the kingdom? Will you pass under the rod if you're Israel? Will you have a pass into that wonderful, eternal new Jerusalem if you're a church age believer and if you're one who qualifies himself after the millennial kingdom? All of us will converge at that second great coming kingdom, the kingdom of the father. Well, that brings us to chapter 13, verse 11.

"Why do you speak to them in parables?" the disciples asked. "Because it has been

given to you "to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, "but to them it has not been given." If you needed a final nail in the coffin of the notion that the kingdom of heaven is synonymous with salvation, you have to be a Calvinist and say, you're elect and they're not. It was given to you to be saved and it's not given to them.

And that's exactly how they take it. And that's why you can have Calvinists who swear up and down that their view is scriptural because this is how they see the scriptures. This is how they interpret them.

All of it is from God. All of it is determined by God. God just gave you disciples knowledge of the mystery of the kingdom.

Therefore you're ordained, you're elect, you're tulip all the way. And you're going to persevere and bear good fruit. Your tree will never be cut down.

So relax. That's not what scripture teaches. The kingdom of heaven is the millennial kingdom.

There are those who will be raised and yet be outsiders. Go to Daniel chapter 12. This is our concluding thought as we close.

If you had any doubt, just remember what Daniel is told. Daniel chapter 12. I'm going to read it word for word.

The great Prince who stands watch over the sons of your people. There'll be a time of great trouble, such as never was since there was a nation. This is the 70th week.

This is the tribulation followed by what? How many times we've been over that timeline? What comes after the tribulation? Resurrection of old Testament saints and the millennial kingdom, the kingdom of heaven. At that time, your people shall be delivered. Everyone who is found written in the book and many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake.

Many, but not all. Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake. Some to a resurrection of everlasting life.

Some to shame and everlasting contempt. They sleep in the dust of the earth. They are going to be raised to shame and contempt.

Weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. Outer darkness, tree cut down by the ax laid at its root. Righteousness that did not exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees.

The resurrection of shame and contempt. If you go the Calvinist route, there is nothing to alarm or worry any believer because you've got the resurrection of everlasting life. And this is life in its abundance.

There are the wise will shine like the brightness of the firmament and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever. Look at the sheep and goats judgment. Enter into the kingdom prepared for you by my father.

Leaving the millennial kingdom, sheep and goats judgment is at the end of that kingdom of heaven. And those who qualify as sheep will then enter the kingdom of the father. Enter the kingdom prepared for you by my father.

Because when I was hungry, when I was sick, when I was in prison, you fed me, you clothed me, you visited me, works. Entering that future kingdom is that salvation by works or is it reward for faithfulness and obedience? It's easily discerned if we look. And it's important to understand this because we have got to examine ourselves and see if we are in the faith.

Now, moderation in all things. God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, of love and a sound mind. If you find yourself getting concerned and alarmed about standing in the future, that's a good thing.

That's the purpose of these scriptures. That's what the Holy Spirit is calling to our minds. You don't want the Lord Jesus looking at us and shaking his head and saying, the field is ripe for harvest, but there's nobody to bring it in.

Pray the Lord of the harvest that there will be workers who will do what needs to be done. We've got that message. We know what can be done.

We have the grace of God. We have the provision of God. We have the guidance of God.

We have the clear teaching of scripture to seek the kingdom that is promised to us and God's righteousness, which comes by faith, by trusting him. I don't know how he's going to solve certain problems, answer certain questions, work out certain details, but I know whom I have believed, right? I'm persuaded that he's able to keep whatever I commit to him. I commit to him everything I don't know.

He's got it. He's going to keep it. If I am seeking his kingdom and his righteousness, he will reveal to me what I need.

I can pray the prayer of Psalm 51. Search me, try me and know my heart. See if there is any wicked way in me.

Purge me with hyssop so that I can be clean. Wash me, make me whiter than snow. Show me my hidden faults.

There is no time that God is not going to answer that prayer. So if you're worried, if you're concerned, if you're rightly looking ahead and saying, I do not want to be in the darkness, which is outside my promised kingdom, you know what to do. Ask, seek and

knock and watch for God's answer.

Implement the answer. Think on these things. Do the Psalm chapter one.

Be diligent to show yourself approved unto God a workman that does not need to be ashamed, does not need to have a resurrection of shame and contempt. God provides everything we need. It's just a matter of wanting it.

So now that we know what the kingdom of heaven is, when we return next time to our kingdom of heaven parables, the point of those parables is going to be clear. And then by observing, interpreting and applying, we will see what the point is for us with regard to our future, our opportunities. And it is a really great insight that we gain understanding why Jesus is giving these parables in the form that he does.

What is the wheat? What are the tares? What are the thorns? These parables just open up like oysters with pearls inside once we know what Jesus is talking about. So that's where we'll pick up next time. Let's close here in a word of prayer.

Father, we thank you for your grace, your faithfulness toward us, the revelation of these truths so clearly, so pertinent, so helpful in our current circumstances and situation. We pray that God, the Holy Spirit will find us apt pupils, ready to receive and to apply these things as they pertain in our specific circumstances, that we may grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and savior, that we can present ourselves as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable, and not be conformed to the world, but be transformed in the renewing of our minds with this wonderful truth spoken by the Lord Jesus himself. We pray these things in Jesus' name, amen.