

God Is in Control

by Robert B. Thompson

The sermon emphasizes God's sovereignty and control over our lives, encouraging trust in His plan amidst suffering and trials.

Duration: 58:47

Scripture: Matthew 24:1

Topics: "Sovereignty Of God", "Christian Endurance"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that regardless of the circumstances we see in our lives or in the world, God is in control. The preacher expresses concern for various global issues such as Kosovo, North Korea, and floods, but believes that God knows and cares for every individual, even those who may have short lives. The preacher calls for a renewed focus on the power of God, righteousness, holiness, and obedience to His will. The sermon concludes with a reminder to look to Jesus as the commander in chief and to endure hardships as good soldiers of Christ.

Transcript

How we praise you Lord, how we praise you for your presence among us Lord, stupendous. And we just thank you Lord for everything that has transpired. Lord, we give glory to the God of Israel.

Praise your name, praise your name. Thank you Lord for your blessing on the young people Lord, as they rejoice in you and find such joy and service. We thank you for that Lord, the talents that you have given them, Martha and all the rest.

Lord, we just praise your name. Lord, we pray for each family here, you know the pressures on people, you know the problems, you know the pain, the confusion, sometimes the despair. And we pray Lord, there'll be a lifting of it this morning, that your presence will be so real to each person here, knowing that you are going to intervene in their families Lord, and answer to their prayers.

Sometimes it's a while coming Lord, but it does come, hallelujah. When your way is being done in our lives, you want obedience Lord, that's all you're asking for. We live a righteous life, we pray for those who are out working now with the little children in the children's church, bless them and the children.

And as we continue Lord, we need to hear from God. So we pray you will bless us all together and give us understanding of your word, in Jesus name, amen. You may be seated, we'll turn our eyes up to the big

board.

We're going to read together, this is the NIV, Matthew 24, verses 1, 2, and 3. We'll read out loud together. Jesus left the temple and was walking away, when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings. Do you see all these things he asked? I tell you the truth, not one stone here will be left on another.

Everyone will be thrown down. As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. Tell us, they said, when will this happen? What will be the sign of your coming? And at the end of the age.

Who's over there close? I'm going to need some water I think. Thanks, Anthony. Thank you.

Thank you very much. Alright, now I'd like to tell you when I start out preaching, so I don't confuse the burden of the Lord with a lot of words. What God is telling us this morning is, regardless of what we see come to pass, whether it's in our own lives or whether it's in the nation or the national scene, God is in control.

And I've asked the Lord about this, and I think God finally spoke to my heart, because I've been concerned about Kosovo and the people starving in North Korea and the floods in our own country. And I believe that God impressed on my mind very clearly that God knows every person well. Even the baby that is born in some third world country and doesn't live past the age of five days.

Now, we have a scripture to that effect, don't we? What is it? The sparrow. The sparrow. Why don't you think about that? Assuredly, a person, even if they're five days old, is of infinite worth compared to a sparrow.

Is that true? So, God is telling us something by that. There's not a sparrow falls to the ground, but God knows about it in detail. Not a sparrow.

I was walking one time down the street praying, and there was problems, as there often are. Is that so? Anybody here without a problem, raise your hand. And I looked down, and there at my feet was a dead sparrow.

A dead sparrow had fallen out of a tree, apparently, and that scripture came to my mind so clearly. There's not a sparrow falls to the ground, but God knows about it. And I thought, well, Lord, this being the case, and I don't doubt it, whatever, what shall we say then about the things that happened? I guess another thing that triggered it was, I just finished a book about the Wycliffe Bible.

Now, Dr. Wycliffe translated the Bible from the Latin into the English 200 years before Martin Luther. I didn't know that. And he's called, for that reason, the morning star of the Reformation.

And in theory, he died of a stroke, died in peace in a stroke, although the papacy had issued bulls against him, their writings condemning him as a heretic. But he was in England, and he had, so he did die naturally. What so infuriated was the Catholic Church over this, over one thing.

He had translated the Bible out of Latin into English so the average person in England could read it. Now, that's a great sin, isn't it? Man, isn't that a sin to read all sins? And they were so infuriated at him that some 30 years or so after he died, they had his bones etched and burned and scattered in the river, just out

of sheer rage over the fact that this man would translate the Bible out of Latin into English. And I thought, one girl, 28 years old, read the Bible in the English language, and the authorities found out, and they burned her at the stake.

And ask you, 28 years old, her crime, she read the Bible in the English language, maybe a page, maybe two pages, but many people died before it was generally accepted that people could have a Bible in their own language. And as I thought about that, I thought, here we have in our homes as many translations as we want in the English language, and we can read it all we please, but we do not understand what a price was paid by people to make it possible for us to have a Bible in our own language. Isn't that something? Maybe the next time you pick up the Bible and you read it, you say, boy, there was a girl burned at the stake for reading the Bible in the English language instead of Latin.

So we have a tremendous heritage, and I was thinking about people suffering, and I was thinking about people dying for no crime other than reading the Bible, and the people that are suffering in many instances are because of the selfishness of leaders and their desire to be more famous, etc., and so on, the whole nine yards. And I was fussed about that. I wasn't fretting because I preached about that, but I was fussed about it.

And I think the Lord spoke to me about that, about that he had over Anne Askew, the control that he had when she was brought to the stake. He had the power to stop that, you know, easily, easily. All the king of England had to do was just sign a thing, and the execution stopped.

And I believe the Lord told me that these things happen because it is necessary from the human race. Now, that may seem far-fetched to you. I don't know.

And at the same time, I was reading Piercing the Darkness by Peretti, and it was the same thing. These people being attacked, some murdered, and the children taken away from them by people who wanted to remove Christianity. Of course, this is happening in our own day.

It was quite popular a few years ago. It's kind of died down now, but a few years ago, kids were taken away from their parents for attending a Christian school. Oh, yes.

Oh, boy. There are some real bad things happening. Twenty years ago, it's kind of died down in this country, but there was a terrific attack on the Christian schools about twenty years ago.

This was in my mind. And I felt the Lord say, concerning the story that you just read, even though it's a story, look at what it did for the people, the Christians involved, how much deeper it brought them in God because of the devil working in people. And the Lord made me know, this is what the world is all about.

This is what the world is all about. It's God working in a garden, and the things that happen, even though God uses wicked men to do them. If we respond correctly, our particular destiny that God has planned for us will be wrought through this pain that was caused by sinful people.

You remember also the verse we all love in Romans 8, 28, and 29. We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. Everyone is tested according to the plan of God for his or her life.

When it comes to those whose names God has written before the foundation of the world, that they might be his chosen in Christ Jesus, as the Bible teaches us in several places. How much more, how much

more is our life so carefully orchestrated by the Lord? All things. And we look at what happens to people that we love and the pain, and we wonder how long, how long, how long.

But God is, it doesn't go one second longer than necessary for God to work his will in that person's life. Can you believe that? Because God's nature is love, very childlike in some respects God is, with a happy heart, with a child's heart. And that's the way God wants us.

We have to be, if we're going to enter the kingdom, we have to be adults in understanding, but for the rest of it be children. That means no malice, no unforgiveness, no jealousy and striving against other people. We're just skipping around, praising the Lord.

God loves that. And so when he sees us and we're bowed down with an emotional pain, or a physical pain, we're worried half to death, biting our fingernails maybe, concerning what worries us. That's right.

Check my own. It isn't because God doesn't care. It isn't because he doesn't love us.

It isn't because he doesn't know what's going on. He assuredly does. And he assuredly knows what to do about it.

He certainly does. God is not caught napping. Known unto God, the Bible says, are all his works from the beginning of the world.

And so when you're thinking, does God know what's happening to me? Does he care? Is the devil winning? Well, think about the sparrow. And say, well, if God takes care of a little gray bird that is no earthly good as far as we can see, except to just make the landscape a little bit better, how much more will he take care of you? Does he care? Yes. Is he able to do something about it? Yes.

He does not allow you to go through things because he's got nothing better to do than to watch you suffer. He's developing in you the character that you're going to need in terms of what he has for you for the rest of your life on earth and then for eternity. There's another aspect of that, too.

I think I mentioned this Tuesday night, I'm not sure, but I read two of Peretti's books in a row, *The Present Darkness* and *Piercing the Darkness*, and I had just finished *The Visitation*. So I went to bed at night, and I guess what my head was full of. Demons, angels, fallen and otherwise.

They're going round and round. I wasn't particularly scared about them, but I was picturing because some of the righteous angels got beat up pretty bad in those books. And I felt real bad about that.

Of course, when the other guys got hurt, I didn't bother at all with those righteous angels. That bothered me. I didn't want them to get hurt.

But anyway, some of them did. And I went to sleep, and I always pray, I know as you do too, just before I go to sleep, Lord, is there anything else? You know, is the day over? And sometimes when I do that, the Lord says, go to sleep, or he may say, no, I've got something to say. Well, he said this to me, and the spiritual checked it out with the Lord.

He said, it's not going to be like that, meaning the pretty books, although I certainly don't want to miss those books, they're wonderful, very entertaining too, and helpful and spiritual. But he says, it's going to be a difference. So then I began to ponder, well, what is the difference? How will it be different today than it was, for example, in Daniel, where the angel, one of the great princes said, I would have come again, but I

was resisted by this prince or that prince.

The angels fighting again, where Paul said, I would have come to you once and again, but Satan thwarted us in a battle. And I felt the Lord say, it's not going to be like that, because all power has been given to me, and I'm going to hold it in my hand in the future. And the battle will not be power against power, but it will be truth against the lie.

It will be righteousness against wickedness, because the Lord has all power, and he can do as he will with the angels, with the nations, with your circumstances and mine. He has all power. Well, why did he let Satan thwart Paul? Well, we know why he let Satan give Paul a thorn in the flesh.

Why was that? So Paul would quiet down, let the Lord do it. My strength is made perfect in weakness. And so the thorn in the flesh was not because Paul, and the devil went over on Paul and was hindering the gospel.

It's not that reason at all. Jesus permitted that, so that his strength would be revealed in Paul. And this the Bible teaches clearly.

So that says something very, those two thoughts, one that, the first one, which was, what did I tell you? Get old, pray. I can only preach as the Lord gives it to me. So the first one was that in the time to come, it's not clear in my mind, what was it? What was the first thing I said God told me to tell the congregation? Can't hear you.

Yeah, that's the second thing. What was the first thing? Yeah, yeah, oh, that he knows about your life. That was it, that God knows.

He knows and he cares. There's nothing going to happen to you that will not result if you take it right. You blame people, you just become bitter.

And I'm talking about things that may come in the future like persecution, perversity, where the government does things we don't approve of. Someone was saying they're taking away all the guns. That's what Hitler did, you know, that's to disarm the population.

And I'm not here advocating guns or anything of the kind. I'm just telling you there may be things happen that we will not like. And the government may interfere in things.

And we are not to lose our cool. When I realize God will put up obstacles and the working through them, even if we're burned at the stake, the working through of them will result in what God wants in us. And if that's the case, then I say, Lord, bring it on.

Life is short enough. And we've got all eternity to rest. So God said, don't be concerned about it.

All that happens in the world, the works of evil men, are only to bring forth what God wants out of human beings. And he knows every sparrow that falls. And then the thing about Peretti, what God said was, I am in control.

And we've gotten into a thing, and I guess some of it's okay, in the charismatic move, there's a lot of talk about what we're going to attack. We're going to attack the principalities. We're going to attack and bring down the spirits that rule over America.

We're going to attack. Sons of God, go put an end to the demon world. Have you heard anything like that? There's a kind of a flavor of that, isn't there? But see, the book of Jude speaks against that.

It talks about people whose lives are not right, speaking evil of dignitaries. And Jude says, Michael himself would not do that, but said, the Lord rebuke you. So what I think we're getting into is presumption.

Now, it is true that you cannot spoil a strongman's house until you bind the strongman. But it seems to me that God, before we go taking on the prince of San Diego or the prince of California, we should hear from Jesus first. I don't think God, because I'll tell you what our tendency is as Christians.

You don't mind me talking about Christians, do you? Huh? You don't mind me talking? Alright. I'll talk about Christians since that's us. What we're apt to do is to lead a life that isn't quite there.

Maybe we're into little flirtations or a little profanity or whatever. We're not quite there. Our life is not quite wire tight.

You know what I mean? We're not really prayed through. We're not keeping short accounts with God. Our life isn't righteous.

There's those things that are not right and we know it and we figure, well, I'm saved by grace, so what's the difference? Then we come to church and we rebuke the devils. I rebuke you! Oh, I rebuke you! There isn't one single passage that tells us to rebuke devils. Not one.

So what are we doing? Are we showing off? I think what's happened is in the charismatic move, we got too big for our britches. That's an old saying. That's probably before your time.

I just got too big for our britches. I rebuke you! But Satan, of course, enjoys this. He enjoys the attention and he laughs and capers about gleefully because that's not how we're going to battle in these end days, is by rebuking devils.

We're going to battle by truth and righteousness. Now, you see, we'd rather not do that. It's much easier to rebuke devils than it is to live a righteous life.

Submit yourselves, therefore, to God. Resist the devil and he will flee. I say rebuke the devil.

Now, what's the difference? All the difference in the world. Resisting the temptation. Whoa, that's harder.

Anybody can rebuke the devil. The kids maybe have heard a Sunday school song which makes me cringe. If the devil's in the way, we'll run right over him.

I got the kids singing that in Sunday school. Well, Satan doesn't even bother listening to it. He's busy to see if he can get the kids getting into lying, stealing, and drugs like that.

Just ignore this other blather because that's all it is, is blather. Having said that, pray. Got to keep my mind clear.

So, the battle that we're coming into in Revelation 12, it says they overcame him, meaning Satan, by first the blood of the Lamb. That is because there's no answer to the blood. When our lives are not perfect, you know, we can be perfect but not perfected.

We're perfect for the day if we're doing all we know God has asked us to do. We're perfect. Don't let anybody tell you different.

We're without condemnation. We haven't been perfected but we're perfect. You can only be perfect for the day.

Amen? Hallelujah. Aren't you glad for that? So, you're only an overcomer for the day. You can't be an overcomer for tomorrow.

Now, if you are doing God's will, you will overcome the devil even though you haven't been perfected because of the blood. The blood makes up the difference between your present state and a perfected state. Okay? So, you can be a Christian for two days and be perfect but you haven't been perfected.

The blood is making up the difference. You see that? You can be a Christian for 30 years, you can be perfect for the day but you haven't been perfected. So, if you're not perfect each day, you'll never get perfected.

We move toward perfection a day at a time. We have to just do the thing for the day. That's all that God asks.

That's all He asks. And we're perfect as far as God's concerned because the blood is making up the difference. What's the second way we overcome the devil? The word of our testimony.

And what kind of a word are you giving forth today by your speech and your attitude and your actions? What kind of a word are you bearing witness of Satan, of yourself, of God? You're bearing witness of something in this world. And God wants us to pray each day until our speech, our behavior, our attitude is showing forth God, showing forth His nature. That's the word of our testimony.

And of course, you want to be a happy Christian. I want to be a happy Christian. But little things get us down.

The demons sit on our shoulder and whisper in our ear until we're irritated. And then we show a lousy attitude toward everybody. Is that right? We're not bearing a good witness.

We're bearing a witness, but it's not of God because God isn't irritated over the things we're irritated about. So that's the second way. And that is done by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit enables us to get our life up to where we're bearing a true testimony of Jesus, whether it's in word or in action or in attitude. The first is the blood of the Lamb. The second is the word of our testimony.

But it's the third one that will pin Satan's shoulders to the mat, and the wrestling match will be over. And it's the one that God is calling for today, and it's the most difficult. The church as a whole, there have been noteworthy individuals, but the Christian church as a whole has never been to this third realm, and that's why Satan is still operating.

And that is what? What's the third way we overcome Satan? By loving not our life to the death. And see, you can be saved and be in Pentecost and be very much in love with your own self-will. And that's why in Pentecost there are all kinds of division, bitterness, that you can imagine exist in Pentecost, even though the people are saved and speak in tongues.

Well, how can this be? If any of you have been in Pentecost for a number of years, you know what I'm saying is true. Sometimes Pentecost is a church of demons. I mean, there is more bitterness, hatred, unforgiveness, strife, and sometimes drunkenness, adultery, fornication, everything else.

And the people come to church and speak in tongues. And the pastors know it. Oh yes, it's fairly common.

And they know, well that one's living with that one's wife, and she's living with him, and everything that's going on. Now, I don't know why nothing's done about it, and I'm not poking fingers at anybody else. I'm just telling you it's going on.

It's going on. Going on in Bible schools. Oh yes, it's going on in Bible schools.

Adultery, fornication, all kinds of things. The standards of holiness. In fact, I heard from someone yesterday was telling me that the young people's pastor in his church was forbidden by the senior pastor to teach from the Bible.

I don't believe that. But he said it's not effective with people. That's the truth.

And this is not, you know, this is a fundamental church, as we call them fundamental churches. So we can see things are at a low ebb, and it's because of this third realm. People give assent to the blood, they give assent to the fact that we should be representing Jesus in our life.

But when it comes to really receiving Jesus as Lord, we draw the line. Not to talk in tongues or anything, but right now what's going on, I can't do that. I simply cannot do that.

What are you asking of me, God? I can't do that. You ever been there? I wonder how Abraham would have been if God said, offer up Isaac. And Abraham said, anything to that.

I'll offer up Sarah. You can take orphans and maidservants and everybody else, but not Isaac. I can't do that.

Well, if you can't, you'll never get past Pentecost. You won't do it. Because the third step requires loving not your life to the death.

That means all your treasures are put beyond the grave. They're put in heaven. It means you've kept the first commandment, you shall love God with all your heart.

Because you see, anything else is idolatry. Now, I could have preached all day and never said that, but that's where God is today. That's the next step after Pentecost.

And that is what is going to be required to stand in the days that are approaching us, that I refer to as the age of moral horrors that's approaching us. We can see it. We become Sodom and Gomorrah.

God will not be slack. In fact, I think I'll tell you what I believe God has told me about America, and then you can judge it and throw it out on the way out, throw it in the basket. And God has told me that he is going to slap America hard, but he's not going to let it be destroyed, because he wants America in the last days to preach the gospel of the kingdom.

To the ends of the earth. Because you see, America stands for Christianity in the world. We know.

It's no longer applicable perhaps, but that's the way Jesus sees it. Like he said to Moses, I'm going to save the Jews, not because I want to, but because my name is on them, I'm associated with them in the eyes of people, so I'm going to do it for my own namesake. I think that's what God has told me clearly on several times.

Your nation is going to be judged hard, severely, and I'm going to give you righteous government at all levels, and from your country the gospel, instead of Hollywood going forth in the filth. The gospel of the kingdom. Now, if it doesn't come to pass, you can say, well, he wasn't hearing from God.

But I think it's the reason why God is saying to me today, to you, that he wants you not to be dismayed by what happens. Anything. Oh, I could talk about the potential for war, it's obvious to anyone that's lived for a while, but that isn't the point.

We don't know whether it's going to be that, or an earthquake, or a flood, or a war, or Y2K, or or the bubonic plague, or what. We're going to be hit in this country. And God wants us not to worry about it.

There's nothing you can do to prepare for it. It'll catch up. You can flee to Samarkand, and that's where your destiny will hit you.

You cannot run from your destiny. So you just be quiet and listen to the Lord, because you might run into the bomb. Okay? God is in control, and he's not Jesus.

If it's of you, bear witness, he's not yet finished with America. He isn't finished with our country. He's going to punish us, but he's not finished.

And if you want to be spared in the hour of trouble, then get up close to God as you can, and your household as you are able. And that's just good preaching no matter what happens. Even if there's a rapture, it's still good preaching.

Okay? There's nothing wrong with getting close to God, is there? And the Lord is saying, the way you're going to overcome Satan is not by all this presumptuous gathering together of people who aren't even there with God yet, who are trying to tear down the princes of the world, but by the blood of the Lamb, by the word of your testimony, and by loving not your life to the death. Because the battle is not one of power against power. Jesus has all power.

He's looking for people who will obey him. Obedience makes things possible to God that nothing else makes possible. To obey God is better than offerings.

It's better than offerings. Obedience to God. That's what God wants to restore to the churches in our day.

We need to receive Jesus as absolute Lord. It means more than all the religious actions in the world. If we had every Christian on earth united to rebuke the devil, it wouldn't mean one thing.

One person to lay down his life for Jesus and will do more to bring down the kingdom of hell than all. It's obedience that God is looking for. It was the first sin was disobedience.

And the thing was reversed by Abraham's obedience. And then by the obedience of Jesus Christ in Gethsemane. Not my will but yours be done.

That's how redemption was brought to mankind. And Jesus learned obedience. Jesus learned obedience by the things he suffered.

And even when Christ gives authority to Satan to do the things, as we read in Revelation 13, it was given to Satan, given to Antichrist, authority over people, nations, languages and tongues. That was given to him by Jesus. Jesus has it.

Jesus has the keys of hell. Jesus has the keys of death. Satan does not have them anymore.

Jesus can lock him in or out of hell. Jesus has all power. All power.

It's not a question of power. He's looking for people today who will lay down their lives for God's perfect will, regardless of what it costs them personally. And anything short of that is idolatry.

And you can then go on and play church games and talk in tongues and prophesy and have the most wonderful praise in the world, but it won't if there's something missing. And what's missing is judgment and truth. And this is the issue of the last days, is judgment and truth.

God wants righteousness, iron righteousness, fiery holiness and stern obedience to the Father. And there will be people who will meet that challenge. The only issue is whether you or I are among those people.

But according to Revelation 11, there are people who will meet that challenge. Hallelujah! And the wrestling match will be over. It's not a question of power.

If you read in Revelation 20 verses 1, 2 and 3, you will see that one angel, one, not a platoon, not even a squad, one angel, one, came down from heaven, holding a great chain in his hand. And he reached out and he took hold of Satan, the cherub, took all of him, one angel, not Michael's entire army, one angel. And he took that huge chain and bound it around Satan, just bound it.

There was nothing Satan could do. Nothing! And the reason is because the saints had overcome him by the blood of the Lamb, by the word of their testimony. They kept their life tuned up to God's word, and when they saw there was something that didn't match God's word, they went to the mercy seat for help to get it changed.

There are people that mean business with God, and then God takes them through their own personal Gethsemane. Nothing like the Lord. None of us here are in any shape to meet the pressure the Son of God did, but He'll bring us to our own place where we are brought down to where we say, not my will, but yours be done, Lord.

Once that happens, you see, Satan has access to God. He calls your name out all the time, especially when you do something that's wrong. And he makes sure God hears about it, chooses them before God night and day, the Bible says.

And he calls your name up there. Don't think for one minute Satan is a gentleman. He is not.

He is the most perverse spirit one can imagine. But there were people. And Satan bounced them around like a yo-yo.

Testing, testing, trying, trying, trying to see when they're going to say uncle. The problem is they never say uncle. Help me.

Until finally, God looks at Satan and he said, well, what are you going to do next? And Satan just shakes his head and walks off because there's nothing more to do. He has taken that person and pounded them in the mortar until there was nothing left but a cry unto God. Oh, Father, help me.

Not my will, but yours be done. That's all that's left. It won't take too many, but it will take some.

And Jesus said that many that are last shall be first in the kingdom. Jesus can choose to exalt whomever he wishes. You and I were not privileged to live 2000 years ago in Judea.

We were not tapped on the shoulder by the carpenter and said, come follow me. But some men were. Some men were.

Some human beings, no better, no worse than you and me. They were tapped and called from their nets by the carpenter's son. Follow me.

Follow me. What a privilege. Tradition says they all were martyred, with the possible exception of the Apostle John.

Even Thomas was martyred in southern India. Paul, they say, was beheaded in Rome. Peter was crucified upside down in Rome, according to church tradition.

But we weren't there, and now their names will be in the foundation of the wall of the New Jerusalem forever. God exalts whom he will. Abraham was called out of earth to be the father of all who believe.

The Apostle Paul was given to write the scripture. He wrote most of the New Testament all by himself. One guy was given the understanding of the transition from Moses to Christ.

One man. God just picked him up. They didn't have a scholarly competition to see who would most clearly speak the transition from Christ to Jesus.

We don't understand it today, but it was given to Paul as their. And so Christ exalts whom he will. And he said, many that are last shall be first in the kingdom.

And I believe he meant last in time. I believe he meant we'll have access to the heights of God and to the commands of his armies. Whether it's the power of rulership, whether it's the fruitfulness of people, whatever he meant by that, many that are last shall be first.

First rank in the kingdom. Now our day is one of moral darkness as far as my little knowledge of history. I cannot think of any time in the history of man that their sin has been so widely available to the average person.

And then it's spreading. There is something contagious and viable about the American culture. And when it comes in contact with another culture, whether it's Japanese or whether it's Iranian or whatever it is, eventually that other culture will crumble.

Because what we have in the idea that every man has freedom to do as he will, appeals much more to people than a dictatorship, no matter in what noble terms it's couched, socialism or whatever. So our culture and coming along with our culture comes sin, drugs, all the rest that these more primitive cultures, they've always been taboos. But when the young people come in contact with the American CDs, the American videos, when the two cultures come together, it has to give way before America.

So we are in a time of increasing acceptance of moral perversion and sin. Therefore it makes sense that God would save the best wine until now, the big guns until now. When you know the big battle is coming, you save your best troops and your best guns for that battle if you know what you're doing.

And so what we've had to this point has enabled us to stand in the 20th century. But we're rapidly approaching the 21st century. And if I'm hearing from the Lord, it's going to be an age of moral horrors.

And to just be saved and speak in tongues is not going to be enough. It's not going to be enough. It doesn't want to take us there.

And so guess what? God has something for us that will enable us to stand in victory in the days that are coming and to be not just conquerors but more than conquerors. A more than conqueror is somebody that whips you with one hand. That's what's one hand down there and whips you with one hand.

That's somebody who's more than a conqueror. And Jesus has that power. He is more than a conqueror.

How many believe that? How many believe that when Jesus comes to town, it's the devil? Oh, yes. They know who he is, the Holy One of God. And they're terrified that he's bringing with him the day of judgment.

They have no power against him and they know it. So there's no question about that. The question that God is asking today is, I, the patriarch, working with Israel and then 2,000 years with the church, which is including the Catholic church and all, in the hour of the greatest darkness would be willing to go the route with me so that I can move through them without distraction.

The Bible calls it the feast of tabernacles. God tabernacling with men. We see it in the scripture, but we see that the Bible says in Matthew 13 that the wheat and the tares shall grow side by side to maturity.

So evil's coming to maturity in our day. Maturity is when we have the ability to discriminate between good and evil and the willingness to reject the evil and embrace the good. And that is the sign of maturity.

This may shock you, but Christ is both the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He is both. Because in him is the moral law of God, which is the knowledge of good and evil, made flesh.

The problem with Adam and Eve, the reason they died, they ate of the moral imperatives of Jesus before they ate of his life. And now we have eaten of Jesus as the tree of life. And now he is feeding us with the understanding so we can discern between what is good and what is evil and have the power to embrace the good and resist the evil.

We're ready for that. The church has never been ready for judgment and truth as it is today. Hallelujah.

We're saved and we speak in tongues. So we say, all right, Lord, show me what is wrong with my life. I'm not going to faint.

I'm going to confess my sins and go on and gain the victory. Praise the Lord. Hallelujah to God.

What a day we're living in. But underneath all of that, underneath it must be a person who says, Jesus, you are my Lord. And I'm not going to take the things or the understanding you're giving me and run out to save the world.

I'm going to come to you and you do with me as you will. And if all I'm to do is wait and have faith, so be it. If I'm to go to the farthest ends of the earth, so be it.

If I'm to work day and night, so be it. If I'm to die tomorrow praising you because you need me more up there, so be it. Lord, it's whatever you say for me to live as Christ and to die as gain.

And for people that have that, they become then untouchable as far as Satan is concerned because there's no button they can push. He can push that they will say, no, Lord, I won't do that. And then God wants to give us that.

And then he wants to give us the testimony that will come as through his spirit, we begin to learn the difference between good and evil and have the strength to choose the good and reject the evil. And that, brothers and sisters, when that's put together with whosoever will, because it's to whosoever will, be he Catholic, Protestant or whatever, it's to whosoever will. When God has that army together, Satan will be cast down from the heavens and we will be at the end of the age.

You say, what has that got to do with Matthew 24? The truth is, everything. But you'll have to come back tonight to hear more about it. Service starts at 6 o'clock, shall we say.

Jesus! Jesus! Just look up to him now. Just look up to him now. Get your mind on me.

Get it on the Lord. Get on the Lord. Now, Lord, we look to you right now.

Jesus, you are the Commander-in-Chief. You are the Commander-in-Chief, Lord. You are the one, hallelujah, the rider on the white horse, clothed in a garment, dipped in blood.

Now, Lord, you've told us to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, not to be entangled with the world. Lord, we are soft in America. We're soft.

We've got an imbalance in the teaching of grace. We need a new dip, Lord. We need a new dip.

We need to get the power of God. We need to feel your presence and walk in righteousness, holiness, and above all, Lord, to obey you without a qualm. Glad to do your will, happy to do your will, knowing that's the only way to travel.

Oh, hallelujah. Now, Lord, I see these people here. There's enough here.

Lord, if every one of them was to walk out of here resolved to live under the blood of the cross, to bear a true testimony, and to love not their life unto the death, it would change the history of mankind. It would most assuredly change the history of mankind. So, Lord, deal with us and raise up your army from the ends of the earth.

Oh, Lord, God, that this thing may be brought to an end. Now, I ask you, I'm going to ask the musicians to come give us a song as we're going out.

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