

Matthew 16:21-28

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[0 : 00] Morning all. So, we're in Matthew 16, so turn there. And the end of last week, if you remember we finished in verse 20, I think.

! But in verse 19 there was a phrase and I had a request to clarify it! Matthew 16, verses 21 to the end. But before we do that, we're going to clarify verse 19, which says this, I will give you the keys of the kingdom and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.

And so the clarity that is needed is because of a misunderstanding of this word. In some versions, I think maybe the...

Malcolm, could you read the King James version of that verse 19? I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatever thou shalt find on earth shall be bound in heaven.

And whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. So, most of the people who've developed a rather wonky theology on this learned it from the King James, not because the King James is wrong, but just because the way the King James phrases it is slightly ambiguous.

[1 : 38] And so they take this view that as a Christian, because God has empowered Christians, I'm now empowered to bind and loose things.

And so the reason this needs a bit of explanation is because there is a lot of teaching out there that's really wonky on this, as if we have suddenly become little gods. And it puts all the authority in the wrong hands in that what it says, if you listen to their teaching, is I can put God's arm up his back to do stuff because he's empowered me to get him to do stuff.

And that's not it at all. Now, the correct translation of this should be, and actually the NASB has it roughly, I will give you the keys of the kingdom.

And whatever you bind on earth shall have already been bound in heaven. And whatever you loose on earth shall have already been loosed in heaven. So this is, first of all, most important in context, this is addressed to the people who will become the apostles.

And we know that there's a movement out there that goes under the title of NAR that believes, pretends, teaches that the apostolic ministry is still alive and kicking and we're getting new apostles.

[3 : 06] And so what they do is they come on the scene and they claim to have authority over things and they bind and loose things. But what this was, was an instruction to these apostles so that they would know that they would have authority to establish the church.

It wasn't a general thing. It wasn't out there for everybody to wield this authority where they could go into a town and they could bind certain things and loose certain things.

Now, there's a further little thing that we need to know about binding and loosing. One is this.

Binding means what it says. So it gives you the authority to bind stuff.

That has to stop. It can't go on any longer. And it gives authority to take that, if you like, disciplinary decision over things.

Gives you authority, which is what you'd need if you were trying to establish a church, isn't it? You'd need the authority to walk into a town. And as you start to establish the church, to jump on things that were wrong and encourage things that are right.

[4 : 14] But the other confusion is the word loosing, which if you go and look it up, it doesn't mean what a lot of these word faith teachers say it means. Because they would have you, oh, because I'm because I'm authorized to loose things, I will loose the Holy Spirit to do stuff.

So you're now dictating to God what he will do? God, the Holy Spirit? No, no, no. I don't think so. So the word that's used for loosing is actually quite a negative word.

It's not when you just say loosing, it gives you the impression that you're empowered to loose stuff.

But if you turn to Matthew 18, and I think it's verse 18.

What you see is that phrase used again. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven. So what's the context in which that is written?

And if you go a few verses back and start in verse 15, it says, If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private. If he listens to you, you have won your brother.

[5 : 24] But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church.

And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.

The loosing in the context of these verses was to do with casting people out of the church. It was loosing in the sense of releasing them from the church.

You can't equate that with loosing the Holy Spirit. You don't wield the Holy Spirit like a big axe. He wields you because you are his servant.

Now, is that enough clarity? Does that work for people? I'm glad you said it's enough because that's all the notes I've made on it. The New Apostolic Reformation.

[6 : 31] And it's a bunch of people. It's actually a carry on from earlier years where people took the spiritual gifts. People may ask. It's worth a small diversion for this.

People say, oh, well, you're a cessationist. Do you not believe in the gifts anymore? And what Satan tends to do is he puts you in a position where he will lead you to believe you only have two alternatives to choose between.

So you either believe in the gifts or you don't. And if you don't, you're a cessationist. But actually, if you study the gifts, and we're not here to study the gifts this morning, but we'll do this at a later date sometime.

If you study the gifts, what you'll find is that some of the gifts had a purpose to establish the church. One of those was the gifts of apostles.

We today still sit under the teaching of the apostles through this word. There are no new apostles, and therefore, you could say the spiritual gift of the apostle ceased.

[7 : 37] Well, not really, because it's still being exercised through the word. But the apostolic gift was given to the men who established the church. Similarly, the gift of prophet.

Now, this is not... I would personally make a distinction between a prophet and someone who prophesies. The prophet wrote the scriptures. The prophet was a man who stood as an ambassador of God in his day.

And when he spoke, that was God speaking through a man. Men today do not have that accolade. That said, I do believe, and I've certainly experienced it myself, times when God has spoken into my heart, and I've been able to go up to someone and say something to them that I couldn't possibly have known, and it has brought them to Christ, or brought them peace, or brought them to some sort of release.

But that doesn't make me a prophet in the sense of the gift of the prophet, as in someone who can write the scriptures. But yes, I can prophesy. Now, the apostles were also prophets in their day. So has that gift ceased? Well, no. And yes, if you see what I mean. Because the scripture is fully written. There is no more of that for them to do.

[8 : 58] But I think all teaching should have a prophetic edge. I think we should be prophetic towards one another. Not in the sense that you often come across in charismatic churches, where you walk up to somebody, you give them the old Pentecostal head massage, and you say, Thus saith the Lord.

And then you speak over them. Because it isn't like that. Quite often it's an arm around the shoulders, and it's a bit of direction. Because you understand where their life is going, and you understand God's word.

Prophecy today is very much an application of this Bible to the lives of the people we mix with. And I hope that helps. And if you think I'm utterly wrong, do see me afterwards.

But that's where it sits for me. Do we still have tongues? Mostly, no. Mostly. But once again, it's not cessationist, because in the right circumstances, they will emerge.

If you go and preach the gospel in virgin territory, you may well find that you're gifted with the gift of tongues, so that they can understand the gospel that you're preaching. You see what I mean? It's a

gift.

[10:06] God gives gifts. Why? I don't know why we're doing a Bible study on 1 Corinthians this morning. God gives gifts for the edification of the church.

Do we need tongues in Great Britain where everybody speaks English? Not really. Can you find me a scripture anywhere that talks about praying in tongues?

Speaking in tongues, yes. Praying in tongues? I can't find that as a use for tongues. Tell me if I'm wrong. Healings? Well, I've personally been healed by the Lord. But not by a man wielding the gift of healing.

And I would say predominantly, we don't have the gift of healing in the sense of a gifted man wielding the gift like a club. You know, I'm going to heal you.

I'm the anointed one, which you will hear an awful lot of. God tends to meet with a person directly and heal them directly because he does not give his glory to another. The exception?

[11:08] Go into virgin territory, preach the gospel, and you may well find to establish your authority in that area, God will give you the gift of healing for a period of time. Paul had to leave behind Trophimus, who was sick.

This is the apostle Paul, who'd healed all sorts of people. But later in his ministry, it seems to have waned. Why did he have to leave one of the servants of God sick? But I do read of it, I do hear of it, and I do believe it's perfectly possible for those gifts to emerge if you're suddenly in a situation where God is trying to establish a new work.

Anyway, that's not what we came here to talk about, but I hope it's been helpful. And please do challenge me on it if you think I'm wrong, because it's one of those subjects where it's very easy to get it wrong, and I am not infallible.

If you remember, they'd been to this place called Banias, Caesarea Philippi. And this cavern there was the gates of Hades to them.

And I meant to bring the little gift that Malcolm bought me, which is a little Petros from the above bed of the river there. Because remember, we had this difference between Petros, a small stone, and Petra, a big rock.

[12:33] And Jesus said, Peter, you're the small stone. And there apparently, so Malcolm tells me, there are millions of these things, and they're all little tiny stones that you couldn't build a church on.

But in the background is a massive rock. And Peter himself, who had this experience, said in one of the books of Peter, we're not going to refer to it this morning, but he said that Jesus was the rock. So the Catholic understanding of it is wrong, because Peter wasn't the rock, he was a small stone. Jesus was the rock. And then if you recall, he asked them, who do you say that I am? And the response was, you are the Christ, the Son of the living God.

So they'd had this revelation, and Jesus said to them that God the Father had revealed this to them. As they'd gone to this place where there was a temple to Pan, there was a temple to Baal, there was a temple to Caesar.

[13:38] And so you had the man that was fully man and fully God in a place where you had Pan, which was a half man, half God. You had Caesar, who was all man and no God, but claimed to be a God.

And you also had the Baals, which were false gods and didn't even claim to be men. And in that mishmash, he said to the disciples, who am I? And they said, you're the Son of the living God. So they'd accepted his description of himself, which makes the passage we're about to read really quite, could be a bit confusing. So let's read it from verse 21.

Matthew 16, verse 21. From that time, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and the chief priests and scribes and be killed and be raised on the third day.

Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, God forbid it, Lord, this shall never happen to you. But he turned to Peter, get behind me, Satan.

[14:52] You are a stumbling block to me, for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's. Then Jesus said to his disciples, if anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it. But whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?

Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of his Father with his angels and will then repay every man according to his deeds.

Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.

Now there's a lot in here that makes you scratch your head. That last verse is one of them, you know, because he said there are people standing here who won't, they won't die until they see me coming in my glory.

[15:56] Wait till next week. It is, it is, yeah. The chapter division is a bit in the wrong place, but it gives me a good starting place for next week.

So keep in mind that Peter has established, as a spokesman for the group, that Jesus isn't just some man, and he's not some magician, and he's not half God, half man, and he's not neither God nor man, but he is who he claimed to be, the Son of the living God.

In other words, the promised Messiah. And that's what it would have meant to them. When he said, you are the Son of the living God, he was saying, you are the Messiah that we've been waiting for. So having said that, when Jesus then tells them in verse 21, from that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised on the third day, you would have thought, having deduced that he was the Son of God, that they would have said, oh, right.

Well, what are we supposed to do with that information? I mean, if you're going, what's going to happen? You'd have thought it would have pricked their curiosity, not a rebuke from Peter, who has suddenly decided that he's big enough to rebuke the Son of the living God.

[17:22] We're back in the same territory as we were earlier about spiritual gifts, aren't we? When people say they're going to loose the Holy Spirit, they're taking authority over the living God, or trying to. Peter was exercising his authority, so-called, over the living God.

And you have to ask why. Well, because he didn't want it to end. I mean, he'd seen him take command of the weather.

He'd seen him feed 5,000 and then 4,000. He'd seen him do miraculous healings all over the place, followed him around for quite a while, and had got used to being secure in the presence of the Lord. And now has come to this revelation, this man really is the Messiah. And I don't want it to end. What fascinates me about this whole passage, actually, if you take it from earlier in chapter 16 and carry on, is how the Lord took the disciples through stages.

Because clearly, although he was apprehended here, you know, he said, you're the son of the living God. He still doesn't get it. He's not treating him as the son of God.

[18:45] He's treating him as a servant of his. He's treating him as someone who can meet his needs. You can't go. This is not going to happen to you.

He knows that Jesus has sufficient authority and power to reverse this decision. So he's trying to put his arm up his back to reverse the decision.

And there's a certain, you can empathise with Peter, there's a certain craving of heart to see the situation turned around. There must have been a sense of, oh no, you can't, what are we going to do without you?

There must have been a sense of that. But, he's misusing whatever authority he has or trying to. And the Lord's response must have been a bit of a shock.

Get behind me, Satan. He's actually saying to Peter, what has in chapter 12 been said to him, which is, you're doing this work by the power of Satan.

[19:53] But this time it's right. Peter, you are acting on behalf of Satan. Get behind me, Satan. You are trying to dangle carrots in front of me. You're trying to tempt me away from what the plan of God is.

Now when you, I think there's a salutary lesson in this for us, in that when you think what the plan of God was, and that Jesus knew it, in fact, if you read Psalm 22, you will know that he knew it. Because he even recorded in that Psalm what he was going to cry out on the cross. So, he knew what was coming. He knew it was going to be agonizingly painful.

He knew he was going to die at the hands of men. And he knew he had the power to stop it. And the only motivating factor for carrying on with it was his love for us.

And by us, I don't just mean us, I mean the human race. To deal with sin once and for all and for all time. So, get behind me, Satan.

[20 : 57] You are a stumbling block to me. This is Peter who's trying to, effectively say, no, no, no, don't do that. We want you. You are a stumbling block to me because you're trying to stop me doing the work of the Lord.

You're not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's. So, that leads to the question of what is God's interest? Well, God's interest is that this debt of sin be paid for.

It's as simple as that. And then we get into this next part, which is, if anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

Now, I've heard so many explanations of this scripture that, you know, your cross to bear could be your grumpy neighbour, or your cross to bear could be an errant child that won't do as it's told.

Your cross to bear could be your mum or your dad or whatever. That is not what this means. When you take up your cross, and when he said to them, you need to take up your cross, this is what it would have meant.

[22 : 11] They were probably still in the high place when they were up in Banyas. And so there would have been people about, but they were used to looking down from a high place and seeing, you could call them victims, or you could call them guilty parties, carrying the beam of their cross to their place of execution.

And so when you were sentenced to crucifixion, you had to take up, not the whole cross usually, but usually the cross beam, and you had to carry it to the place where it would then be laid down, and you would be nailed to it, and then the cross would be lifted up and dropped in its stand.

And it was, and probably still is, the most brutal form of execution, in that there is a historical record somewhere of somebody taking 13 days to die.

It was awfully sadistic. It wasn't designed just to end your life, but it was designed to end your life with an awful lot of suffering. And so when he said, if you want to come after me, you've got to take up your cross, he was speaking of his own future, that he would have to take up his cross, and walk it up to Golgotha.

And if you remember, he was so weak when he did that, he needed help from Simon of Cyrene to get there. But he carried his own cross to that place.

[23 : 41] So he was speaking future, but he was also telling them of something they had seen on a regular basis. During that year, and I have no idea how accurate this is, it came from a history book that may or may not be true, but during that year, it's reported that there were 800 crucifixions in that area.

It's also reported that in the previous few years, I can't remember the numbers, there were something like 2,000 crucifixions. So this was a common sight.

So when he said to them, you need to take up your cross and follow me, it was a bit like saying to someone, you need to take your, I don't know, your electric chair or your gallows with you.

You need to take with you wherever you go, a means of execution, because your life in this world is now expendable for Christ.

Now that, that's a big ask, but he wasn't sugaring the pill for them. He was telling them that in order to faithfully serve God, you may have to give up your life.

[24 : 55] I think the application in this for us is very simple and straightforward, in that when we serve the Lord, we don't walk according to what drives us in the flesh.

Right? If, and I add this, if called to do so. We are blessed. We live in a society that doesn't ask us to give up our life for our faith.

If you lived in Saudi Arabia, it would be a different story. So, there is, there is a situation that could face any of us at any time, where we would have to make a choice.

Do we give up our life? Or do we tell a lie? Or do we take the easy route? And clearly, these guys are being told, if you're going to come after me, you need to be prepared to pick up your cross and follow me.

In other words, follow me to death. That leads to, for me anyway, and I, you may be much more courageous than I am.

[26 : 04] But that leads to the question, how am I going to do that? How could I say, how could I face the Lord right now and say, yeah, I'll do that for you, Lord. What I can say is, I'd like to have enough courage to do that for you, Lord.

And everything in me wants to be the man who would do that for you, Lord. When it comes down to it, am I courageous enough? And that's where I think two things, or two, two bits of scripture come

to mind.

One is that around Pentecost, the disciples changed from a cowardly bunch who were hiding. They were terrified to go out, quaking in their boots.

Pentecost happened. The Holy Spirit fell on them and they became courageous. Courageous. And therefore me becoming courageous enough to do this does not depend entirely on me.

It depends on an endowment of the Holy Spirit to bring courage to me. You see, the thing is, I don't have any doubt about the end outcome. I know where I'm going.

[27 : 10] What I doubt is whether I could face the pain. You know, people say, are you afraid of dying? No, I'm not afraid of dying at all. It's pain. I'm a bit averse to. So, but he is able to endow me.

There was a story of somebody who, the method of execution for Christians in this particular situation was they put this massive, great copper pan on a fire. And if you wouldn't, if you wouldn't recant your faith, they'd heat up the fire and they would chuck you in the copper pan.

And a man who was thrown in there, and I can't remember the names because I don't do names anymore, but he, he was in the pan and he cried out, is this side not done enough yet?

Do you not want to turn me over? And he went to his death with that kind of attitude. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego went into the furnace with this kind of attitude and God preserved them in the furnace.

All of the apostles, apart from John, were martyred. And even John, they boiled him in oil or tried to. And the Lord, what am I trying to say?

[28 : 27] We don't know what the Lord is going to do with us or for us. What we do know is he can give us an endowment of the Holy Spirit to cope with it and to face it. The Romans used to say of Christians, they tend to die well.

They wouldn't recant. They wrote letters to one another. I've got a book with a letter in at home that says, you know, the, the, what's his name?

The emperor at the time said, if they will recant, don't execute them. But if they really are believers, they won't recant. That was the reputation Christians had.

And you think, where did they get that courage? And I, I can only think it was something that the Holy Spirit brought to them. Turn with me to first Peter. Because it's something that I don't know.

Perhaps I'm the only one that thinks about it. I doubt it. But I do sometimes look at these things and say, I'd love to be that man, Lord. I'd love to be that man who can just say, yes, Lord, I'll do it.

[29 : 34] But that's what Peter did. When he chopped off Malchus's ear, he was, I'll save you, Lord. No, no, no. The Lord was there to save Peter.

So, one Peter, beginning at the beginning. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who reside as aliens scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen according to the full knowledge of God, the father, by the sanctifying work of the spirit to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with his blood.

May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure. Blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time.

God protects his people. And when we're in these difficult situations, we are protected and we have to ask, what does that protection mean?

Well, does it mean you won't suffer? Does it mean you won't get beaten up? Does it mean you won't be thrown out of your job or starve or whatever else? No, it doesn't mean any of those.

[31 : 03] It means that God will protect you. In whatever way he sees fit and in whatever way will glorify him. Hence, when you read Revelation chapter five, you have the saints sitting under the altar, crying out, saying, how long, oh Lord, until you avenge our blood.

God. So there is a path, there is an eternal pathway to walk, which won't necessarily brush pain and everything aside.

But what it will do is give us the courage to glorify the Lord if we have to suffer for him. But coming back to what was said to Peter, you know, he, Peter was praying for something that God didn't want in a sense, wasn't he?

When he was saying, this can't happen to you, Lord. But that's not what the Lord wanted. The Lord, this sounds awful, but the Lord wanted to go to the cross.

It was for the joy we read in Hebrews, for the joy that was set before him that he enjoyed the cross. He wanted to go to the cross. And Peter was trying to exercise his influence to stop him from going to the cross.

[32 : 22] Now, I think the church at large does this a lot. I think it prays things without first asking, what does the Lord want? And one example of that, and I may be wrong in this, so do bear with me.

But one example of that is the number of churches, usually charismatic churches, that say, we're going to see revival. The Bible doesn't tell us to expect revival in this time.

Now, he may be merciful, and he may grant revival. But that's not because of anything we can do. What we can pray for is, what I think we should be praying, not is, Lord, send revival, necessarily, but, Lord, come soon.

Now, we've all got unsaved friends and relatives, and we want them to get saved. And so there is something to be said for saying, Lord, if it's possible, if there's time left, if it's doable, please let us have a revival before you come.

But that's a request, not an insistence. But we have lots of Christians who insist there's going to be a revival. The kingdom now folk are insisting that we bring the kingdom now.

[33 : 46] Never mind waiting for Jesus to come back. But we can bring the kingdom now. Is that what God wants or has expressed in his word? Absolutely not. It isn't. So this is a big point of application for us, to make sure that we pray for the Lord's will to be done, and seek him to find out what that is, and pray for that, rather than just pray for what we would like to see.

So we need to be in cooperation with the Holy Spirit, not in opposition to him, is the point. Back to Matthew, chapter 16.

So we need to cooperate with the Holy Spirit, and we need to be prepared to take up a cross, and we need, I would say, to pray for the strength to do that, because that is a supernatural endowment. It isn't, for most people I've met, it doesn't come naturally. You need a supernatural help to do that. Verse 25, Oh, that's a difficult verse in some ways.

Because in the context, that must refer to the person being persecuted. Now I've heard a lot of people use this, and apply this to the unsaved.

[35 : 12] Right? The unsaved, are those who wish to save their own life, and the saved are the ones who are not bothered. But in the context, I don't think you can get that from this.

I think this is, to saved people, in fact, it was spoken to these disciples. So, it's to save people, and say, despite your salvation, you're going to have choices to make.

Now, of course, if you are unsaved, you will certainly lose your life, as in, you won't be saved. If you, if you choose a hedonistic path, rather than the path of Jesus, you will, lose your, life, and remain unsaved.

Whoever wishes to save his life, will lose it. Saving your life in this context, is, doing what will be a blessing, rather than hurt you. And if you take that road, you might get a temporal blessing, but in the long term, you will lose your relationship with the Lord.

But if you cast aside your own life, all the things that you want, for his sake, you will find life. So, verse 26, what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul?

[36 : 33] Now, to me, that has to be written to people who, it's quite difficult to interpret this, because, the church has not yet been established, these disciples are being prepared, for the establishment of the church.

There is an argument, and I've heard it made, and I actually don't quite know what to make of it, that they're not even saved yet. And God obviously has a plan for them. Are they born again?

I don't go with that argument, but it does make this scripture a little bit difficult, because when it says, for what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul?

It seems to imply that this is a scripture that's aimed at, maybe, unsaved people, as well as saved people. That if you, if you go on a worldly mission, to gain the whole world, you can forfeit your soul. Now, there's a lot of famous people, who've become Christians, who did just that. They pursued riches, and wealth, and fame, and fortune, and it was empty.

[37 : 38] It did their soul no good whatsoever, and then they found Christ, and suddenly none of that stuff mattered. There was only one thing that mattered in the end, which was Christ.

And I think that's what this scripture is getting at. It's saying, all this other stuff you can chase, is worthless, when you put it next to knowing the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, I don't know that I've done a very good job with that verse, but that's what I came away with in the end, that it was saying, all the stuff the world can offer you is not worth it.

It doesn't do your soul any good whatsoever. And verse 27, for the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and will then repay every man according to his deeds.

In the notes, there are 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 places, where this phrase is used, that God will, read it again, Ray, he will repay every man according to his deeds.

[38 : 53] So, I think there's a tendency when we sit in salvation, there's a tendency for us to read that and go, well, that doesn't really apply to me, because I'm saved.

So, I'm not going to be asked to repay anything for my deeds, because I'm not going to face judgment for my deeds. Hmm. Well, you are, but you're not going to be judged for your sins, and therefore not allowed into heaven, or cast into the lake of fire.

That's a certainty. But you are going to go to what's called the beamer seat judgment, the place where believers' works are judged.

And on the basis of that judgment, rewards will either be given or not given. So, we are all called to give an account for what we've done. It's just that if you're unsaved, when the books come out, and they go down the list of, if Ray was unsaved, when they went down the list of Ray's deeds, it would be, hmm, no way, mate, there's no way you can come in here with a list like that.

But what we read in Colossians, for the believer is, he has removed the handwriting from the decree which is against us, and which was hostile to us, and nailed it to the cross. So, our sins are done, and dusted.

[40 : 18] We're forgiven for the sins. But then there's all this other stuff, that God would have us do. And if we've not done it, and I'm not suggesting that this is like, it's not the same as going to hell, but it's going to be really disappointing, especially if you know you were called, and you know you said no.

It's a daunting prospect. The unsaved go to final judgment, and for the saved, to the beamer seat judgment of God, where God will likely say, I gave you this to do.

Well done, my good and faithful servant, and I gave you that to do. Well done, my good and faithful servant, and I gave you that to do, and you chickened out. And I have no idea what that's going to be like, because at times I've been a first class chicken.

And I hope I'm getting less of a chicken as time goes on. So, in verse 27, for the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and will then repay every man according to his deeds.

Verse 28, Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his glory. So, when you first read that, and if you don't read on, and we're going to read on next week, but if you don't read on, you are left thinking, well, that sounds like the Lord was saying he's going to come again before these people have even died.

[41 : 58] So, just a brief preview of coming attractions, is that he, the next thing that's recorded in Matthew's Gospel is the Transfiguration.

And, when you read the Transfiguration, as we will next week, what you realise is that this was not just some, it wasn't like any of the other things they had seen the Lord do.

It wasn't, okay, he calmed the storm. But at the time that he calmed the storm, he was sitting in the boat and he looked like a man. He fed 5,000, fed 4,000, healed lots of sick people.

All the time, he looked very much like you and me. Nothing exceptional about him. He hadn't come in his glory. In fact, as the song says, he'd laid aside his majesty.

We didn't see his glory. We saw a man who was also God, but the God part was very much hidden, apart from through the things that he did to fulfil the word of the Lord.

[43 : 04] On the day of Transfiguration, he came in his glory. And so, the people who were with him were there when he came in his glory.

And, they didn't know what to do with themselves. His garments were so white that they were whiter than a launderer could ever make them. You get this impression that he was shining.

And it says his face was shining. And in the process of all that, this massive voice, and I can't imagine it was a whisper, boomed out of heaven and said, this is my son, with whom I am well pleased.

Listen to him. Now, I think that fulfills what we've just read. But the people standing there saw the transfigured Lord, saw the glorified, magnified Lord, in the fullness of his presence, standing there,

with these Old Testament saints as well.

And, it does sound, it sounds a bit like, you know, Peter says, it's a good job we're here.

[44 : 15] It's almost like a nervous, it's a good job we're here. Can we make some tabernacles? I mean, there must be something we can do in the face of this. No, just shut up and listen.

This is my son, with whom I'm well pleased. Listen to him. Stop talking, Peter. You're going to put your foot in your mouth again. So, I think that fulfills the scripture that we've just read.

Whether you agree, I don't know. If we just turn briefly to Luke chapter 9, which is Luke's version of this whole account.

Once again, it's in three Gospels. Bits of it are in three Gospels. Luke 9, verse 28. Some eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray.

And while he was praying, the appearance of his face became different. And his clothing became white and gleaming. And behold, two men were talking with him. They were Moses and Elijah, who, who appearing in glory, was speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

[45 : 35] So, we get the impression there that not only was the Lord seen in his glory, but so were Moses and Elijah. And you also, you receive this piece of information, which I think is significant, that going to the cross, the last, the last line, his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

Going to the cross was an accomplishment. It's so often portrayed as a murder, which it was, but more than just a murder, from God's perspective and from Jesus' perspective, it was an accomplishment.

Why an accomplishment? Well, because the timetable for it had been preset. And so when he went to the cross, it wasn't early. It wasn't late. It was according to the word of the Lord.

And it served the purpose of the word of the Lord, which was to pay for the sin of mankind for all time. And to give a load of demonic presences, a pasting.

And if you want to, if you want to know more of that, what you need to do is read Psalm 22 and study it. Because there's a bit in there about the bulls of Bashan attacking him, which I think is a reference to demonic presences attacking him.

[46 : 55] So we sometimes lose, and certainly the world loses, this perspective that Jesus going to the cross was an accomplishment. Peter tried to get in the way yet again, chopped off Malchus's ear.

And he said, don't you know that I could call legions of angels to deliver me from this hour? I need to go to the cross and I need to do it on time.

So earlier, what the Lord was saying to Peter is, this is, this is something that must happen. And then he tells Peter off for trying to prevent what must happen from happening.

He's dodged and avoided confrontation with the Pharisees on several occasions to postpone his death to this very day and hour. And even at this very day and hour, he could walk away from it, but didn't.

And he stood in the garden of Gethsemane with blood running down his face, saying, Lord, if it be possible, deliver me from this hour, but not my will, but yours be done.

[48 : 04] So it was an accomplishment, accomplishment for Jesus, who was fully man as well as fully God, to see it through. An accomplishment to achieve God's prophetic timing and a massive accomplishment to pay for our sins.

So, Father, I just thank you for this scripture, which I admit to have struggled with parts of it, to get the context right. But the overarching message is so clear for us that you had to go to the cross and that that we can take example from Peter who was actually praying against the will of the Lord rather than in line with the will of the Lord.

Lord, teach us, teach us to act and pray in line with your will. And Father, impart to us the courage to do it when it's not an easy thing to do, when it's going to make life uncomfortable.

And by the same token, Lord, don't let us fall into the trap of just being brash people who bludgeon people with your word when we, if we go out on the streets or if we meet people on the doorstep or our friends.

But Lord, that we are always full of your spirit and manifesting the fruits of your spirit, the love, the joy, the peace, the patience, the kindness, the gentleness, the goodness, the faithfulness, the self-control.

[49 : 34] All of it, Lord, so that you are glorified by our actions. Father, we thank you for this study time in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. Amen.