

Matthew 21-03-04b

Let's continue our study now in Matthew where we have seen the significance of this request because it tells you about the heart of the people. And this is Jesus' observation when He says, the reason I'm speaking to them in parables so that they see and do not perceive, they hear and do not understand, is they do not have the heart that God can bless with the gift of insight, with the gift of understanding, to understand these mysteries. And He said that back in chapter 13.

Well, as we come to chapter 15, which we've already seen, the scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem came to Jesus. They've come all the way up there because He's become a phenomenon, He's trending, He's got His own hashtag now. So they're going to come up.

Why do your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? They do not wash their hands when they eat bread. What does the law of Moses have to say about washing your hands before you eat bread? I'll save you the trouble of reading all five books, nothing. The law of Moses says exactly nothing about washing your hands before you eat bread.

This is an invented standard of righteousness on the part of the elders. And Jesus says, your invented traditions are violating the command of God. We saw that on Sunday.

Hypocrites, verse seven, well, did Isaiah prophesy about you saying? Now, what did I just skip over? Jesus said, you are violating the commandment of God with your tradition. In what way? I've declared my possessions to be a future gift to God. It's a bequest.

I've put them in a trust. They're going to go to the work of God when I die. Therefore, I can't pull any out to help mom and dad.

What is the, it's not just the law of Moses. It's in the 10 commandments. No other gods before me not make into the any graven image.

Don't take the name of the Lord, your God in vain. Then what? Honor your father and mother that your days may be long in the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee in the King James. Honor your father and mother.

It's the first one after the God centered commands, commandments, father and mother. It's before adultery. It's before coveting.

It's before bearing false witness right below God, honor your father and mother. So how could they avoid honoring father and mother? They've got to find a way to attach their behavior to the first three commandments. And so that's what they've done.

They have found a way around having to support their parents. How seriously does God take this very seriously? It's in the 10 commandments. First tablet.

Well, did Isaiah prophesy about you saying, and this is a quote from Isaiah chapter 29. This people draws near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. What did we just see at the end of chapter 14 there? Are they drawing near? Are they making a request to the Lord Jesus? Well, I'm talking to the son of God here.

I'm talking, of course, they don't recognize him as son of God, but I've drawn near and I'm, I'm speaking with my lips. I'm making a request, humbling myself as it were requesting to be able to touch these clothes. Their heart is far from me.

And in vain, they worship me teaching as doctrines, teaching as truths, stuff that's been made up by men. Well, this is a quote. And you should always in your personal Bible reading, devotions, whatever you do, anytime you come across a new Testament scripture that quotes the old turn back and find out what that footnote fully says.

Jesus doesn't have the time or inclination to quote the entire context in Isaiah, but we have the time and inclination to go back and see what it says. So I've got my ribbon marker here in Matthew chapter 15, and I'm turning back to Isaiah chapter 29 and Isaiah 29 begins woe to Ariel. And this is, this is one of the, one of the names for Jerusalem.

Why would it be Ariel? What is Ariel mean? You know, Gabriel, Gabor, El is the strong one of God. Uriel, the light of God. What is Ariel? This is lion of God, right? Ariel, lion of God.

Why would he refer to Jerusalem as Ariel? What is he specifically addressing? Who's supposed to be the ruling tribe in Israel? It's the tribe of Judah, right? Judah, the, when you go back to the blessings from their father, Jacob, Judah is a lion's whelp. So this is a reference to not just Jerusalem, but to Israel. This is a reference to the government of Judah, to the leadership of Judah, lion of God.

You know, they say this is woe to Jerusalem. This is woe to the leaders of Jerusalem, the leadership. Woe to Ariel, the city where David dwelt.

Why David? First king from the tribe of Judah. Had a king before that, but he is the one from the tribe of Judah. I will distress Ariel verse two.

Now why? I asked myself this question. Woe to Ariel, the city where David dwelt. I will distress Ariel.

Why? Well, what's in the preceding context? Go back to chapter 28. Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, which is at the head of the verdant valleys to those who are overcome with wine. Be not drunk with wine when it is excess, be filled with the spirit.

Drunk with wine. This is the pursuit of self-gratification, pleasure. This isn't a little wine for the stomach's sake.

This isn't wine at dinner to wash down a meal and compliment the cooking. This is drunkenness, pursuit of pleasure, wanton disregard for self control, for reflecting the glory of God. This is pursuit of self-gratification.

Behold, verse two of chapter 28, Isaiah. The Lord has a mighty and strong one like a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, like a flood of mighty waters overflowing who will bring them down to earth with his hand. The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim will be trampled under foot.

The glorious beauty is a fading flower at the head of the verdant valley. Like the first fruit before the summer, which an observer sees, he eats it up while it is still in his hand. It does not last.

In that day, the Lord of hosts will be for a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty to the remnant of his people. So where do you look? Do you look to the crown of pride or do you look to the crown of glory and diadem of beauty? Right now, when you look around in our country, our society, our culture, who gets crowned? Who is feated and admired and celebrated and rewarded and awarded? Who gets the Emmys and the Grammys and the awards for good television and so on? It is pride. It is arrogance.

It is beauty that fades and perishes. It is here today and gone tomorrow. Today's celebrity is tomorrow's dog baying at the outskirts of town, having been run out on a rail, to mix my metaphors.

What kind of leadership and rulership and authority should the remnant of the people of God be looking at? Just like we saw in the first session, we commit, we aim our faith, we aim our trust, our confidence. We build on the foundation of God in heaven, not the shifting sands of what passes for righteous, what passes for good, what passes for strength, and what passes for power in this crumbling, fading, humanly dictated traditional world. And when I say tradition, it doesn't have to be long lasting.

It can be any more with the rapidity with which things move. The traditions of men can spring up in a day, the grass withers and the flower fades. And today's celebrity is tomorrow's, you know, pariah.

It is the crown of glory, a diadem of beauty. This is Isaiah 28, verse five, to the remnant of his people. This is the faithful few.

This is the few, the humble. Marines like to say the few, the proud. Believers should be the few, the humble.

A spirit of justice to him who sits in judgment and for strength to those who turn back the battle at the gate. They have erred through wine and through intoxicating drink. They're out of the way.

You don't have to be looking at alcohol or other, you know, mind altering substances in this day and age. There are people who get intoxicated on information, intoxicated on events and the flow and the trend and the commentary. People get drunk on followers and on blogs and vlogs and stimulation that comes from the latest thing.

What's the newest revelation? What just happened? It's people used to do this by chasing ambulances. You know, where is their blood on the pavement? Are they using the jaws of life to extract somebody from an overturned car? What is happening? Something exciting, something unusual. My life is mundane.

I want to see something that I can tell other people about. I saw, you know, the head roll to the side of the curb. I saw blood flowing out of the, you know, door of this car.

I saw this. I saw that. I was there.

Here's my experience. Well, experience now comes digitally. It comes through media.

It, and there are people who are addicted and who get drunk on, get intoxicated on information that you saw this. Those of us are old enough to remember. You saw this happen with the OJ trial.

There were people who could not wean themselves away from the TV while OJ Simpson was on trial for the murder of his wife. And that before that, the Iran Contra trial, and a lot of us were following that and there were issues at stake, but you just get fascinated. You can't tear yourself away.

If you can't, you got to go to work, but you've got the radio on. You've got an earbud in. You got to hear what is the latest? What's going on? I don't want to wait for the evening news.

I want to wait for the 10 o'clock or the 11 o'clock news. I got to know now. I've got to know now.

What's trending? What's what's, what are people talking about? It's intoxication. I'm telling you it is intoxication. It is the modern version of this wine.

They have erred through wine and through intoxicating drinker out of the way. When you're intoxicated, you can't think about important things in a balanced way. It removes inhibitions.

You become emotional. You become impulsive. You become unreasonable.

It releases the darker forces that are supposed to be chained in the dungeon of our soul by the word of God and the power of God. The indwelling and the filling of the Holy spirit are supposed to keep our darker nature in check. When you get intoxicated, you are distracted and you remove those natural inhibitions.

You can look today at the world of Christians, the world of believers, the world of pastors who are preaching in pulpits and the world of people who are streaming all kinds of stuff on the internet. And what are they talking about? It's, it's hooky. It's I, I need some more of this tomorrow and the next day.

I want to hear what this person has to say. Um, you, you can get hooked on current events. You can get hooked on trends and, and happenings and developments and what did Congress vote in today? And so on.

It's intoxicating the priest and the prophet. Look at verse seven. What are the priests in the prophet? These are supposed to be those who lead and guide in the spiritual arena.

Verse seven, Isaiah 28, the priest and the prophet have aired through intoxicating drink. They're swallowed up by wine. They're out of the way through intoxicating drink.

They air in vision. They stumble in judgment. This is not a day or a time to air and stumble in vision and in judgment.

We need good judgment and we need clear vision as never before. Things are moving quickly. I personally think, and you know, from our end time study over the last year and change that I think given the hockey stick graph nature of things and the widespread overt deception that is being imbibed by not just pockets and not just segments, but worldwide nation after nation after nation is drinking this wine and getting intoxicated with the lie.

Air in vision, stumble in judgment. Verse eight, all tables are full of vomit and filth. Do you remember a week ago, the six word theme of that study? I think you do.

It is all about what? The bread. It is all about the bread. What's on the table here? The tables are full of vomit and filth.

No place is clean. It's not a matter of did you wash your hands? What's the point of washing your hands when the food is not clean? And this is Jesus' point in our passage. You're worried about whether the disciples washed their hands before they ate their bread.

The bread itself, the tradition of men that is being taught as doctrine and as truth is foul and corrupt. Washing your hands makes no difference when the food itself is infected. And that is the problem today.

And in a lot of Christianity and a lot of churches and in a lot of denominations, the food is foul. We have got to ensure that we understand the importance of the bread. What did Jesus say to Satan? Turn these stones into bread.

Man shall not live by bread alone, but every word that proceeds from the mouth of

qualified spiritual leaders, from the mouth of the priest and the mouth of the prophet. Man should live by what the prophet says and what the priest says is not what Jesus said. The word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

Whatever you want to say about the content and the origination and the culmination, there was a great radio program in the early 60s called Back to the Bible. And that's what we need to get back to the word, back to the simple, clear truths of scripture. You don't have to parse complex *posi non peccary, non posi peccary*.

And is it infralapsarian, sublapsarian or superlapsarian? You don't need all of that. You can read the words of the Lord Jesus. You can read the words of the apostle Paul, of Peter, of John, of Jude.

And it's not hard. It's not high in heaven where you have to climb. It's not down in the deep where you have to dig.

The word is near you in your heart and on your lips, Paul says. And if we ask, if we seek, and if we knock, it will be given, it will be opened unto us. It's all in the heart.

Why did the people in Jesus day miss it? Why did they want to touch his garment? Why did they want to make him king at the wrong time for the wrong reasons? Is he the king? Is there not some truth in the fact that Jesus from the tribe of Judah, the lion of the tribe of Judah ought to be the king of those people? Wrong way, wrong time, wrong place. It's not just that there is an element of truth. Was it true when Satan told Eve, if you eat this fruit, you will understand good and evil? That was true.

But it is not the time for her to understand good and evil. You don't get there by disobeying God. You don't get there by being overcome and falling for the lie.

The tables are full of vomit and filth. No place is clean. Look at verse nine, Isaiah 28.

Whom will he teach knowledge and to whom will he make to understand the message? Remember now, this is the context of the passage that Jesus quoted. These people honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. What's the problem? Whom will he teach knowledge to? Whom will he make to understand the message? Those just weaned from milk, those just drawn from the breast.

Precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little. If you were going to summarize that into a single word, to distill it into a single word, I would distill it this way, consistency. You cannot gather here a little and there a little.

You cannot put line upon line, line upon line, precept upon precept and precept upon precept unless you are consistent. Now, is this consistency in attending Bible class? Is that what he's talking about? Well, he says to whom will he teach knowledge? What is

this? Where is this stuff built? Where are the lines stacked? Where are the precepts mortared into a wall one upon another? Where does that take place? Is it in the teacher's words or is it in the receiver's heart? Where is this structure built? Where are these lines laid one upon another? It is not coming out of my lips. It is in each of our hearts.

That is not going to happen by hearing only. You know what verse I'm about to quote, Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only. Deceiving your own selves.

You can deceive yourself by saying, well, I've heard all kinds of things and I have the answer to a lot of riddles. It doesn't count. It doesn't matter.

It has to be precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, there a little. Consistency and not consistency in hearing, consistency in reflecting, thinking, digesting. It's not consistency in putting some bread in your mouth and then spitting about two minutes later so that you can say something.

Don't talk with your mouth full. Out goes the bread. And what proceeds from the heart is something entirely different than what the bread represents.

It has to be internalized. For with stammering lips and tongue he will speak to this people to whom he said, this is the rest with which you may cause the weary to rest. And this is the refreshing.

Look at verse 12. They would not hear rest and refreshment are offered, but they would not hear. What does Jesus say? Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will do what? I will give you rest.

You will find refreshment for your souls. It's an Old Testament promise and Jesus is there to fulfill it to the Old Testament people of God. You may cause the weary to rest.

This is the refreshing, but they would not hear. But the word of the Lord was to them precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line here, a little there, a little that they might go and fall backward and be broken and snared and caught. It was given to them a line at a time, a precept at a time and the predisposition of their heart, their choice on what to do with that word is made manifest.

Remember what I said in the first session that this, this lady, I read a comment somewhere and she said, I wonder if the previous president did not get reelected is to expose the hearts of people who have been resisting and undermining and trying to get things changed for at least the last four years. And with the last president and his administration out of the way, now they're out in the open. We can see what's in their hearts.

It's coming out their mouths. It's coming out of their pens. It's coming into legislation.

It's coming into action and we see it open and plain because that which restrains has been taken out of the way. What happened here? God says, I put the word out there line upon line, precept upon precept so that you could imbibe it line upon line and precept upon precept. But you, it's like Jesus says to Jerusalem when he stretches out at hands and he says, how often I would have gathered you under my wings like a hen does her chicks, but you would have none of me.

He doesn't say you weren't predestined. God didn't give you the pervenient grace. He didn't give you the effectual call.

You would have none of me all day long. I've held up my hands to a people who are disobedient and stiff necked. Didn't stop God from holding out his hands, but holding out his hands and seeing the rejection and the rebellion and the, the negativity and going their own way is made manifest.

When this presentation is made, go to Romans chapter one, what made, what may be known of God is manifest in creation. Go to Ecclesiastes eternity in their hearts. God has put eternity in men's hearts, but the witness of eternity in their hearts, the witness of God's eternal power and God hood in creation is rejected.

They suppress the truth in unrighteousness. And that is why God gives them over. He doesn't give them over.

Therefore they can't come to him. He doesn't give them over and fail to elect them and fail to give them the grace and regenerate them so that they can believe what may be known of God is manifest and they are without excuse. It can't get any plainer than Romans chapter one.

And listen, remember when you get to Romans chapter two and Paul says, and you, oh man, that are ready to point a finger at these who suppress the truth and unrighteousness. Do you see the three fingers pointing back at yourself? You are doing the same thing. You need to be those who, uh, by patient continuance and well-doing seek for glory, honor, and immortality.

That's who God will grant eternal life. And you can read the consequences for those who don't in Romans chapter two. Well, this example is written for our instruction.

The ends of the ages have come upon us and there has never been a more challenging time to eschew what is evil and hold fast to what is good and to know the definition of good. This is the definition of good. Not what society says, not what culture says, not what people pronouns in media and elsewhere.

Verse 14, hear the word of the Lord, you scornful men who rule as people who are in Jerusalem. Remember when we got to 29 and he said, Ariel, lion of God, this is sarcastic. You're supposed to be the lion of God.

And you're not the context of that is right here in verse 14. Hear the word of the Lord. You scornful men who rule this people.

Have we got scornful people ruling us now? We most certainly do extremely scornful. Blessed is the man that walks not in the council of the ungodly, who does not stand in the way of sinners and does not sit in the seat of these people. The scornful.

You have said we have made a covenant with death and with Shaul we're in agreement. We've got a vaccine. We've got a shot.

We've got a, we've got a mask you can put on. We've got a distance that you can stand from. We're going to keep you from assembling.

We have mastered the death that so seriously threatens you. These are them. The scriptures know all about this line of attack, this line of reasoning.

We have figured out how to beat death. We have figured out how to beat the disease. Now, listen, shots are great.

Masks are great. Distancing is great. Unless and until that becomes the object of your faith.

Cars are great until you drive drunk. Cars are great until you speed and run red lights and do something inappropriate with it. Wine is great if you don't get drunk on it.

There are a lot of things that are wonderful in their place. Food is good if you don't become a glutton. You can take anything to excess and it becomes wrong.

If you put anything in the place of God, it is now wrong. And it doesn't matter how legitimate it is, how truthful it is, how scientific it is. It doesn't matter if you put it in the place of God.

Where is your faith? Should you be prudent? Should you take advantage of safety measures when they're made available, when they seem to make sense? Absolutely. But if it becomes a substitute, if it elbows out of the way confidence that, well, yes, I'm not going to walk out in traffic and trust God to preserve me from getting run over by a semi. Of course not.

Store wants you to wear a mask. I will mask up every time. There is prudence, but I'm not depending on the mask.

And you can still get the virus no matter what you do. People that have been sequestered and masked and distanced and everything else have still gotten the virus and died. Other people that have done none of those things have died.

People that have done none of those things have lived. It is not dependent on that. Our

lives are exactly as long as God ordains.

And when we recognize that and say, well, Lord, I'm going to use wisdom here and be prudent, that's great. But I'm not depending on prudence and I'm not depending on what science says, which has varied. You know that the guidance has changed multiple times in the last year and a half.

Well, okay. I'll try to ferret out what seems to be the best. And I certainly don't want to endanger myself or fellow citizens, but I'm not really invested in that one way or the other.

I'm invested in God. I'm invested in my spiritual life. I want to honor Him above all.

If I can honor Him and still go along to get along, you know, to the extent that it is possible, live in peace with all men. If it, to the extent that it's up to you, somebody wants you to distance, well, stand on the green spot on the store floor. They want you to wear a mask, you know, please don't enter with that.

Well, put one on, fine. But I am not depending on that for my health and wellbeing. I look to the Lord in the same way we always have.

You could have got the flu. You could have gotten pneumonia. You could have been hit by a truck.

I could have been killed any number of times. And I can tell you the circumstances there by many measures, I ought to already be gone. We live by the grace of God.

We die by the grace of God. Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. Remember Paul talking about that? Might be better for me to hang around.

I kind of prefer to go and be face to face with the Lord, but it's probably more needful for me to stick around, Paul says. If we live, we live to the Lord. If we die, we die to the Lord.

Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. That ought to be on the refrigerator of everybody that's got any concerns about the virus. Whether we live or we die, we are the Lord's and we ought to act like it.

We ought to faith like it. We ought to look for righteousness like it and not be waylaid and deceived by the traditions of men. Verse 15, Isaiah 28.

You've said we've made a covenant with death. With Sheol we are in agreement. When the overflowing scourge passes through, it will not come to us.

We've got a shot. We're immune. It won't hurt us.

We have made lies our refuge and under falsehood we have hidden ourselves. Now I'm

not saying that the vaccine is a falsehood. What I'm saying is it is false to believe that if you've gotten a shot, you're not going to die of the virus or of any other thing that comes your way.

If it's time to go, you're going to go. If it's time to live, you're going to live. Whether we live or we die, we are the Lord's.

We belong to Him and He is going to put us on whatever shelf He chooses. It may be the shelf of this life. It may be the shelf of the next life.

We are the Lord's. Commit yourself to the hands of a faithful creator. I know whom I have believed.

He's able to keep what I have committed to Him against that day, that future day. We live in hope. We're motivated by hope.

We're not motivated by fear. Perfect love casts out fear. God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power and love and a sound mind that recognizes where our commitment lies and where our fate lies and where our destiny lies.

And our faithful creator has determined it down to the second. Be prudent. You don't walk out in traffic.

You don't put yourself in harm's way unnecessarily. You get a polio vaccine, get a measles vaccine, great. Get a COVID vaccine, great.

But do not put your faith in the technology of man. What do they say? The thing is 60 percent effective, 60 percent of the time or whatever? Well, it's like a lot of other things. Therefore thus says the Lord God, verse 16 of our chapter 28 in Isaiah, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation.

This is what Jesus is encouraging people to think about. When they didn't have single verses on little cards, they would hear these entire chapters read in the synagogue in Aramaic, translated from the Hebrew, and they would hear this context. Anytime they heard teaching his doctrines, the traditions of men honoring me with their lips, their heart is far from me, they heard this context.

They knew what this was about. I've laid a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation. Whoever believes is not going to be imprudent, is not going to act hastily or with shallow levels of thought.

I will make justice the measuring line and righteousness the plummet. This is the level, this is the plum. Hail will sweep away the refuge of lies.

The waters will overflow the hiding place. Your covenant with death will be annulled. And listen, the day is coming, we won't be here, but people are going to cry out for the rocks

to fall on them.

They will cry out for death and death will not come because they're going to paint themselves into a corner with human ingenuity and human technology. If you think thalidomide was bad, if you think excessive x-rays were bad, if you think asbestos was bad, if you think roundup was bad, if you think mesh was bad to repair internal injuries, wait until we're gone and human technology is going to try to solve problems and people are going to cry out for death and death will not come. They're going to cry out for the rocks to follow them in the face of the wrath of God.

Your agreement with Sheol will not stand. When the overflowing scourge passes through, you will be trampled down by it. As often as it goes out, it will take you.

For morning by morning it will pass over and by day and by night it will be a terror just to understand the report, just to hear about what's happening. It's going to scare you to death, going to leave you in fear and terror. God has not given us a spirit of fear.

We are built on the solid rock, power, love and a sound mind. Doesn't matter what happens in government, doesn't matter what happens in science, doesn't matter what happens, wait till the next virus hits and it doesn't have a 99.565% chance of survival for anybody under the age of 70. Wait till a virus hits that kills 15 or 20% of the people that catch it.

It's coming. And cursed is the man who puts his trust in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the Lord. He's going to be a shrub in the desert and will not see good when it comes.

Here are the people looking at the Lord Jesus, wanting to touch his clothing. It's tragic. It's fatally tragic.

That cannot be us. We do not put our trust in man. We do not put our trust in science.

Nothing wrong with availing ourselves of science. I've got a cell phone and I love it. I've got a computer.

I love it. I've got a radio. I love it.

Technology's fine, but I'm not pinning my hopes and my life on it. I do not let it rule me. I do not let it master me or overcome me.

Paul says, I keep my body in subject subjection. We should keep all of these things in subjection. Nothing intrinsically wrong with social media.

If you keep it in subjection, I will not be ruled by anything. Paul says used to be wine and strong drink used to be, you know, substance abuse. Now the wine in the modern day is information addiction.

Social media addiction. Can't get the phone out of my face addiction. Shut the thing off 15 minutes a day.

Go into your closet and confront the Lord. God avail ourselves of the opportunity through the veil, which is his flesh to enter into the throne room of God. Come boldly before the throne of grace for help in time of need.

Can we not shut this stuff off for 15 minutes in a day and spend time alone in the power of the Holy spirit by means of the access granted to us through the Lord Jesus Christ and come to the throne of the father and lay our lives before him, lay our concerns and our requests before his throne. Is it convicting at all? How much time we spend looking at the word of man versus how much time we spend thinking about the word of God in a day, in a week. If it's not convicting, we must be doing it right.

You must be really spending a lot of time like the tree planted by the rivers of water, bringing forth his fruit in his season. And, and God bless those of us that are doing it, but it's not going to happen by accident. It doesn't happen by default.

It doesn't happen without our conscious decision to do so. We make flesh, our strength, or we make ourselves enter through the veil into the throne room of God. We choose, we decide it is not fate.

It's not kismet. It's not circumstance. It doesn't happen, you know, reflexively or automatically we choose, we decide the Lord.

Jesus says, if you're just coming to me to touch my garment and get well, get your relative well, you have missed it. You miss it now and you're going to radically miss it in the age that is to come. What kind of people ought we to be? Peter says, knowing this stuff is going to melt.

Heaven's going to be rolled up like a scroll. The elements are going to melt with a fervent heat. Are you going to try to build society? You're going to try to take back the nation for God.

You're going to try to, you know, live your life in freedom and waving the flag and so on. Even the American flag, even the American military, even the hallowed traditions of the past are going to disappear. The only thing that goes forward into eternity is our relationship with God through Christ and the power of the spirit.

Nothing else. Not going to be American flag waving patriotism or French waving flag or any other waving flag. Not going to be look at my military service, look at my service to the community, look at this, look at that.

It is only what we build on the foundation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Gold, silver, and precious stones is going to pass through that fire into the eternal future. And every

moment that we forget that is a moment wasted.

It is an investment of time lost. That's what the Lord Jesus is talking about. That's what you see as a convicting illustration and example at the end of chapter 14 and the beginning of chapter 15 in the gospel of Matthew.

And it has never been more pertinent. It has never been more applicable than it is for us right now. So as we think about this, you can read through the rest of Isaiah.

You're going to get to this part where the blindness of disobedience, the potter and the clay flip over our very last thought here in chapter 30 of Isaiah. Look at verse 17, 1000 shall flee at the threat of one. At the threat of five, you shall flee to your left as a pole on top of a mountain and as a banner on a hill.

This is the abandoned flag. You're supposed to be on the high ground holding it and all that's left is your flag and everybody is gone. They fled.

They had the high ground and fled and left their flag behind. It's pathetic. 1000 shall flee at the threat of one.

This is the spirit of fear. This is the context for Jesus saying the people that honor me with their lips and their heart is far away. They're governed by fear.

They're governed by fancy. They're governed by the momentary, by the immediate, by the short term, the ephemeral. We can't be these people.

Well, we're out of time for tonight, but we'll pick up our study in Matthew chapter 15 on Sunday morning. We'll close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the vivid examples, the clear truth in your word.

It doesn't require exegesis. It doesn't require a postal study. We can read it.

We can see it from the lips of the Lord Jesus speaking to the generation in which he lived, speaks to our generation as we live in a time of deception, a time of deflection and distraction. We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will minister these truths to each of our hearts in a way that is meaningful, that motivates us and encourages us to stand firm, wearing the full armor that has been provided to us, and to having done all to stand, to stand now, to stand in the day of judgment and be ready to stand in the kingdoms which are to come. We pray these things in Jesus' name.

Amen.