

Mark 12:38-44

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Date: 23 November 2014

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[0 : 00] The text before us today is Mark chapter 12, verse 38 through 44. Now, let me remind you before we read this where we are. We're in the Passion Week. Jesus is now in Jerusalem.

On Friday, He will be crucified. And this is Wednesday. And we've been here for a while now in Wednesday. And we'll be here for about a month more. On Monday, He entered into Jerusalem. The praise of the people. The triumphal entry is what it's often called. Tuesday, He goes back in. He goes out for a while. He goes back in. He takes over the temple by overturning the money changers' tables and stopping the court of Gentiles from being used as a thoroughfare.

And then on Wednesday, He's now encountered this wave of confrontations. First from the Pharisees, along with a political group called the Herodians. Then the Sadducees.

And then a scribe. One who's a professional in the law. And in verse 34 of chapter 12, we see, And after that, no one dared to ask Him any more questions.

[1 : 07] Because all who had come to Him, who had sought to make a fool of Him, He turned back around and made fools of them. And so they've ceased asking questions. And in verse 35, He then begins to teach.

Let's read together, beginning in verse 38. And in His teaching, He said, Beware of the scribes who like to walk around in long robes and like greetings in the marketplaces and have the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers.

They will receive the greater condemnation. And He sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums.

And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. And He called His disciples to Him and said to them, Truly I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box, for they all contributed out of their abundance, but she, out of her poverty, has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.

This is God's Word to us. It was written for His good, or excuse me, for His glory, and our good. My brain is still catching up this morning. We would all do well to listen to it in order to believe its promises and obey its commands.

[2 : 29] Let's pray together. Father God, we certainly do praise You this morning for the blessing of Your Word, for becoming an author, for inspiring men by Your Spirit to pen these words for us today.

Father, we ask for a great miracle in my speaking, that You would guard me from air, that I would lead people well by Your Word. And we also ask for a great miracle in the hearing, that the Spirit would apply the words that I speak concerning Your Word to people's hearts appropriately, that they might respond appropriately.

All of this to the praise of Your glorious name. And we pray this in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. So, as I said, we are in Wednesday.

And just to give you a little bit of an idea of where we're headed to, at the end of chapter 12, Jesus heads out of the temple and continues to teach about the end of all things through the end of chapter 13.

Beginning of chapter 14, we'll then get into Thursday. I've managed to sit down and plot out the timeline for the rest of Mark. And praise God, we get to actually preach on the resurrection on Easter.

[3 : 44] I'm so thankful that it turned out in that way. So you may be asking, why is it that these two texts are placed together? Why 38 through 40 and then 41 through 44?

Because certainly those two things seem to be able to stand alone. And we could. It could be preached that way. Though I think you'll find, and I'll hope to show you, the great theme that exists between the two of them.

They are actually tied together thematically. I'm not doing that just to keep the timeline of getting us to the resurrection on Easter. Very important that we wrap our minds around why Jesus says the one, and then He says the next.

And the major theme that ties it together is this nature, this situation that's before them of these false teachers. Jesus here calls them scribes.

For a particular group, although they weren't an official religious group, they weren't an official political faction, they were just the extra learned men.

[4 : 50] Most likely Pharisees. This was typically the case. These men were experts in the law. They knew the law very, very well.

They were the theologians, so to speak, of the day. John MacArthur said, the Jews had a saying that Moses received the law and gave it to Joshua. Joshua received the law and gave it to the elders.

The elders received the law and gave it to the prophets. The prophets received the law and gave it to the scribes. They were the professionals. They were the experts of this day.

And everybody trusted them and hung on what it was they had to say concerning the law. But Jesus gives to us a very strong warning concerning these men.

He says to us, beware of the scribes. Strong warning. And let me say to you that as a general habit, it is healthy and right to be known for what we're for rather than for what we're against.

[5 : 52] Although, there's a great deal of value at times. From time to time to stop and to recognize the wrong in order to maintain the right.

And this is what Jesus is doing here. He's making a very emphatic point to the disciples and those others that are listening to Him that this is not the way to worship God. There's a right way to worship the right God.

And these men really worship themselves, but in this pursuit of worshiping God, were doing so wrongly. In fact, they were apostate. They were outside any favor of God's blessing.

And they were leading the people in the same way. Jesus says some very stark things about them that they are sons of Satan and they're making sons of Satan.

Matthew 23, 15 says, Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselytite or convert.

[6 : 53] And when he becomes a proselytite, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves. They were leading people astray.

And you have to understand that there's not a continuum for the way in which people are led. You either are going to lead people in the way of God or you're going to lead people in the way of Satan. And that's where these men find themselves. Now, there's a scope to this warning which exists all throughout the Scriptures. I'll give you one Old Testament example.

Ezekiel 13, false prophets are condemned. And in chapter 14, idolatrous elders are condemned for the way in which they led the people astray.

Jesus said in Matthew 7, 15, beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves dressed up.

[7 : 49] They look good on the outside, but truly they come to devour and to destroy. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 11, verse 13 through 15, for such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.

And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise of his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness.

Put on the dressings, the trappings of good, but ultimately, they're aimed at evil. Paul makes an emphatic charge to Timothy in 1 Timothy on a number of occasions.

I'll let you read those on your own later. Chapter 1, verses 3 through 7. Chapter 4, verses 1 and 2. Chapter 6, verses 3 through 5. The major charge to him is that he preserve sound doctrine among the church at Ephesus.

Peter also gives warning to this in 2 Peter 2, verse 1. But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.

[9:13] 1 John 4, verse 1. Many false prophets have gone out into the world. And so this is to be the reality of things, that in this day, there was warning about it in the Old Testament.

Jesus said it would be true. Certainly there are scribes in this day that he is giving strong warning against. And the apostles warn in those churches it would be true as well as in our day.

And it's certainly our experience at this is the case. Many false teachers leading people ultimately astray. And we tend to categorically put some people way off, way off in left field who do this very thing.

But there really isn't a spectrum. This makes me tremble. I want to rightly handle the Word of God. I cannot say to you that I have never erred.

I am sure that I have. Probably someday I will go back and listen to some old recording of a sermon and ask that it all be destroyed because I messed it up. If we do not walk in the truth, then we walk in a lie.

[10:18] Any believable lie contains within it some measure of truth. This is the great deception of Satan. He takes things that are true and he distorts them. Things that are bizarrely false no one believes.

It's a very bizarre lie and no one would ever believe it. But if you anchor it in some truth, then it becomes believable. And this is the great deception of Satan.

And therefore, all men who even speak some truth, but yet mixed within it lies, are they themselves not liars? Servants of Satan.

It's a great strong warning here. Beware. This is the exhortation that Jesus is giving to us. Beware. The explicit thing that He's trying to tell us.

But what can we draw out of who these people are? How can we help to identify these people? And He gives to us some nature. So we see a warning firstly in verse 38.

[11:16] Then going on, verse 38, and into the following, we see the nature of their hypocrisy. It says, to like to walk around in long robes and like greetings in the marketplaces and have the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts who devour widows' houses and for pretense make long prayers.

These men like to walk around in their ceremonial robes, these long decorative robes so they can be picked out of a crowd so you can see them coming and know that here comes a great learned man, a wonderful follower of God.

In the parallel passage, Matthew 23, Matthew records that they make their fringes long. At the bottom of these robes were blue fringes.

In fact, it was commanded in Numbers 15 that the Jewish people were to put little blue tassels on the bottom of their robes to identify themselves as Jews and to identify themselves as those who gave their attention to God and their attention to God's word.

It was meant to be a reminder of this very thing. In fact, in Matthew 9, verse 20, most of you are familiar with the miracle of the woman with the discharge of blood who touches the fringes of Jesus' garment.

[12:34] That's what she touched were these tassels that would have been on the edge of his garment. So it wasn't wrong to do that, but these men were elevating. They were making their tassels extra long to say to others, we are extra devoted.

We are extra followers of God. Please pay attention to us and what it is we have to say. They like to walk around in these long robes and they like to receive greetings in the marketplaces.

Now, he's not talking here about people saying hello to them. I like it when people say hello to me.

He's talking about pomp and circumstance type of greetings. Again, in the parallel passage, Matthew 23, verse 7, it adds that they like to be called rabbi or teacher or my master.

This is a great, high, elevated title given to these men, which is why I don't care much at all for titles. You'll never hear me call myself Pastor Nathan.

My email just is Nathan at our website. If you want to call me Pastor, I consider that an honor, but I don't seek out that type of thing. This type of title is a lot like people who earn PhDs or doctors of ministry and want to be called doctor.

[13:54] Now, clearly, it is a lot of work. It's a massive amount of work to earn these degrees and MD, I will include in that. And in some sense, these people deserve to be called doctor.

In fact, I will call anybody doctor until they ask me to do it. They deserve some commendation for them, but as soon as somebody says, oh, excuse me, that's doctor so-and-so, well, they have just

ensured that I will never call them doctor so-and-so.

We get on a first-name basis at that point. This is what these men are looking for. Oh, great, learned doctor, rabbi, let us step out of your way and let you pass.

This type of honor is what they sought in the market places. In addition to that, they sought the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts.

They wanted to be placed first in all of their social circumstances. When they gathered for worship together and when they gathered to eat food, they wanted to be placed at the very highest place to be shown honor in that way.

[15:00] Jesus has been speaking directly against this type of attitude leading up to our text today. Flip back just a couple of pages starting in Mark 8, verse 34. I've shown you this theme a number of times.

I want to show you to it once more. Mark 8, 34-36. If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

This is antithesis to long fringed robes and seeking honor in things. Verse 35, for whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake in the Gospels will save it.

For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and to forfeit his soul? To gain all of that honor, but yet to be found outside the faith. Chapter 9, verse 35, If anyone will be first, he must be last of all and servant of all.

Not self-exalting, but self-emptying in service to others. Chapter 10, verse 44 and 45, and Jesus then gives to us the extent of this sacrifice.

[16:14] Whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

To show honor to other people, to love them even to the point of death. Jesus told a parable that's recorded in Luke chapter 14, beginning in verse 7.

He says, Now he told a parable to those that were invited when he noticed how they chose the places of honor, saying to them, When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honor, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him.

And he who invited you both will come and say to you, Give your place to this person, and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, friend, move up higher.

Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at table with you. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. And he's speaking an indictment on these men who place themselves in positions of honor.

[17:24] And the groomsmen will come to them one day and put them in the lowliest of places. That is the place of eternal destruction. They thought that they deserved the favor of God, that they as we ought to, putting ourselves in the lowliest place.

Certainly we deserve eternal damnation for our sin, and yet the groom will come to us and say, please come and sit in this honored place. Jesus was never self-exalting.

In fact, he was constantly self-abasing, constantly pointing to God the Father as the source of all the things that he did. He did nothing on his own initiative. John records this for us again and again. He acted, and he only spoke as he saw the Father doing. He exalted the Father in all that he did. Isn't it interesting that we live in a day and age that if you're going to be popular in the Christian world, you have to be self-exalting instead of self-emptying?

You have to be incredibly active with your blogs and your Twitter feed, and you have to be constantly touting all the things that you know and all that you can do. Ad infinitum, if you're going to be popular in this day, I want to be like Jesus, and I also don't like social media.

[18:44] It works out, right? Now it says, please don't draw that as a direct connection, right? It says that they like to walk around. Now there's an interesting verb here, they like, and it means more so than just what we would think of as like, that they desire these things, that they love these things, right?

This is the very existence of their being, this type of praise being heaped upon them. And so, as Jesus is saying to them and to us, beware of the scribes, beware of these false teachers, he's saying to them, beware of people who are self-exalting.

Beware of people who are self-exalting. Now we'll skip down for a moment and see that they also make a pretense of long prayers.

They make a pretense of long prayers. For the sake of appearance would be another way to say that. Some of your translations may. For the sake of appearance, they make long prayers. When Jesus teaches the disciples how to pray, Matthew 6, 5 says, and when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. That's who he's referring to. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners.

[19 : 57] They may be seen by others. Truly I say to you, they have received their reward. They like to put on the pretense. They like to act righteous on the outside and like to do so in such a way that everyone can see it.

Not in the quiet, hidden, secret places, but out where everyone can see. And they put a great show on so that they will be praised. Jesus says beware of the scribes, the false teachers.

Beware of people who merely put on the appearance of holiness. And then lastly, in the nature, we see that these men devour widows' houses.

They devour widows' houses. Now, for the sake of time, I won't develop thematically for you all of God's commands to care for widows, but they are many, 20 to 30 different times in the Old Testament.

There are commands to care for widows, to look out for them. And these men were doing the very opposite of that. As they still believed, even though they were under Roman rule, that they lived a theocracy, in many ways, these men ruled.

[21 : 09] They were part of the ruling class, the Sanhedrin, those who sat in judgment over Israel, and they were experts in the law, and so they did things, they managed to do things in being asked to help with estates from these widows.

They did manipulative things to take advantage of them. They took advantage of their property, they would stay at their homes, and eat their food, and they would find ways in which to actually keep their property. Above and beyond that, they developed a system that wasn't just oppressive to widows, but all people generally, which said that you must buy the favor of God.

There were 13 offering boxes in the temple where you would put your money to buy God's favor. favor. And this was a system that presumably the people didn't care for.

I think they knew that they were being swindled, which is likely why they began to pay attention to Jesus when he overturned the money changers table. They liked that. Here was a man who was coming and flying in the face of all that was being done in the name of God to take advantage of the people, and they began to listen.

This is why these groups of men, these religious leaders, were so offended at what Jesus was doing because he was disrupting that system. He was cutting off their flow of income in this way.

[22 : 28] The more I study, Mark, the more I understand I could actually put myself in the shoes of these religious leaders, why they would have been so upset at Jesus, even to the point of death.

They worshipped themselves. They worshipped the system they had established. They worshipped all of the fame and honor that came to them, and Jesus came to destroy that kind of self exaltation. So they devoured widows' houses, the very lowliest of society that should have been cared for and supported by the law of God. They did the very opposite of that thing with the structure that they created.

This is true in our day as well. Many false teachers, most of them that you can see on TV, not all but most on TV, who just want a little seed gift, just want you to order up the prayer rug, which is a piece of paper strangely, right?

That are going to give you some kind of a thing that's going to bless you more. If they could just wring a little bit more out of you. You know some of these people. Joel Osteen, Joyce Meyer, T.D.

[23 : 35] Jakes, Benny Hinn, Creflo Dollar,! The list can go on and on and on. Beware of these people. As I said to you though, we tend to put them categorically off in one place.

It's not just them. There are many others who do this as well that just don't have the name or the scope that they have. So beware of the scribes, the false teachers.

Beware of people who take advantage of the less advantaged. Who don't serve, but are served. And so this is the nature of their hypocrisy.

We've got a strong warning against people like this. And then we see in verse 40 their final condemnation. The text says they will receive the greater condemnation.

2 Corinthians 11.15 says their end will correspond to their deeds. And as I read to you 2 Peter 2.1 I'll read it to you again. But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false

teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.

[24 : 53] And there's a great deal of encouragement in that, and seeing that there is in fact a condemnation for these men, because even as we are to beware them, and I will show you some other places that we are actually supposed to battle against them, that one day, fully and finally, God will be vindicated.

In fact, Peter says that their destruction will be swift. Not in our terms, certainly. There are many men, I would gladly see their destruction come now, that they would quit leading so many people astray, but their destruction will in fact be swift.

Things will be made right in that day. And this is the final place for these men, damned for eternity, because they used the name in our day of Jesus Christ to perpetuate their own kingdoms.

Now, verse 41 through 44. So Jesus goes out, he sits out opposite the treasury, and he watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums, and a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins which make a penny.

And he called to his disciples to him and said to them, truly I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box, for they all contributed out of their abundance, but she, out of her poverty, has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.

[26 : 13] She puts in there what is the equivalent of a one-sixty-fourth of a denarius, which a denarius was a day's wage. To give you an idea of how little money this was, one-sixty-fourth of a denarius, and this seems to be all that she has left in the world.

These coins that she puts in are the two of the smallest coins used by Jews. insignificant from everybody else's perspective. Now, how does the one connect to the other?

You've probably heard this preached. I believe I've used it as an example of sacrificial giving, of the faith that it takes to give, of seeking first the kingdom of God and all of our needs will be added to us, but that is not at all what this text is about.

It's not even kind of. what it's about. In fact, we tend to want to run to juxtapose the rich against her, but Jesus never condemns the rich here. In fact, he says that they give well.

They're giving a lot out of their abundance. It's not the point at all. What he's doing is he's pointing to the fact that she is a victim of this system.

[27 : 26] She is a victim of the scribes, believing that she must come and buy God's blessing. She has given every single bit that she has.

She's given it all away. She now no longer has any money to support herself because she's given it now to the temple worship, to the apostate temple worship. Jesus here is not supporting giving good offerings in our churches, although you should.

That's not what he's doing in this case. Every sermon you've heard preached out of this likely had the right point made, but taught someplace else in Scripture. Jesus is simply finding a physical example in the temple court of the very thing he's been saying.

He's saying, see, beware the scribes. Look, case in point, they devour widows' houses. Luke 16, 14, Jesus says that the Pharisees are lovers of money.

They have failed to love the people. They have failed to lead the people in the truth, but rather they seek what they can gain from them, not what they can give to them.

[28 : 33] And this is the case with the widow's offering. Now I hope that by her faith God was good to her in this, but this act is not what bought her God's favor.

She's a victim of this very thing. What is the application for us today? Rightly so, we've said it. Beware.

Beware of the false teachers. This warning is explicit here in our text today. Avoid the teachings of these people. Let me say to you, the call here is not to avoid these people altogether, to ignore them, but rather to avoid their teachings.

Be very, very careful what people like this perpetuate with their mouths. Watch what they say. Be careful of their example. Beware.

In fact, Jesus gives an example of not just avoidance, right, but he is constantly engaging with these people. We've seen that quite extensively here in chapter 12.

[29 : 42] He stands firm and he contends for the truth. Turn with me, if you will, in closing to Jude, the book of Jude. Right towards the end of your New Testament.

Jude has no chapters or one chapter, whichever you prefer to say. Jude is James' brother. Verse 3 and 4, he writes, Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.

For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

So his very longing is that he can talk about what he's for. I really wanted to write to you is what he's saying. It was my eager desire to write to you about our common salvation.

I just wanted to write to you and talk about the goodness of the gospel of Jesus Christ. However, it's necessitated. There's an importance, an emphasis placed upon me because people are coming in and they're leading you astray.

[31 : 11] Therefore, I've come to set you straight. This letter is aimed at that very thing. Contend for the faith. Beware of the false teachers, but contend for the faith.

And how do we do that? Number one, by searching the scriptures for ourselves. Search the scriptures for yourself. In Acts 17, 11-12, we see a little story of Paul and Silas being in Berea. Many of you are familiar with the Bereans. A little mention of them. Verse 11, Now these Jews, being the Bereans, were more noble than those in Thessalonica. They received the word with all eagerness, examining the scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

They're talking about the gospel proclamation there. And therefore, verse 12, many of them therefore believed. They carefully scrutinized. They studied it for themselves to see if what the apostles were saying concerning the scriptures was true.

How will you be able to identify a false teacher if you don't know the teaching itself? And beloved, this is not a laborsome task. This is an incredible book and it is so varied in its themes, in its stylistic expertise.

[32 : 30] It's a beautifully written book. It is not that hard to know your scriptures. I shared with you a number of weeks ago that the average college student, and I know none of you are this kind of average, but spends 106 minutes per day on social media.

So if you just took, I'm not saying social media is all bad, right? It's okay to spend some time on social media, but let's just say theoretically that you did that twice in a week, and the rest of the week you devoted that time, that 106 minutes, across, let's give you a couple weeks off, let's say 50 weeks of the year.

Do you know how many times you could read the scriptures that time through? Average reading speed of 250 words per minute, eight and a half times. Eight and a half times.

We piddle away time on unimportant, unnecessary things, and we neglect to know our scriptures. How are we to contend for the faith if we do not know our faith?

We get that we have a belief, but what does it mean? And what are all of its intricacies and complexity? Get after searching the scriptures for yourself.

[33 : 38] And then turn, I shouldn't say turn, you're probably on the same page, Jude 17-23, and I'll give you two more points. So contend for the faith by number one, searching the scriptures for yourself, and let's read beginning of verse 17.

But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. They said to you, in the last time there will be scoffers following their own ungodly passions.

It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the spirit. But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith, studying the scriptures, and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.

And have mercy on those who doubt, save others by snatching them out of the fire, to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh. So firstly, search the scriptures for yourself.

We even see that as in verse 20, Jude writes, building yourselves up in your most holy faith.

Secondly, pray. It is by the grace of God, given to us by his Holy Spirit, that we are maintained in the truth.

[34 : 51] That I have understood anything true in this world is a great gift of God. My mind and my heart will be just as darkened as these scribes if it weren't for the Lord.

So pray. Pray that we would have right understanding. Pray that we would be able to open up the scriptures and have our minds illuminated by the Spirit. This is a possible thing.

It's a promised thing given to us as Christians. Pray. We are dependent on God to rightly maintain the truth. Let me add to that as a step outside of Jude's exhortation, but let's also pray for these false teachers.

That God would do the same for them. That all of those under their influence would be rightly turned. Now likely their churches, their following would die away. However, maybe some.

Maybe some would be converted. Maybe some would follow in the way of God. What a wonderful thing it would be if Joel Osteen one Sunday got up and repented of everything that he's been teaching and rightly taught the gospel. Let's pray for these people.

[35 : 54] And thirdly, teach the truth. Verse 22 and 23. People are going to doubt. People are not going to understand the truth.

They're going to be following some of these teachers. We must teach the truth. You have it. You have the truth. Teach the truth. Find every opportunity to lead people rightly, to lead them away from those that will lead them astray and lead them in the way of God.

Now likely very few of us will have chance to encounter the large false prophets of this world.

Certainly given the opportunity, teach them as well. If I'm ever given the chance, I certainly would be glad to.

I will be content with teaching you and teaching those around me at this point. So search the scriptures for yourself. Pray that God would illuminate your mind to understand and to keep you, hold you fast to the truth, and then turn and teach that truth.

Now as we are on the Sunday before Thanksgiving, aren't you thankful today that we're not counted amongst the scribes and the false teachers?

[37 : 05] I am. It is a great wait to get up each week and to teach the word of God. It is the struggle of my week to rightly understand it so that I don't err, so that I don't lead you astray in any measure.

It is a blessing to be found in the truth. And I don't know all of your different spheres and all the things that you're being taken off to into this week.

I know many people have difficult family situations, unbelieving parents, maybe the believing parents that just seem to not quite get it are the most challenging of all.

Go and contend for the faith this week. Rejoice in the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ and share that with those around you. Let's pray together.