

# Matthew 17:22-27

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[ 0 : 00 ] We're in Matthew 17, aren't we? So if you turn to Matthew 17, we got as far as verse 22. The end of verse 21 was where we finished, where Jesus had said, this kind of demon can only come out by prayer.

Prior to that, in chapter 17, we had seen the glory of Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. He had blown their socks off with just this manifestation of Jesus as God, a divine being.

And they had beheld something that they didn't comprehend. And Peter became a bit of a kind of gibbering idiot. Maybe I could build a tabernacle. No, Peter, just shut up and listen.

There was this moment when he was completely, the disciples were completely overwhelmed. And they also met the Old Testament saints. Moses and Elijah were there, which tells us that life doesn't finish when you exit this world.

These were real people that these disciples met and recorded it for us to know that people who died long ago were met on the Mount of Transfiguration.

[ 1 : 15 ] So if you believe this book, that gives you hope. If you don't believe this book, you laugh at that kind of thing. And I love the fact that God actually leaves us no options.

What he does is he puts us in a position where you either accept him and there is immense joy or you reject him and there is nothing worth living for. So we saw that. And then we saw him come down from the mountain and deal with this demoniac, this demon possessed person.

And we saw for the second time, at least, I think there's probably three occasions, actually, but two in Matthew's gospel where he cast the demon out of a dumb person.

And that was a definite messianic sign, according to the Jews. They had always taught because their own method of exorcism was ineffective against anybody with a dumb demon.

And if you just briefly turn to Mark chapter five, keep your finger in Matthew 17 because we're going back there. And if you go to Mark chapter five, what you see is Jesus using the Jewish method of deliverance ministry.

[ 2 : 28 ] And so in chapter five, you've got this account of the Gadarene demoniac or some of your versions would say the Gadarene demoniac. Same place. And the demon spoke in verse seven.

And then shouting with a loud voice, he said, what business do you have with each other? Jesus, son of the most high God, I employ you by God. Do not torment me. For he had been saying, Jesus had been saying, come out of the man, you unclean spirit.

And he was asking, what is your name? So the Jewish method of exorcism was to use the voice of the person to extract the name of the demonic presence and cast it out.

Of course, with a dumb person, you can't do that, which is why their method methodology just failed when it came to dealing with people with a dumb demon. Back to Matthew, back to Matthew 17.

So he had come down from the mountain, was confronted with this man who was epileptic, frothing at the mouth, incredibly ill, but also demon possessed. And I think he was blind and dumb.

[ 3 : 35 ] And Jesus cast out the demon. And one of the things he said when the disciples said, how come we couldn't do that was this sort only come out by prayer. Which demonstrated to them that he lived a life of prayer, but they didn't.

So it drew a comparison there between their ministry and his. So we get to the end of that. And then out of the blue, seemingly, and we get to this morning's passage.

In verse 22, it says, so he just said, this sort only comes out by prayer or prayer and fasting.

Because there's a confusion over whether the whole verse is in the ancient manuscripts. We don't need to worry about that this morning. But it immediately moves on to verse 22. And while they were gathering together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, the son of man is going to be delivered into the hands of men and they will kill him.

And he will be raised on the third day. And they were deeply grieved. So this is our first conundrum for this morning.

[ 4 : 44 ] You say, well, what's what's a conundrum about that? Well, what we need to understand is that at least three times in the synoptic gospels, that's Matthew, Mark and Luke.

Jesus has said this. He said, I'm going to be killed. I'm going to be raised on the third day. That happens at least three times. It also happens in John's gospel, but it's more subtle.

And I won't go into the subtleties this morning because I will just probably be wasting time. And so the first occasion is in the previous chapter. When they were on the Mount of Transfiguration, he told them he had to die and be raised from the dead.

And that's in Matthew 16, verse 23. But it also appears in Mark 8, 31 to 32. And in Luke 9, 21 to 22. And they didn't understand it.

It just says they didn't understand. The second time can be found here in Matthew 17. We've just read it. The same account also appears in Mark 9, 30 to 32.

[ 5 : 48 ] And in Luke 9, 43 to 45. Same account. Very slight differences, but saying the same stuff. And then the third occasion is found in Matthew 20, verses 17 to 19.

But also in Mark 10, 32 to 34. And in Luke 18, 31 to 33, I think it is. I've missed a number.

So turn to Luke because this gives us our conundrum. And the only reason I'm dealing with this is because it's a question that has come up for me from time to time. And generally, I find we don't have a ready answer.

And one of the reasons we're here is to be able to give an account for the hope that is within us. So turn to Luke 18, verse 31. Luke 18, verse 31.

Verse 31 says, He took the twelve aside and said to them, Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things which are written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished.

[ 6 : 55 ] For he will be handed over to the Gentiles, and he will be mocked and mistreated and spit upon. And after they have scourged him, they will kill him, and the third day he will rise again. So according to Luke, it's prophesied that Jesus would rise on the third day.

So if any of you really know your Bibles well, you'll be able to take me straight to the Old Testament scripture that says Jesus will rise again on the third day. It doesn't exist.

It's not there. And so you think, so not only why should we believe it, why should they have believed it, how did they come to the conclusion that their Messiah would be raised on the third day?

And when somebody asks us an awkward question in a Bible study or in a conversation, you know, Old Testament doesn't say anything about the third day. How do we respond? And it's really interesting because, just to give you another example, if you go to 1 Corinthians 15, where you have the teaching of Paul on the matter, 1 Corinthians 15, and verse 4, Paul is teaching, I'll start with verse 3, because that's where the sentence begins.

Paul says this to the Corinthian church, Which leads me saying, so what scriptures?

[ 8 : 36 ] Because I can't find it. So what we're going to try and do is unravel why not only was Jesus saying the scriptures contain this information, but how would he have expected them to know it?

Easy peasy. Well, maybe not. There is no direct quotation that shows this. And so what we need to do to resolve this is to revert to the importance of typological statements.

And the Old Testament is full of typological statements about Jesus. Not that many about the third day, but typological statements about Jesus, or typological actions that the Jews were required to commit to in order to understand about their coming Messiah.

So, for instance, the feast of Passover. The lamb was Jesus. When Jesus walked on the earth, John the Baptist said, behold, the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

And he pointed to Jesus. This man walking towards you is the lamb of God. And their heads would have said, he's talking about Passover lamb. So there were these typological things.

[ 9 : 49 ] And you will find that quite a lot of Bible teachers make light of typology. They kind of think it's a little bit ethereal and a little bit airy fairy and you can't depend on it. And some try to allow you to use some typological statements, but don't permit others.

And usually that reflects their bias in their teaching. So the rabbis had sussed a lot of this. And you have to take my word for that, unless you want to go and read an awful lot of Jewish targums, where they wrote down the revelations that they obtained.

So I'm going to point to four ways that we can see a third day resurrection was foretold typologically. Now I've picked four.

There are more. But I've only got 45 minutes this morning. So the first one is in Genesis 22, if you want to turn there. By the way, this is the easy one.

The other half that we're going to read this morning is more difficult. So in chapter 22, we've got the offering of Isaac. And to give you the background, Abraham is told by God, take your son Isaac to a place I will show you and offer him as a burnt offering.

[11:05] And the burnt offering is a sin offering. So Abraham sets off for this place with his only son to offer him on a fiery altar to the Lord.

And there are all sorts of background stuff we could go into on this, for which I don't have time this morning. But in Galatians, what we read is that Abraham knew that if need be, God could raise Isaac from the dead.

So if the sacrifice went through and he killed his son, he knew that God would give his son back to him. So there would be a resurrection. So that's in Abraham's mind when he sets off to sacrifice his son, his only son on the mountain.

So you can see the parallel between Jesus being the only son of the father being sacrificed for us. There's a direct parallel there. So in verse three and four of chapter 22, we read, And by the way, if you do a little bit of research, that place where he was sacrificed was the same place that Jesus was later crucified.

So I haven't got time to explain that, but we'll do it one Thursday night at the Bible study because it's a bit involved. But look, verse four, On the third day, Abraham raised his eyes and saw the place from a distance.

[12:42] So he's gone three days and there's the place. All right. Now, from the moment that Abraham was told, I want you to sacrifice your son.

There were three days of travel during which he knew that as far as he was concerned, his son was lost to him.

He was going to commit a sacrifice that involved the death of his son, his one and only son. And he saw, he traveled for three days knowing that his son was lost to him.

He then left the party behind. If you look at verse five, Abraham said to the young men, stay here with the donkey. I am the young lad.

We'll go over there and we will worship and return to you. So three days, my son's dead to me, leaves everybody behind, goes to the place of sacrifice.

[13:42] And we know the story is that at the point where he's about to plunge the knife in, God intervenes, stops the sacrifice and provides for himself a lamb.

It was a ram caught in a thicket. In verse 19, what you then read is, so Abraham returned to his young men and they arose and went together to Beersheba and Abraham lived at Beersheba.

So you've got this three days when the son is lost to the father. The sacrifice takes place, or in this case doesn't because God intervenes, and they return to the men.

So they get there. He gets his son back three days after he's lost him. You follow the typology there. Now there's a little bit of vagueness in there, but it's good enough for me.

But that's only one of four examples. I think some of the others we're going to look at are more compelling. But according to what we've just read, he got his son back on the third day from the day when he knew he'd lost him.

[14:53] The next is in Exodus 19. Turn to Exodus 19. And this is more brief. But Exodus 19 deals with God descending on Mount Sinai.

And if you remember, the biblical account is that God descends, and the fire of God is on the mountain, and the whole of the mountain is singed all the way around. And by the way, it's still like it today.

You can go and see the singed mountain today. So hot was that fire, which I just find amazing that why is everybody not going?

The mountain was singed, and we can see it, so the Bible must be true. I don't know why they don't make that mental leap. But we're looking at verse 10 and 11.

Now this manifestation of God on Mount Sinai is probably the greatest, the biggest, the most public manifestation of God in the whole of the Old Testament, where God breaks out of heaven, sings a whole mountain, and everybody's scared.

[16:04] And in verse 10, what we read is this, the Lord also said to Moses, go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments, and let them be ready for

the third day.

For on the third day, the Lord will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. So they had to wait for the third day before they would see God. So in the same way, with Jesus, his manifestation back from the dead happened on the third day.

Jesus' presence on the earth wasn't a particularly fascinating manifestation for most people. He was born of a woman. He did amazing things. But there wasn't an event after a three-day period until he died, entered the grave, and rose on the third day.

So there's a parallel there, a typological parallel. The next one I find truly fascinating. Turn to Ezekiel 37. Now, the reason that this is fascinating, let's read it first, and then I'll tell you why it's fascinating.

Ezekiel 37, verses 11 to 14. So this is God speaking through the prophet Ezekiel. Then he said to me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel.

[17:29] Behold, they say, our bones are dried up and our hope has perished. We are completely cut off. Therefore, prophesy and say to them, thus says the Lord God, behold, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, my people, and I will bring you to the land of Israel.

Then you will know that I am the Lord when I have opened your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, my people. I will put my spirit within you and you will come to life and I will place you on your own land.

Then you will know that I am the Lord. Sorry, then you will know that I, the Lord, have spoken and done it, declares the Lord. I must have written down something wrong. In Ezekiel 4, 22, this is his firstborn son.

Right? What he says is, Israel is my firstborn son. So this talks about raising Israel and therefore he's raising his firstborn son.

Now, does anybody's version say this differently? Because when I read this, I... Take my word for it, the Old Testament. There is a place where Jesus says, Israel is my firstborn son.

[18:41] I'll look the reference up and I'll correct the notes. Israel is my firstborn son. And what we've just read in Ezekiel talks about God raising up Israel. But if we turn to Hosea 6, Exodus 4, what did I say?

Right, there's the mistake. Exodus 4, 22, is the right verse. Thank you, Joe. Oh, Ray, sort yourself out. Hosea 6, speaking about this same event, verses 1 and 2.

Come, let us return to the Lord for he has torn us but he will heal us. He has wounded us but he will bandage us. He will revive us after two days. He will raise us up on the third day that we may live before him.

So, God speaks through Ezekiel and Hosea of this raising up of Israel which in Exodus 4, verse 22 is called his firstborn son.

I will raise up my firstborn son on the third day. Now, I find that fascinating but the Jewish rabbis would have picked on that. Messiah is God's son.

[19:56] Israel is God's son. Israel is being raised on the third day. God's son will be raised on the third day. You follow the typology there. So, it's not on the surface of scripture.

You have to dig a bit for it. Last example is this. You remember the story of Jonah being swallowed by the big fish or a whale.

People argue as to whether it was a fish or a whale. I don't really care. But Jesus refers to that event in Matthew 12. The fact that Jesus refers to it means it happened.

He didn't refer to it as a piece of fiction. He referred to it as an actual event. Matthew 12, verse 39 and 40. Jesus has performed the same messianic sign that we've just been talking about.

He's delivered a dumb man from his demon and they have poo-pooed him and said that he's acting under the power of Satan. And then, in verse 38 of Matthew 12, they say to him, teacher, we want to see a sign from you.

[20:59] And they've already seen hundreds of signs from Jesus and they'd ignored all of them and they say, well, if you're Messiah, show us a sign. And Jesus answers this. He says, verse 39, an evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet.

For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so will the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. I'm not going to go on because I don't

need to but the point made here is that Jesus links Jonah's dwelling for three days and three nights in the belly of the whale with his own resurrection typologically.

So, the fact that Jesus uses it means the rabbi should have sussed it out that Jonah was a type of their coming Messiah and he was gone for three days and was resurrected on the third day or spat out of the whale.

When you read about it Jonah actually referred to the belly of the whale as the belly of Sheol. Sheol being the place of the dead. So, he was spat out of the place of the dead on the third day just as Jesus was resurrected out of the place of the dead on the third day.

So, that's that bit. So, what we need to move on to now is what comes next in Matthew 17. which is one of those passages that makes you go, huh?

[ 22 : 29 ] What? So, it goes on and says this, verse 24 onwards and I'm going to read all the four verses and then we'll see what we can glean from them.

When they came to Capernaum, those who collected the two drachma tax came to Peter and said, does your teacher not pay the two drachma tax? He said, yes. And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first.

Jesus is preempting this saying, what do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect customs or poll tax?

From their sons or from a stranger's? When Peter said from strangers, Jesus, I can imagine Peter sort of feeling like he was on the spot and going, from strangers.

So then Jesus says, then the sons of man are exempt. However, so that we do not offend them, go to the sea and throw in a hook and take the first fish that comes up and when you open its mouth, you will find a shekel.

[ 23 : 39 ] Some versions will say a stator, same value, different name for the coin. Take that and give it to them for you and for me. First of all, why is it in here?

Well, one thing, one thing you can grasp is that Matthew was a tax collector so he had a particular interest in this. This is the only gospel that records this and it's the tax collector that records the tax miracle.

But what does it mean and what does, it's one of those passages that gives us grief as Christians because people go, surely you don't believe that people can go fishing and find a coin or pay their taxes in the mouth of a fish.

Surely that's crazy. Is it crazy or is it godly? So let's quickly deal with the tax and if you turn with me to Exodus 30, I think I've got the right book this time.

I'm going to read verses 11 to 16 if I've got it right. The Lord also spoke to Moses saying, when you take a census of the sons of Israel to number them, then each one of them shall give a ransom for himself to the Lord when you number them so that there will be no plague among you when you number them.

[ 24 : 57 ] This is what everyone who is numbered shall give. Half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary. The shekel is 20 geras.

Half a shekel is the contribution to the Lord. Everyone who is numbered from 20 years old and over shall give the contribution to the Lord. The rich shall not pay more and the poor shall not pay less than half a shekel.

When you give the contribution to the Lord to make atonement for yourselves, you shall take the atonement money from the sons of Israel and give it for the service of the tent of meeting that it may be a memorial for the sons of Israel before the Lord to make atonement for yourselves.

So that was the command to pay the tax. Who gave the command? God. Right? And the ones that should be paying the tax are the sons of Israel.

So now that we know that, let's go back to Matthew and chapter 17. So God has demanded the tax. Jesus' question was who do you think, Simon, from whom do the kings of the earth collect customs or poll tax?

[ 26 : 13 ] From their sons or from strangers? And Peter's answer was from strangers. So who's the king who's collecting the tax here?

Who demanded it? God did. So God is king. So who will he demand the tax from? Sons or strangers? So the Israelites are considered strangers to God in this instance.

It is redolent for me of Hosea. Hosea 1 and verse 9. If you turn there, you'll pick up the principle.

Hosea 1 and verse 9. And the short version of a study of Hosea 1 is God was fed up with Israel. So he's given them a talking to.

And in verse 9 he says, And the Lord said, Name him Lo-Ami, for you are not my people and I am not your God. Yet the number of the sons of Israel will be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered.

[ 27 : 19 ] And in the place where it is said, You are not my people, it will be said to them in the future, You are the sons of the living God. So it speaks of Israel in a time when he has cast them aside and he doesn't want to treat them like his sons.

So this temple tax, which is a tax that the king demands of strangers, is because Israel is a sinful nation and they're not close to him.

So park that for one minute. That's the reason for the tax and that's why they're paying it. And so somebody says to Peter, Does your master not pay this? And notice the accusatory tone here. Does your master not pay this? And Peter says, Yes. Now whether he knew he did or whether he was making it up, I don't know. Trying to get Jesus off the hook.

We don't know that much. But Jesus preempts the question and when Peter enters the house, Jesus says, What do you reckon then? Who should be paying this tax?

[ 28 : 20 ] And Peter says, Well, strangers. And in that one statement, the one thing becomes clear is the temple is the house of God and God is there in the form of Jesus.

God in the flesh is there. So why would he pay the tax on his own house? Now you can take that analogy one stage further because what we do read in scripture is that ultimately Jesus himself is the temple.

He's paying tax on himself, not just the house. So the sinful Jews need to pay this tax and Jesus is saying here, I'm the son, so I'm exempt.

The bit that is mind-blowing is he sends Peter off to go fishing for tax money for you and for me. So he's not only, you've got to remember, he says, let's do this lest we cause them offence.

We don't owe this tax, you and me, Peter. Why would that be? Well, because we are sons. Jesus enumerates Peter as a son. And praise God, he does it for us too.

[ 29 : 31 ] So he's saying to Peter, you don't need to pay this tax. But the next thing to note, and this is so thick and rich, we're going to pay the tax lest we cause offence.

But Peter doesn't pay his own tax. Now when we were reading back in Exodus about why this is here, it's here, as an atonement for sin.

Every man has to pay money to atone for himself. Peter says we don't, sorry, Jesus says to Peter, we don't need to pay this, but we'll pay it anyway because we don't want to cause them offence.

He then gets tax money from the fish to pay both of their taxes. Neither of them needed to pay it, but Jesus said, I'm the son, I don't need to pay it, but Peter, but you're also a son.

So you don't have to pay it. When we confess Christ, we are saved from having to pay for our own sins because Jesus paid for us.

[ 30 : 33 ] And in this example, Jesus pays the tax that will pay, obviously temporarily, for his sins, but Jesus pays Peter's share. I just thought that was wonderful.

By the way, it's in John chapter 2, verses 19 to 22, that we read that Jesus was himself the ultimate temple. Just as a reference, we don't need to study that this morning, but if you want to check up on me.

But Peter didn't pay for his own sin, and I think that is so important for us to grasp. And was the wonderful teaching moment that Jesus was bringing to this occasion when they asked, does he pay the tax?

And he was effectively saying, I don't need to, and neither do you, because your sins are paid for. The other thing is, he paid for the sin by supernatural means.

Now, again, people will poo-poo this. Why would you believe something like that? Well, because the guy who can control the storm, the guy who can make the wind stop, the guy who can feed 5,000 people with a few loaves and a few fish, can also, he's already demonstrated he can control nature, he can make storms, he can calm storms.

[ 31 : 48 ] Actually organising the fish is no big deal to him. He is God, and he can do what he likes with his own creation. Peter must have been gobsmacked, so he wants me to throw the hook in the pond, and the first fish I get is going to have a coin in its mouth.

Oh well, I've got to see this. But his taxes are paid because he put faith in Jesus, and he went and did as he was told. And that's our mission.

We get tied in knots sometimes when all we need to do is what Jesus said to do. We have our own struggles. I've already had evidence this morning of someone in this church who, they just always share in the gospel, wherever they go.

Whether you're saved or unsaved, you always get the gospel from them, and you get the kindness of the Lord, and you get prayer, and you know they're always praying for you, just doing as they were told.

That's all they're doing. It's no more miraculous when you send up a prayer and God answers it than it is if you throw in a hook and pull out a fish with a coin in its mouth. We make these comparisons.

[ 33 : 01 ] Oh, I can't believe that. Well, then don't believe it. But it's true. Matthew wouldn't have dared record it in his gospel if it wasn't true. So we don't know how the coin got there.

We don't know how the right fish with the coin got to the hook. You know, you think of how many fish there are in the Mediterranean, and yet the first one he pulls out is the right fish. This is God showing he's God to Peter.

And Peter needs to know that he is God because when he starts the effort of launching the church, he's going to be persecuted. And there must have been times when he thinks, have I got this right? As we all sometimes feel when we're struggling to get through. So he needed those. There was a lady who her children were drifting in and out of Christianity.

They were being a bit rebellious. And she always said to them, remember the warts and the boils. And when they were little, they had persistent warts and boils.

[ 34 : 06 ] And she prayed for them and they were healed. And when they doubted, she said, whenever you doubt, remember the warts and the boils. We need to be ready to remember, in Peter's case, the fish with the coin in its mouth.

In my case, my miraculous healing from asthma, which dogged me all my life until I got saved. And nobody even prayed for me. It just went. I used to use an asthma inhaler every night and sometimes several times during every night. And I woke up the next morning and I hadn't used it. I thought, this is weird. What's going on? And then the next night and then the next night. This is crazy. But all I'd done is what the Lord told me to do, which was turn to him.

So I always remember the asthma inhaler, which I don't even carry anymore. But I carried on carrying one for quite a long time because I struggled to believe it was true.

[ 35 : 10 ] And you will have your thing. There will be things. Your wood that was already cut to length. There will be things that you can use as your fish with the coin in its mouth or your warts and your boils where you can say, I am not going to doubt God because I know that happened.

And finally, his reason, lest we cause them offense. There is so much on this, you could do an hour sermon on this alone.

I'm not going to, you'll be pleased to know. But application for us here is that in Matthew 7 verse 6 we are told, do not cast your pearl before swine and just be trampled in the mud.

There is no point in going out there and just being offensive for the sake of being offensive. And I see a lot of people, I see people on the streets who on the face of it are doing, you know, we are preaching the gospel.

But they do it with brutality. And we should be preaching the gospel on the streets. There is no question about that. If that is your gift and if that is what you are called to, go do it. But casting pearl before swine is a waste of time.

[ 36 : 25 ] Pray to God as to who you should cast your pearl before. In Jesus' situation, we already know from our previous studies in Matthew that he had been hounded by the Pharisees and the Sadducees, the scribes.

They hounded him and they were investigating him because he was a potential claimant for the position of Messiah. And they were investigating him.

And this scripture comes at a time when that investigation is quite far advanced and they're being very picky and pointy at everything that he does. And he's on a strict timetable because he has to die not only at a Passover but at the right Passover.

So the last thing he wants to do is inflame things unnecessarily. And there's no great moral issue here, so I'll just pay the tax and not cause them offence.

It would have been inflammatory not to and he'd have finished up with a battle on his hands for his own life too early in the process because he was on a strict time clock that God was controlling. [ 37 : 34 ] And then think of Peter because if he'd have said I don't need to pay the tax because I'm a son that would have been treated as blasphemy. He would have probably been killed on the spot. But there's no need to wind them up unnecessarily. There'll come a time when they're ready to receive that information and that's when you share it. Meanwhile just pay it. And I just think it highlights the need for us to be really discerning about which battles we take on. There are some battles that we definitely should take on. A lot of them are personal battles as in when I came to Christ I was a thief and I had to learn that other people's stuff belonged to them. So there are personal battles but there are also other battles like I was under pressure from colleagues at work to falsify my timesheet so that I would earn more money. And one could go through a vast list. I'm not going to. I think the point is made that we should prayerfully consider which battles we take on and which battles we just push to one side for now. [ 38 : 49 ] one of the things I think should guide this and I will finish with this statement. One of the things I think should guide this is whether what we're doing is in keeping with the fruits of the spirit. If it's unkind, if it's not loving, if it's not peaceful, if it's not good, you know, I've seen people on the streets get really angry with people who are saying, what about this and what about that? If it's full of anger, it's not full of the Lord. It's not full of the fruit of the spirit. So I think it's a really good guideline to ask oneself, is what I'm doing in keeping with the fruits of the spirit? If it's not, shut up. Come back to it when you can operate along with the leading of the spirit which will produce the fruits of the spirit. bless you. Father, thank you so much for this word. I do pray that your word will come alive in our hearts and that we will be able to live it in the way that you would want us to and that you would supervise us. [ 40 : 07 ] Lord, give us a heart to submit to you in everything and give us the revelation that we are sons, whether we have to comply with stuff that's not really for sons in our current governmental situation or not. We should know that we are sons. Lord, please write that large in our hearts that we can be sons of the living God and we can be in this world but not of it. In Jesus' name. Amen.