

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Taught by Bruce Bickel

Session: September 28, 2012

...once again, as we just stand in awe of the majesty of your creation. Thank you for the gift of music and the beauty of art. You are the author of all things that are beautiful and good. We just pray, Lord, that you'd be pleased this day to remove all the frustrations of this week, the things that concern us of a worldly nature that seem to sometimes saddle us down with frustration and inactivity. We just ask, Lord, that you'd be please to open our eyes, once again, that we might behold you for Jesus sake. We pray this in his glorious name. Amen!

Thanks, guys. Appreciate it very much. [AUDIENCE APPLAUSE] Sometimes, brothers, you know, it's just good for us just to be quiet and do nothing.

Audience Member: Good morning, Bruce. My name is Warren. I don't know whether anyone knows my wife. My wife's name is Glennie. About four months ago, she got cancer. I asked you for your prayers, and they're working well. She's been through her third chemo. We have three more to go, and I thank you for your prayers.

Amen. [AUDIENCE APPLAUSE] Let's turn in your Bibles, please, to Matthew 6. We're continuing our study of the Sermon on the Mount. We finished several weeks ago Matthew 5, which began with the Beatitudes. Matthew 5 is the beginning of this most powerful sermon ever preached. That's where Jesus, at his very first staff meeting, introduced the people to whom he was speaking, his disciples, and basically saying, "This is the characteristic of a kingdom citizen. This is how you enter into the kingdom of God. This is how you take on the character of the nature of a citizen of the kingdom, and this is your witness." That's all in the Beatitudes in Matthew 5 all the way to verse 48.

In Matthew 5:48, you'll notice he has a summary statement at the end of Chapter 5 when he says, "You therefore must be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect." That's a summary statement of all of Matthew 5. The interesting thing about Matthew 6 is the next command that he gives. Right after saying be perfect, he says, "Be careful." The English Standard Version says, "Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven."

As we talked last week, we introduced Matthew 6, and we go from being perfect to being careful. The issue is, the bridge there, is your motives. We come into Matthew 6, and this is one of the more difficult things for us as men to deal with, and that is our motives. You see, in Matthew 5, the real issue is whose blessings do you want to receive? In Matthew 6, you go to who do you want please? Who do you really want to please? Do you want to please the system of this world to enhance your reputation, to enhance your resume, whatever those things may be that drive us as men?

The real issue we're dealing with here is what is our motive? Why do we do the things we do? Jesus goes into a description here of personal holiness based upon this idea of being personal and being perfect. Our perfection is not something that we achieve; it is something that we receive because of our justification by faith alone. We get credit for the sinless perfection and perfect obedience of Christ, and therefore, we can't add on top of that.

A couple of things we need to understand—the difference between antinomianism, legalism and grace. Antinomianism is against the law. It basically says it doesn't make any difference what I do. It doesn't make any difference what I do because I'm saved, because I have a saving relationship, because I'm in God's grace. Antinomianism, which is against the law, says it doesn't make any difference what I do.

Legalism says what I do makes a difference. What I do makes a difference. And then grace says it's what I did for you that makes the difference. You need to understand those three things in the right context.

Antinomianism says it doesn't make a difference what I do. Legalism tries to add on to that perfection of Chapter 5:48 and says it does make a difference what I do, because what I do now has merit. Well take a look at this logically. If you have been credited for the sinless perfection and perfect obedience of Christ when you were justified by faith, you now have peace with God, you have access with God, as a result of your justification, how then can you add onto perfection if you were given credit for the sinless perfection and perfect obedience of Christ? That's how God views us now as wrapped in the robes of righteousness. Legalism says I'm going to take which is perfect and add on top of it.

We begin to say such things as, "Lord, give me a good day because I want to have a good quiet time today." We drive a correlation between what I do and what we think God should be doing for us. We say, "Alright, I'm going to go have a good quiet time today, therefore, I expect you to let me have a good session when I go to this [UNCLEAR] this afternoon," whatever it may be. You see, there's this mentality that says that I can add onto; I can add onto that which is perfect. The perfection is found in the person and work of Christ. Humility, brothers, as we've been saying, is seeing this which is perfect and realizing I can't achieve it.

You see, you and I realize, and see hopefully, what is perfect, and that is the sinless perfection and perfect obedience of Christ. Humility says I see that. But humility also says I can't achieve that. I can't be that. I can't do that, so you don't add onto that thinking that the things that I do, even in our obedience, you see, there's no merit in our obedience. Obedience is a love response in obedience. You do it out of gratitude. You do it out of response of love for the amazing grace of God. Grace, now, is this—grace is, "It's what I did for you that counts." Legalism says that I can add on top of what you've done. Antinomianism says it doesn't make a difference what I do.

As we move into Matthew 6, you see, that's paramount we understand those three things because the issue is going to be motives. Jesus talks about four areas in our life dealing with our holiness. Holiness means we are set apart to demonstrate the sinless perfection and perfect obedience of Christ, fully realizing there's nowhere in the Scripture that says that I will ever attain that myself. But rather, what I do is I picture the person and work of Christ in my life through my holiness. I'm set apart for a special purpose. The word holiness means to be set apart.

He says you're set apart in four ways in your conduct of your life expressing your holiness. That would be in your giving, in your fasting, in your praying and how you manage your money. That's Chapter 6. Four areas of our personal holiness are demonstrated by the motives behind our giving, the motives behind our fasting, the motive behind our praying, and the motive behind the management of how we handle our possessions and our wealth. Those are the four things we're going to look over the next several weeks.

We introduced this last week by looking at praying. We saw that in Matthew 6, the very first, the first verses of that, we talked about giving. Basically, giving is done by faith, it's done consistent with the Scripture, and it's done with the right motive. That's how you describe a good work. As we've been saying for several years, the best that a non-believer, a person who does not have a saving relationship with Christ, can do is a good bad work. It's good in the eyes of the world, and they'll be recognized for that, and it may be something that is very, very humanely done. It's good in the eyes of the world, but bad in the eyes of God because it doesn't meet the qualifications of a good work.

Here are the qualifications, biblically, of a good work. It's done by faith. You see, somebody can give a

million dollars to build a hospital wing, and they do it for their own ego. That's a good bad work. It's good in the eyes of the world, and they'll have their name on the building. But it's bad in the eyes of God because it wasn't done with faith. It wasn't done with the right motive. You see, motive is critical for us as a follower of Christ.

Secondly, a good work is defined by it's consistent with the Scripture. Somebody might build a hospital wing to take care of the needy. That's consistent with the Scripture, but is it done with faith? If it's not, then it's a good bad work.

Thirdly, it's done with the right motive. What's the motive behind making that gift? Now, this doesn't mean, people, that you and I go out and judge people. That's not what I'm saying. All I'm saying is you've got to look at yourself. That's where we go from, "Be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect," now to "Be careful." Be careful how you live out your righteousness. Be careful how you live out your holiness. Be careful how you give. Be careful how you fast. Be careful how you pray. Be careful how you manage your money. The real issue is now be careful because of the motive. Do you really want to call attention to yourself, and the examples that he gives. Don't do it like the Pharisees, because they're going to get exactly what they want, but they'll get no blessing from the Heavenly Father. Because, you see, the motive is wrong.

I can't tell you what is the right motive. That's only something you can go before the Lord. I can't be your Holy Spirit. But as we go through these things, we need to examine very closely, what's the motive behind the things that I do. Really, why am I doing the things that I do? Hopefully we're doing them because the Holy Spirit has been pleased to lead us in that way. But you've always got to check your motives. Now I'm not saying that you're not recognized by the system of this world. I'm not saying that. If they choose to do that, sometimes you just have to let them do it. That's okay. But the question is you know down deep in your own soul that that wasn't the motivation for why you did it. You have to know that answer yourself.

Let's take a look at some of the motives behind our giving, as the Scripture would teach us. Paul says that we are to give secretly, and that's the way we do it to receive the heavenly reward. Now secretly doesn't mean that people don't know about it. It's talking about the secret of your own spirit, the secret of your own soul, and your own motive; that you're doing it with the right so the left hand doesn't know what you're doing. In other words, you can't congratulate yourself and say, "Oh wasn't I spiritually wonderful because I had the right motive?"

Several years ago in the first church I pastored in Kansas City, we were talking about the Sermon on the Mount, talking about holiness, talking about sinless perfection and perfect obedience. A woman came up to me one Sunday and said, "You know, Pastor Bruce, I just want you to know this message you've been teaching us on the Sermon on the Mount is so perfect about our holiness and being careful. I just want you to know that this week, I did everything absolutely right." She said, "I lived a sinlessly perfect life, and this exactly what you're teaching me to do." She said, "I was sinless perfect and every motive was absolutely pure." I said, "I bet you're proud of that, aren't you?" She said, "Yes!" {LAUGHTER} [UNCLEAR]...

You see, you can't even take pride in doing things correctly. You see, that's the subtlety of Matthew 6. You can't even take pride in... [UNCLEAR] said, "Well my left hand didn't know what the right hand was doing. I didn't congratulate myself." You see, you've got to be careful about that. Now I can't tell you what to do, guys. Please understand that. I'm not standing up here telling you I know how to do this. All I'm saying is this is the standard by which you and I are to live that is so radically different than the system of the world. We've got to be very careful. What's the motive behind our giving? Why do we do that?

Now, you know, I'm in the foundation business. I have 28 families around the country whom I help give their money away through their family foundations. Go all over the place. The great sin of an executive director, which I am of these 28 families, the great sin of an executive director of a family foundation is thinking it's your money. It's not my money. Now some people would say to me, "How can you let them give that money away to that organization?" It's not my money. Not my money. I can't tell them what to do, and it's not job. I have not authority to tell them where to give their funds. Many of the people give their funds to things I wouldn't touch with a ten-foot pole. But it's not my money.

Some of them say this, "Find someplace where we can really be recognized." That's their choice. Others say, "Bruce, we want to do everything anonymously." That's their choice. You see, now, somewhere you and I have to ask ourselves, "What is my motive?" I never ask them about their motives. That's not my job. My job is not to correct them in what they do. My job is to let them keep the fun in philanthropy and maintain the joy of giving. I do have some influence in the way they begin to think over the years.

I remember I had one woman who, when I first met her, a wealthy woman who had just come into some substantial infusion of funds, and she wanted to set up a foundation. The first time she met me she said, "I know about you, and I hate religion." I said, "Well we're going to get along fine because so do I." She said, "But aren't you a minister?" I said, "I'm a follower of Christ," and she said, "What the f-- does that mean?" I said, "Well stick with me for the next five years, and I'll show you." That's the only thing I ever said to her. Stick with me the next five years and I'll show you.

She recently went to be with the...she recently passed away. I went down to see her before she died because her son asked me if I'd come down and visit with her. She asked me if I would pray with her, and I did, in the hospital. She said, "You know, I remember years ago, about eight years ago, you told me the difference between being religious and being a follower of Christ. I now see the difference, and I just wish I had lived my life like you do." I said, "It's never too late." I prayed with her. I don't know what will happen. In God's sovereignty, I can't tell you that she had a conversion on her death bed. I don't know that. That's not for me to know. I don't need to know that. All I know is I can tell you what happened, and I have to trust the righteousness and mercy and justice of a holy God to do the right thing for her, because God always does the right thing. So I don't know. When I did her funeral, I couldn't say, "Oh, she prayed her salvation prayer." I couldn't say that. All I just said is, "I know her heart was warm toward the Lord and I don't know what that means," so I could be very honest.

But you see, one of the things we really have to do is check the things that we do and what are our motives, even in our own personal giving. Why do we do it? What's the motive behind it? The Pharisees did it to receive accolades of men. Jesus says that's not the way we do it. We do it in secret. The word "secret" doesn't mean that it's not publicly recognized. The secret means it's in the depths of your own heart because you've examined your own mind.

Ted: I don't know if you'd care to unpack this, but you just laid out a very...this is a very heavy concept that you've shared, and that is if you are employed and asked to do something, you may not necessarily agree, even morally, with what you've been asked to do, but you do it because you're a servant of your employer. Did I miss that? I mean, I agreeing with you. I'm just fascinated by the idea.

It's not an easy idea, no. That's exactly what I'm saying.

Ted: I think about Esther and I think about Daniel [UNCLEAR] at Joseph.

You see, I think that...when you take a look at Daniel...Daniel is a very good illustration. Ted, I think you really touched on something very, very key. You see, we can't even take pride in saying, "I'm not

going to do that.” You see, you can’t even take pride in that if your employer asked you to do something. You can’t take, “Oh, I’m a Christian; I can’t do that.” I mean, that’s the attitude we often have, “I’m a follower of Jesus. I’ve got this wristband on my wrist. I can’t do that.” You see, you can’t even take pride in that, what he’s saying. You’ve got to be careful.

In Daniel’s case, you notice Daniel went through a four-year, or three or four year brainwashing in the Scripture. They wanted to change his name. He said, “I can go along with that because my name is written in the Lamb’s Book of Life. You can’t change me, but you can change my name externally. You don’t have to call me Daniel; you can call me something else.” So he went along with that. He went along with the educational system. They wanted to reeducate him because they wanted reeducate him, they wanted to redefine him. He said, “I can go along with the educational system.” He learned a whole different things [UNCLEAR] gods and myriad of gods and all those others things. “I can do that, but I can sift it through the Scripture and know which is good and bad.”

The educational system we have is not necessarily good nor bad. You have to sift through it and use the Scripture to help you do that. But Daniel went along with that. The one thing he didn’t go along with was what? Didn’t eat the food from the king because he knew that Scripture said this, “You cannot eat food that’s offered to idols.” Daniel took a stand where? On the Scripture. That’s the principle I would apply in my own life. I can do a lot of things that I would personally not want to do, but as long as it doesn’t violate the Scripture, then I’m going to say I’m a servant to my employer and I will do that. But if they come and say, “Bruce you can no longer have that Bible study at PNC,” or “You can no longer mention the word Jesus Christ,” then that’s a different story. But I’ve never been asked to do that, and I would say 99% of the time, you’ll never be asked to do that.

When you take a look at Daniel, he drew the line in the sand when it dealt with the Scripture. That’s the best counsel I can give. I have never been asked by my employer to do something that is contrary to the Word of God. They’ve asked me to do a lot thing that I don’t feel comfortable with because it’s not who I am, but it is not contrary to the Scripture. You have to realize what is my responsibility...I can’t tell you what to do in those situations. I can’t be your Holy Spirit. It’s a fine line of how you draw the line. You’ll know when you need to take a stand. You’ll know on that. Most of the time you don’t have to do it.

***Don:** Well, maybe, I don’t know, obviously, you can’t tell people what to do and you can’t be their Holy Spirit, but what if, suppose...let’s say this scenario, and it’s happening more and more in this country. Let’s suppose that in order to work at a certain company, you’re required to take sensitivity training for gays, lesbians, etc., and go along with it. What do you do there?*

I would say what do you do? Not me. I’ve not been put in that position. What do you do?

***Bishop Rogers:** What if you’re advising or helping set up a foundation and they want to dedicate money to an immoral purpose? They’re not asking you to...but they’re asking you to set the thing up, help them set it up. Have you run into anything like that?*

I’ve never had that yet. If I were to be confronted with that, I think my response would be, “Thanks, but no thanks. I’m not the person to help you.” I wouldn’t give them a sermon on why I’m not. I would just say, “Thank you, but no thanks. I’m not the person. I can find somebody who can help you do that. That’s not something within my value system that I could do.” If they wanted me to explain it, I’m prepared to do that. I’ve not been in that situation yet. I’ve thought about that, Bishop, and I’ve thought what would my respond be. I’d pray to the Lord that he’d give me the courage to do the right thing at that time. If I were asked to do something that is immoral and contrary to the Scripture, my response then would have to be, “Thanks, but no thanks.” If you’ve been praying about it, and pray without

ceasing, “In all things make your supplications known to the Lord with thanksgiving,” if you’re constantly praying, prayer is preparation for the right response when it comes. I can’t tell you what the response is going to be, but you’ll get the answer at the time. That’s how God leads us.

One of the ways that we’re going to see as we pray is how do we pray. What do we pray for? What’s the motive of my prayer? Is he a heavenly gopher that he goes for this and goes for that? Is this my daily wish list? What’s the motive behind my prayer? What’s the purpose of it? We’re going to discuss that separately when we go through the disciple’s prayer known as the Lord’s Prayer. I prefer to call it the Disciple’s Prayer because he was teaching the disciples how to pray. In my mind, the Lord’s Prayer is John 17, his high priestly prayer. That’s the Lord’s Prayer. We’ll talk about this separately when we get into that. We’ll spend several weeks on the Lord’s Prayer.

***Brian:** When you and I were flying, we always had to do sims and emergencies and different things along those lines, so I was wondering, as we’re praying through these things, could we really put ourselves in that situation of, typically speaking, we see them coming down, so we can anticipate them, so really pray through how will I react in that situation, so whenever you do get put there, you can act properly, because you pray to which you know the response, you know what Scripture says, maybe you even sought the counsel of other godly men, so when the time comes, you can react properly. So don’t wait for it and be shocked [UNCLEAR].*

We shouldn’t be shocked by anything that’s going on around us. We shouldn’t be shocked about that. You just want to be prepared for it. I’ve given you this illustration before, but it’s the best one. The best illustrations always come from the Scripture. Let’s go back to the night before Jesus was crucified. He was preparing himself for that event that was coming. He asked James, Peter and John to go with him. Jesus is over here praying in anticipation of something coming down the [UNCLEAR] that he knew was going to happen. Peter was over her doing what?

***Audience Members:** Sleeping.*

Peter was sleeping. Now, as history unfolds, hours later, you saw two respond to identically the same situation, but with different responses. The Pharisees, the religious leaders and the Roman soldiers came to take Jesus captive. Jesus saw that and Peter saw that. Peter’s response was to draw his sword, cut off the ear of the high priest’s slave, because in his mind, he said, “I have to defend God. I’ve got to defend God. I’d better do something.” How often times do we think, “I need to defend God, so I’m going to do this.” Now that is just egotistically ludicrous to think that I can defend God in anything. You see, that was Peter’s motive, “I’ve got to defend God.” What was his reason for doing that? It was because he responded out of trepidation, which is fear. Fear is losing control, “I’ve lost control of this situation. They’re going to take my Lord away. They’re going to arrest him. They’re going to crucify him. I can’t let that happen. I’ve lost control, so I’ve got to take charge and I’ve got to defend God.” He responded out of trepidation. What did Jesus respond out of?

***Audience Member:** Preparation.*

Preparation, which is prayer. Jesus was praying. He said, “Put the sword down, Peter. If you live by the sword, you die by it. How will the Scripture be fulfilled.” Before that, he said this, “Don’t you know, people, that I can call down 12 legions of angels. It’s one of my options. Don’t you know I can do that?” You need to understand that a Roman legion consisted of 12 military troops—6,000 infantry men and 6,000 support. He’s basically saying, “Look, don’t you know that I can call down 144,000 angels. God’s on my side, not yours. That’s an option I can do. But how would the Scripture be fulfilled if I did that? I’m not going to do that.”

There you saw the wonderful advantage of prayer as preparation for the right response. Jesus's response was the motive of this—God will be glorified by every situation that I'm in. I'm going to be an aggressive responder what I can do to be consistent with the Scripture, what I know will fulfill God's glory. That's my motive. He responded out of preparation, where Peter responded out of trepidation.

You see, that's where you understand the idea that prayer is really preparation for the right response. Brothers, I cannot emphasize that enough, how you and I need to be prayer warriors. You're absolutely right, Brian, you and I as aviators, those of us who are pilots, you're always taught to anticipate, fly ahead of the aircraft and you land on a carrier. You're always thinking, "What am I going to do if this happens?" You're anticipating. You're not driven by fear; you're just preparing yourself so that if the ship bounces a little bit and I bolter and don't catch the hook, what do I do? I know exactly what to do, because you've thought through that. You see, that's what prayer does. I prayed before every carrier landing I ever had, "Lord, just give me the insight to know what to do should something happen." I wasn't agonizing over it, but I was just preparing myself. That's what you call flying ahead of the airplane.

Jim [UNCLEAR] is a top gun guy. He was a wonderful instructor. He's been with the aggressive squad for 50 years. We've talked about that, how you've got to fly ahead of the airplane. You always know what's going to happen, so you respond to it. You and I have to be prepared for what's going to happen. You don't let it drive you, you don't do it in fear, you just prepare yourself, so that when you need the grace, the grace will come. A good illustration. Thank you. Any questions on that?

Audience Member: [UNCLEAR] in John, Acts 4:20 and Acts 5:29, did they respond properly?

I'd have to go back and read the text.

Audience Member: [UNCLEAR]...lead by the Holy Spirit to go and speak publicly against the Pharisees?

I would have to say they did or they wouldn't have done it. Right?

Audience Member: What should we do?

Do what the Lord leads you to do. Just because they did it, doesn't mean you have to do it.

Audience Member: Doctors that have been told to abort, pastors that are pressured to marry homosexuals—there's a lot of...and government, the purpose of government is to condone good and punish evil [UNCLEAR] sin.

That's correct. Romans 13.

Audience Member: Now we see they're condoning evil.

That's correct.

Audience Member: And punishing good.

I can't solve that, can I?

Audience Member: We can do something. We can influence.

Absolutely. Do what the Lord leads you to do. I can't tell you what to do, brothers. Don't look to me for answers. Pray about it. That's the role of the Holy Spirit. His job is to what? To guide you into all truth and call attention to the person and work of Christ. I can't answer your questions. Two things don't ever ask me—how and what. How do I do it? What should I do? I have no idea. That's why the WWJD thing drives me goofy. What would Jesus do? I have no idea what he would do. I know what he's done.

***Ted:** I was just going to say, I think you hear, especially in the context of the election and the debates and [UNCLEAR], you hear so much of [UNCLEAR] financial planning meeting last night, Christian Athletic, and he said he was fearful of country...I was disturbed that a Christian would say they're fearful about the national situation. We've had it very easy in terms of our faith in this country, and the result has been stagnation in terms of church growth. We're entering a period that is very similar to the first three centuries of the church. Christians at that time were swimming in a society that was anti-Christian and anti-God in every way, and yet the church blew up in size. I would say I'm not fearful, I'm very hopeful about the future, as it becomes more pagan.*

Amen to that. When I was teaching in China several years ago, and Bishop Rogers, I'd like you to address this because you've had more international experience than all of us in ministry, but when I was teaching in China at the Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary in China, I said, "What's the greatest thing that you can do for America," and they said, "Pray that you'd be persecuted," because that's the thing that's caused the church in China to grow. They said, now understand this, "The best thing that's ever happened to us in the church was communism because it forced us to really depend upon Christ and come together as the body of Christ." Now I'm not saying that we become communists. Understand that. You understand that? {LAUGHTER} You got it, coach? Understand that? Okay. I'm not saying that. I'm affirming what Ted is saying. The church has always grown through persecution. Bishop Rogers, could you speak to that for a moment, sir?

***Bishop Rogers:** I was just thinking of an occasion at the seminary. We had a guy from behind the Iron Curtain when it was still up. We said to him, as were excused during Q&A, we said, "[UNCLEAR] it really must be tough." He said, "Oh yeah, it is tough," and we listened to some of the things he said, "It's not nearly as tough as you all have it over here. I don't know that I could really effectively minister in this setting. You just have it too easy."*

Isn't that interesting.

***Bishop Rogers:** He really meant it.*

I'm sure he did.

***Bishop Rogers:** He wasn't just making a point, you know, to be dramatic. He was quite serious. He thought we had it really, we were in terrible shape.*

I think the most difficult place to have an evangelical New Testament gospel ministry is the United States. Far more than Africa, Asia, Guadalumpur, any place else in the world. I think that we are the world's largest third world, spiritual country, and the most difficult place to have any significant, biblically oriented ministry is the USA, not outside. I get so frustrated when somebody says, "I'm going to the mission field." You've got one in your backyard! You've got one at work. You've got one in your neighborhood. What do you have to do raise money to send your youth down to Costa Rica? Send them to Pittsburgh. Right there's the ministry. We spend all...we've glamorized them. We're okay because they're the ones who need it. Folks, the ones that need it are us.

***Audience Member:** It's also easier to go out than to stay home.*

Oh yeah, it's easier. It's easier. That's a great illustration Bishop Rogers, that he said, "I don't know that I could do it here because you've got it too easy." I'm not fearful of what's going to happen. All I'm doing, is I'm praying more than ever, so that whatever the Lord is pleased to do, which I don't know need to know in advance, hopefully I'll have the right response when the time comes, and grace will be applied to me at the moment of application, not contemplation.

You see, that's the beauty of being in Christ. You're in union with Christ. What he accomplished through him, he's going to accomplish through us, so we do not need to be fearful. We just need to prepare ourselves. We'll talk about that next week as we get into the Lord's Prayer.

Let's pray. Father, it's just overwhelming that you really don't need us, but you use us. We really can't add anything to it, but you let us be the ones who demonstrate it. Father, we just pray that you would help us clearly understand what it means to trust you, what it means to not fear the system of this world, and what it means to be courageous when we need to be courageous. Father, just remind us of the things that you teach us about perfection has been given to us in the person and work of Christ. We can't add onto that, but what has really made the difference is what you have done to us has made the difference, and may be so that our lives will demonstrate that to your glory. All the Brave Men said...Amen!!