

Verse by Verse Matthew 18:11-35

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[0 : 00] All right, we're going to get right back into Matthew 18 this morning and continue to work our way through this gospel and life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 18, we got down to verse 10 and finished off with this deal about their angels.

Do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. And commented there about the theory of guardian angels and about children having guardian angels or everybody having them and just ran some scriptures there.

It seems the Lord Jesus Christ had them, but to make that a doctrine is pretty far-fetched. We ended last Sunday not really doing a thorough job, but at least introducing how this seems to kind of tie into some other truths in the scriptures, how things in heaven or things in earth, maybe I should say, have a counter in heaven or a representation in the presence of God.

And I showed you in Revelation how there's churches that are represented there as angels. And then we even went back in the Old Testament in Daniel and saw that kingdoms have, there was the prince of Persia, the prince of Grisha, and even Michael, the great prince which standeth up for the children of thy people for Israel and just saw that nations have representations in the spiritual realm.

[1 : 52] Princes like principalities and powers. And Paul says we don't wrestle against flesh and blood, but it's against something else up there. And when Daniel knelt down to pray, there was a wrestling match going on and he was unaware of 21 days there was some spiritual resistance to the answer from God that was sent.

It was three weeks he was praying and mourning. And so anyway, this is getting off track and I know we didn't really get into that deep. I didn't intend to, but it seems to connect with this thought of their angels beholding the face of my father which is in heaven.

And we ran the axe and saw how when Peter came out of prison that they said it is his angel. They didn't believe that as he was physically standing outside knocking, they didn't believe it was him. They told the girl, no, it's not him. It's his angel, meaning it's his spirit or his ghost. And so it seems like I don't, I definitely don't believe that there are guardian angels protecting every believer or every individual.

And as I said last week, if there is, then they're just not doing a very good job across the planet. But there's too many, too much harm being done to children especially, too many bad situations to say that, oh no, there's an angel protecting them.

[3 : 07] But anyway, God can protect you and he can send an angel if he so chose, but that's really not at all what I believe this verse 10 has to do with. Now we're moving forward.

Verse 11, the son of man has come to save that which was lost. That's a pretty good statement.

That's a pretty good thought that we like, that we definitely can spiritually and inspirationally apply to us today thinking Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners.

And here it says to save that which was lost. And in 2 Corinthians, is it 4? That if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. And we can make the connection that we're lost and in need of the son of man or God to come and to save us.

And so that's a great statement. I don't know why it's missing in many of the new versions. Well, I know why. It's because they're a sad, sorry representation for the words of God. But most of the new versions pick up.

You won't find that statement in there at all. It's omitted from the text. Now, the doctrine of this passage, the son of man has come to save that which was lost.

[4 : 15] But it's not just at this moment. He's not saying everyone and everywhere. Come back to chapter 15. And we saw this earlier. This is worthy of repeating. In Matthew 15.

And verse 24. A Gentile comes to him asking a favor of him.

Asking him to help her daughter have mercy on her. And in verse 24, he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

And the son of man has come to save that which was lost. He's referring to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. It's in chapter 10 and verse 6 as well. And so in chapter 18, he asked this question, How think ye?

It's like, what do you think? If a man have a hundred sheep and one of them be gone astray, like the nation of Israel, like Isaiah 53, all we like sheep have gone astray.

[5 : 15] That is a theme that just travels through the Old Testament. That they are likened to sheep and God is likened to the shepherd. And Jesus Christ shows up in John 10 saying, I am the good shepherd.

The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. And he's dealing with Israel. That's who's in front of him. He's not going to the Gentile nations and I'm giving my life for you. Thank God we get it.

But in the text, that's not who he's talking to. The nation of Israel, one of them be gone astray. Doth he not leave the ninety and nine and goeth into the mountains and seeketh that which is gone astray?

And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. Now, I have to say these things about it being Israel.

I have to make sure you understand the truth and the doctrine of the words. Because when you start to take this and say, Oh no, that's me. That's the church. Like probably 90% of people do when they come through Matthew chapter 18.

[6 : 16] Well then, you start with problems that you can't reconcile with the scripture. And in this case, if you're a sheep and that's written to you, and you went astray in verse 11, you're lost.

So did you lose your salvation? Because he came to save that which was lost. And in the passage, they were a sheep that went astray who's now lost and needs the Son of Man to come and save them.

And so, something's wrong here with the doctrine if we want to apply it and read it and take it at face value. What's wrong is somebody who tries to assume and presume that this is church age material.

This is Jesus in the New Testament talking to me and you. No, it's not. And if it doesn't match what Paul teaches the church, that they're secure in Christ Jesus for eternity and that they possess eternal life and can't lose it and that they're sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise until the day of redemption, if it doesn't match what Paul teaches to the church, then we'll just say, okay then, this teaching goes somewhere else.

And why would we even need to go any further than the context of the chapter and of the book where Christ is teaching on the kingdom of heaven, verse 1, verse 3, verse 4. And it's pretty plain.

[7 : 35] These are the lost sheep of the house of Israel. These are God's flock that are going astray that Jesus Christ is coming for and he's coming to bring them back and he's telling them the kingdom of heaven's at hand and he's proving who he is with healing and signs and wonders and showing all the evidence that he is their Messiah.

And so, in that context, it's perfect and it's flawless and there's no need to presume things and then try to... Now, if you want to make the application, fine. Just be careful making the application.

You can make the quote saying to a sinner, hey, Christ came to save sinners. He came to seek and save that which was lost and you're lost. And sure, you can say that. But then if you dig into the passage and say that you're a sheep that went astray and now you're lost and then you create a problem.

And there's no need to do that. Verse 14, even so, it is not the will of your Father, which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

And so, Peter takes that thought and he makes that application in 2 Peter 3 saying that God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. And now, he's dealing with the little children, the one he brought before him as an illustration that he carries this thought all the way through to verse 14.

[8 : 47] And it started with who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven and then he kind of spills over into a teaching about offending the little ones that believe in him and causing them to go astray.

And it's not the will of God for that to happen. He's going to punish the man. It would be better for him that a millstone hanged about his neck than to drown in the depths of the sea in verse number 6 than to lead those little ones astray.

All right, verse 15, Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. Now, let's get this straight before we go any further. This context is about a brother trespassing against another brother.

That's what it starts with in verse 15. And so, these are practical instructions that we could take into church matters, into individual situations. And that's what it is.

It's individual situation. A brother trespassing against thee. Singular, a brother. Go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. And I'll just finish the passage and then come back.

[9 : 51] If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church. But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and as an apublican. Now, there's four steps here that he takes.

And I've got to reiterate this. This is individual issues, one-on-one. A brother trespassing against another brother. And I don't need to give you illustrations to help you understand that.

You get it. And we can take this as a practical way to settle disputes within the church today. But as he's giving this illustration or this teaching, there's steps to it.

One is, he trespasses against you, so you individually, one-on-one, go confront him. Tell him his fault. Look, you did this. You said this, but you didn't do that.

[10 : 50] But whatever the case is, you go one-on-one and confront him. Doesn't mean you're looking to pick a fight. Doesn't mean that you're going to try to strangle him or choke him or force him to do anything.

You just confront him and say, this is the issue and this is the problem I have with it. And if he hears you and he agrees with you and you can settle it right there, you've gained your brother, you're back and you're restored to fellowship.

Praise the Lord. That's the best case scenario. But that doesn't always happen. So there's step two, verse 16. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more.

Don't get a mob. Don't get all of his family involved. Don't get all the church and go over to see him. Just take one or two more, preferably faithful people, honest people, neutral people, and take them along.

That at the mouth of two or three witnesses, now that's scripture there, every word may be established. All right, so take step two and try to get him to reason and see it's not just a one-on-one conflict, but there's others involved and they're going to pass their wisdom or their discretion into this thing and try to help us to resolve it.

[12 : 04] It's a good way to handle it, better than making a bigger deal out of it. Try to stay as small as possible. Verse 17, step three. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church.

But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee. There's step four. As a heathen man and a publican. So if he rejects the church on this thing and still maintains his innocence or he's right and everybody else is wrong, then the church rejects him.

And notice he's as a heathen man and as a publican, which would be considered in the Jewish economy as a lost man, someone outside of God's covenant.

And that's who he's talking about, Jewish brethren. He's talking to his disciples. Now everybody wants to say, this is God, this is Christ giving them instructions for the future church and body of Christ.

And sure, we can use it practically, no doubt about it, but he's not giving them instructions for the future body of Christ. Like, hey, when I send my spirit and when I do this and when this happens and when the apostle Paul comes and teaches you these things, he's just talking to this church, this assembly, this congregation.

[13 : 15] And there will be a Jewish assembly shortly after his resurrection. And the kingdom and all that stuff is still on the table. And then he, nevertheless, that's the steps there, the sequence of events to follow to try to sort this out.

And so if the brother is not interested in reconciling, then he's the one that gets booted out. He's as a heathen man and a publican. Now, Paul says something similar to this.

Come to Titus chapter 3. How to deal with somebody. Titus chapter 3. There's always a right way to deal with things.

And there's probably a multitude of wrong ways. So thank God he gives us some outlining of some ideas or some principles to follow, some courses of events, steps to take.

Now, Paul's dealing with people that have false doctrine and causing problems with the church and believers. And so in verse number 9 of chapter 3, Titus 3, 9, But avoid foolish questions and genealogies and contentions and strivings about the law, for they are unprofitable and vain.

[14:36] But that's going on. And it's going on, especially in these early church days where they're so mixed up in some cases with their bringing their Gentile roots into Christianity or bringing their Jewish traditions into Christianity or attempting, and even other religions, bringing their pagan things into and trying to keep them but just make them Christian, which the Catholic Church mastered over the centuries.

But he's saying, avoid all that stuff. It's unprofitable and vain. Verse 10, A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition, reject.

One time, two times, the third step is, we're done with you. Reject him. Knowing that he that is such is subverted and sinneth, being condemned of his self.

And so Paul gives a little different, this is about false doctrine here, not necessarily about a brother trespassing against you and stealing your shovel or whatever your problem with him is.

And so on back to Matthew 18. The goal is to gain thy brother in verse 15.

[15:54] But it may be in the end that you have to treat him as a heathen man and be done with him. Paul also gives some instructions in 1 Corinthians chapter 5 about a brother that's called, or a man that's called a brother.

And if he'd be a fornicator, a railer, a idolater, and so forth, he's living in sin and knowingly living in sin and interested in his sin. And he says, with such a one, know not to eat. You're going to have to cut off fellowship with him.

And he did that. If we read that as a specific example in 1 Corinthians 5, later in his second epistle in 2 Corinthians, he says, I know you guys, basically you handled it right.

You dealt with him. He went out, but he came back and he repented and he got right and it was all good. And it worked out, best case scenario. But they had to do their part. They had to cut off fellowship and he said, put away from you.

And that's what he did. All right. Now back in Matthew 18 and we got down to verse 17. So verse 18, Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye, who's the ye? It's the disciples in verse 1, the disciples of Christ.

[17:06] Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again, I say unto you that if two of you, disciples, shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

Now in verse 18, this loosing thing, the context is forgiveness and restoring a brother in verse 15 through 17. And in verse 21, Peter's going to come on the scene and ask him about his brother offended him and forgiven him.

How many times will I have to forgive him? So sandwiched in between that's that statement about binding on earth and loosing on earth and loosing in heaven. We saw that statement come up back in chapter 16 where Christ said, Peter, I give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatsoever thou, singular Peter, shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.

Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. This case is plural. It's the disciples and it's on context of the matters within the congregation as well as trespassing one against another personal issues.

And so there's, it's a little different context from 16 to 18 here. Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

[18:23] And so if you can get it right down here, God's happy with it. And it's forgiven, it's loosed is the phrase of the word and that word shows up in verse 27. Notice that.

Then the Lord of that servant was moved with compassion and loosed him. That's not ropes, that's loosed him of his debt. He forgave him the debt. And so loosing and binding has to do with

forgiveness or retaining something that's going to have to be dealt with later.

All right, verse 19. And we read this again. I say unto you that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst.

Now this is a prayer promise you might call it and it's to the twelve. A prayer promise saying that if you ask it shall be done if two of you or three of you but if two will agree ask and it'll be done.

Now people like to jump on this stuff. They love to jump on this and pretend that this is to me and this is so I can just get God to do whatever I want or they claim this stuff so close to them because they have something close to their heart and they find something in the Bible that speaks to them on the issue and therefore well God you're going to have to hold yourself to your word because me and so and so are bound together on this and we've been praying for this for years or whatever.

[19 : 56] You have to answer it. No he doesn't because this is Jesus Christ speaking in the very in person to his disciples and he's got something different going on than he's teaching you today.

A prayer promise. You've got to be careful taking these prayer promises. Look at chapter 21. Here's another one real quick. Chapter 21 and here Christ curses a fig tree and it withers up and when his disciples see it they're amazed by it and in verse 21 and 22 Jesus answered and said unto them Verily I say unto you who?

The disciples. Jewish disciples that are going to sit on twelve thrones in the kingdom of heaven.

Verily I say unto you that if you have faith and doubt not you shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree but also if you shall say unto this mountain be thou removed and be cast into the sea it shall be done and all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing ye shall receive.

You've got to be careful. You've got to rightly divide your Bible. You've got to know who's speaking and to whom they're speaking to. And this is Christ to his disciples and their prayer promises that he's given to them and how often do men take those promises and place them on themselves and rip them out of the context of Christ and his disciples I mean he handpicked these men specifically these men for a future goal and purpose train them and then he makes these kind of promises to them but it's all in context of his will for them and for the nation of Israel and for the kingdom of heaven.

It's a foolish thing to go find that one thing and then say see God said it Jesus said it I'll pray believing and then it's going to happen. Now you want to pray in faith but you better not claim those passages as if Jesus Christ told you that he has to do it because you prayed for it.

[21 : 59] There's a difference and rightly dividing your Bible helps you and knowing where promises go helps you a lot. That's why this study. Alright back in Matthew 18 where two or three are gathered together in my name verse 20 there am I in the midst of them.

Now this is obviously prophetic of after the resurrection because Christ in his person in his physical person is not where two people are anywhere on the planet.

This is the Lord Jesus Christ resurrected and it's not in a physical sense either it would be in his spirit the spirit of Christ and you know what he does in John promising the comforter to come and saying that I'm that's me and that's where me and my father are in the person of the comforter the Holy Ghost and so there I am in the midst of them.

Verse 21 now Peter's going to come with a question. Then came Peter to him and said Lord how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Till seven times?

That's fair right? Seven times? That sounds like a lot. It probably sounded like a lot to Peter to say that. Like do I seriously have to forgive him seven times?

[23 : 13] Like the completion of seven and Christ responds to him oh had to leave Peter just with his mouth wide open. Jesus saith unto him I say not unto thee until seven times but until seventy times seven.

Now that's not an infinite number. That is a real number right? Seventy times seven what is that?

Carry carry the four carry the that's four hundred and ninety.

Now do you think anybody's going to keep track of four hundred and ninety times? Some will. Okay. Some will. You're up to twenty-three.

This is not an infinite number. This is I mean it sounds like no not seven seventy. Why didn't he say seven hundred times seven? Why didn't he say until seven times seven thousands and so forth?

Why why do you I mean something he just flew it flung out a number implying it never stops.

There's there's something interesting to that number and it's something that God did and got connected to that number and I can't make perfect sense of it I just know when that four ninety

shows up it's not the first time in the Bible it showed up.

[24 : 28] It's a number that God has well whatever let's go look at one of them. Look at second Chronicles thirty-six. Second Chronicles thirty-six.

and I'm not going to run this one all the way down to the ground but you'll get the idea pretty quickly. The Lord kicked his people out of the land for how many years? Well it was seventy in the initial year in the initial captivity Jeremiah says until seventy years are fulfilled but there's a reason for that seventy years.

it's because the land was supposed to be keeping Sabbaths every seven years and it wasn't and so God said I'm going to kick you out. Verse twenty one he said to fulfill this is twenty talks about them going to Babylon and verse twenty one to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah until the land had enjoyed her Sabbath for as long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath to fulfill three score and ten years.

Now that's a representative of four hundred and ninety years because it was every seven years and the land was not keeping her Sabbath so he said all right then you're out for those seventy years and there's a and so what I forget if it's Larkin it's one of the scholars has a has a system I think it might be him I'm not positive now I lost it that has lays out four nineties through the Bible showing that God does he works in seven or periods of seventy weeks and of course one of them is Daniel's prophetic seventy weeks and that's four hundred and ninety years as well and it's something with that number that God is he works in it's not just a random number is really my point with it all it's something that he established and he showed up with in that Old Testament with the Jew and he stuck to it and then here in Matthew 18 when he's talking about forgiving somebody a person a brother he says it goes all the way that far to four ninety and it seems that there's some connection there and maybe you could even make a type of this but we'll move out of that and get back to this thought on forgiveness something more practical here

[26 : 46] Peter wants to know how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive until seven times Jesus says not until seven times until seventy times seven and then he's going to give an illustration of this thing but before we get that look at look at a verse in Luke seventeen here's a statement in the same context of forgiveness look at Luke seventeen and a little little clause here is added Luke seventeen and verse number three take heed to yourselves if thy brother trespass against thee rebuke him and if he repent forgive him now this is the same chapter of Matthew eighteen with just some different wording and if he trespass against thee seven times in a day and seven times in a day turn again to thee saying

I repent thou shalt forgive him so that's the teaching there you don't ever get to write them off if he tries to get it right you make it right if he comes back to repent you get it right now that's going back to that establishment with the brother you go to him you rebuke him or in this in Matthew fifteen tell him his fault between thee and him alone if he will hear thee thou hast gained thy brother if he will hear thee he repents and says that I was wrong I repent then he says thou shalt forgive him you're not going to hold it against him when he tries to get it right Peter wants to know should I just keep forgiving him and forgiving him the connection here is when he wants to be forgiven absolutely you can never reject and hold it against a brother and we would say we would say now you did it once you know fool me once we'd go through that little process like that's bible we don't have the right to do that and like a Wednesday night

I preached from first John about John being concerned about your relationships with the brethren and some of the passages we ran showed us that we're to forgive them the way Christ forgave us all trespasses we're to be willing to lay down our lives for the brethren and he said in first John chapter 4 if God so loved us we ought to love the brethren and John doesn't give us any leeway there he's like you sinned that much against God and he made you pay for this much of it and your brother sins this much or this much or this much against you and you think you have the right to hold it against him and say nope not anymore not forgiving you it doesn't wash it doesn't wash and here's an illustration of it now back in Matthew 18 Christ will give an illustration as always to prove his point so in Matthew 18 look at verse number 23 therefore is the well what do you know the kingdom of heaven the kingdom of heaven as always the context of Matthew therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king which would take account of his servants when he had begun to reckon one was brought unto him which owed him 10,000 talents now that's a large sum and we might just put it into we don't know if it's gold or silver we don't know what it is but 10,000 talents it's going to be several million if not more in our kind of setup so he's got this big debt

and verse 25 but for as much as he had not to pay his lord commanded him to be sold and his wife and children and all that he had and payment to be made that's a just lord and verse 26 the servant therefore fell down and worshipped him saying lord have patience with me and I will pay thee all now remember kingdom of heaven remember we're not talking about church age doctrine because if we did and this had to do with

God forgiving us that great debt did you ever fall down at the lord jesus christ feet and say I will pay thee all no you just begged for forgiveness and mercy and he said I've paid it all that's the big difference that's church age doctrine for today versus kingdom of heaven teaching but we don't want to get caught in this and mistake something and try to apply it and when we try to take this and take that then we've got to twist one or two of them so that we can make them blend and we've got to spiritualize one and then twist the other now we're resting the scriptures as peter says to our own destruction better to rightly divide it study to show thyself approved all right verse number 27 then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion and loosed him and forgave him the debt but the same servant went out found one of his fellow servants which owed him an hundred pence and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat saying pay me that thou owe us and his fellow servant fell down at his feet just like he did and besought him saying have patience with me and I will pay thee all just like he did and he would not but went and cast him into prison till he should pay the debt so when his fellow servants saw what was done they were very sorry and came and told unto their lord all that was done naturally then his lord after that he had called him said unto him oh thou wicked servant I forgave thee all that debt because thou desirest me shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant even as I had pity on thee so this is the same request for mercy and this time it's denied and the illustration is the debt that

God has forgiven us of compared to the menial and small things that we're to have mercy on and just the insignificance of our issues with the brethren in comparison but the outcome we have to stay in tune to this is the kingdom of heaven and we'll have to quit here but let's finish the chapter because the lord was wroth and delivered him verse 34 to the tormentors ooh what is that well he's getting beat he's getting whipped he's he's delivered he's paying up till he should pay all that was due unto him so he's being punished and verse 35 so likewise shall my heavenly father do also unto you if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses so thankfully we don't have to make a mistake here in interpreting this we can rightly divide our bible we can remain in the context that I'm trying to stress however not everybody does that and therefore they've come up with some additional doctrines for instance this man has to be purged of his sins so he's delivered to the tormentors so we're going to make up a place called purgatory where a man can die and go and be purged of his sins be tormented for a while and then till he should pay all that was due to him and then he'll get out and that's the teaching and this is one of the premier proof texts for this supposed purgatory teaching that people die outside of the state of grace that's another non-biblical concept outside of the state of grace go into the fires of purgatory but for a season till they pay for their sins that were not paid for previously in the previous life and then they can be released into the grace of God and be in heaven and they take it out of a parable on the kingdom of heaven it's not good doctrine it's not the place to build doctrine today and we could refute that quite easily with the scripture but in verse 34 the Lord was wroth and delivered him to the tormentors till he should pay all that was due unto him and the one great thing we have that we know is that the

[34 : 56] Lord Jesus Christ paid all that was due unto him on Calvary when he died on that cross and cried out it is finished he satisfied the wrath of God for our sins as John said in first John chapter 2 he is the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only but for the sins of the whole world and with that one sacrifice he sat down at the right hand of God and it is finished and so we're not going to go to hell and pay for our sins and we're not going to go to purgatory to temporarily pay for the few sins that we didn't get cleared but ours are paid for and so we're not going to pull this and make something that's not there and try to apply that to people today it's not for this age it's before the cross it's Jewish disciples it's the kingdom of heaven and having all those things stacked up we're not going to try to mix it with church age doctrine alright we've got to quit there and we'll pick it up next week in chapter 19 ok we'll go now to kids we'll bring it well we'll let go she she