

Kenny Moorer 1/28/2024 – Understanding Scripture More Clearly

Well, my lesson this morning is understanding scripture more clearly. It is one's objective to do that. If I asked you this morning, do you understand Scripture every one of us would say well, parts of it. I feel like I understand Scripture enough to where I can obey God and where I can serve him or I can know what his will is for me and I think that's true, probably of every single one of us. But the objective in life is to understand it more clearly. That's an ongoing process. And I think that's important for us. And so, whenever I come to a conclusion about some things that have helped me, I'd like to share that with you and such as the case today and that's what I wanted to share that thought with you. I remember growing up attending services, back home in Arkansas and I can remember on occasion hearing a man teach a class in the auditorium and this was his common go to phrase when either the comments were becoming too varied in the in the class or when he thought the text was too difficult. He would say well it says what it means, and it means what it says. If you ever want to get through a Bible class on time, just always say that Randy that's a way to do that. He says what it means, and it means what it says I want to suggest not just to Randy but to all of us who teach classes. Wow, that might be the case in some areas. That's not always the case. I don't think it always means what it says. So as a result of that we have to do some digging and we have to do some thinking about what the text is really saying to us. Does the Bible say what it means and mean? It's what it says yes and no. And I want to explain that this morning as we think about some phrases in Scripture, some not but statements in Scripture. I'll tell you upfront, I'm going to overload you with this. I'm going to I don't know if it's the right word to say but I'm going to pound you with it. I don't want you leaving here this morning having any misunderstanding of what we talked about. Because I think what we talked about this morning will help you see as you look at not only the ones we're going to look at but if you look at other passages of Scripture will help us understand this this really it's a Hebrew idiom idea about how the Bible teaches us and especially in the New Testaments the idea of how the Bible would teach us and it's used extensively by the New Testament writers that we're going to look at today. The writers of the New Testament used it to convey a less important idea to a more important idea; both were true. But when you look at the statement, it almost sounds like they're saying one isn't true. And one is true that that's not at all what he's trying to say it's easily seen, I think in Scripture by these two words that we've got I've got on screen this not but it's not this. But it's there's it doesn't mean it's not this, it just means it's less important, or it's not just this, but it's also this. So now if I've totally confused you, we're going to look at some passages that help us understand and more specifically what pulls this together is a common verb that uses its two clauses and a common verb. And when you see it, I think it's going to stand out to you. So, I want to look at those things this morning. Go look at 12 or 13 verses. And again, as I said, I'm going to run through these so be patient. And I really sometimes I say I hope I don't wear you out I kind of hope I do this morning. I hope when I get to about seven, you're going okay, can you wind this up? Because I'm going to press on. And I want you to see very clearly, I don't want you to miss this point as you think about what Scripture teaches us.

The first passage I'd like for you to think about is Matthew six. Matthew 6:19 In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. You practice it, have you laid up treasure on Earth? Are you saving any money for later in life? Are you investing any money so as to help build for lack of a better term, something that you'll have at the end really anybody doing that? We've even got

people who are part of this church who help people do that. Interesting, isn't it? Jesus said no lay up for yourselves treasures on earth. moth and rust destroy thieves can break in and steal let but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven. Do you do what Jesus said? Well, if you understand what he's saying, you probably do what he says Jesus is not saying that you shouldn't lay up treasures on earth for a rainy day that you shouldn't say that you shouldn't maybe put some things back so that when the time comes that you might need that, that you had that's not what Jesus is saying. Jesus is saying your mind needs to be it's not focused on what you're treasuring on Earth and what you're building up in terms of your treasure on earth. What is focused on is your treasure in heaven. That's what he says. Don't do this but do this. This is something you can do. But this is the more important thing to do that just point you see. That's the way he would teach now that's hard to determine. My guess is every single person here in this audience struggles with this.

Do you lay up treasure on earth? Let me throw something at you that will get you moving in your seat. How much treasure do you need to lay up on earth? How much treasure do I need to let Ballmer know being a Christian is hard. Being a Christian is hard. Jesus isn't saying don't do it. He's saying don't make that your priority. So, here's the answer to what the question would be. Are we doing that? If what you're trying to do primarily is just take care of yourself on this earth. You've not only missed the point, but you're also not following the Lord, it's what Jesus is saying. Say one's less important, considerably less important. That's what he's trying to help us treat because he goes on to say where your treasure is your heart will be also you want to answer the question then you determine where you already have. That's it. It's not an easy it's not an easy question. They are not an easy, it is an easy answer the question I think, to answer where's your heart, got to ask yourself like where's your heart if your hearts here, then you've missed the point. If it's elsewhere, then you've understood what Jesus said. Or how about this passage in Matthew 10:20. This is part of the passage that Mike read a moment ago. Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul, but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Do not fear those who kill the body. Somebody breaks into your house in the middle of the night or in the middle of the night. You don't be scared Sure. That you're that your area that's your area to defend. This is my house. This is where my family is. If somebody breaks in, I need to fear that person. Jesus said no fear don't fear that person. Don't do not fear those who kill the body. If somebody is an intruder, and he or she comes in and they want to kill me is Jesus saying don't fear that person? No, that's not what Jesus is saying. Well, that's just what it means, what it says right? No, but Jesus is saying but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. If you really want to be concerned. Then be concerned about the one who can destroy your body and your soul and hell. What concerns you more Jesus is not saying if somebody breaks into your home wanting to kill you that that shouldn't concern so we'll come on in you shoot me whatever you want. So okay. It's not what he's saying. He's saying one is much less important. Because the killing of my body while that may be a bad thing, in many areas, it's not the most important thing. It's the destroying of my soul that Jesus is concerned about. That's the one Jesus said you need to fear. Or this passage in Matthew nine when Jesus heard that, he said to them, those who are will have no need to physician but those who are sick but go and learn what this means I desire mercy and not sacrifice route and not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. You tell me that Jesus didn't come to call righteous people. Is that Is that what Jesus is saying? That's what it says. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners. What Jesus saying he says the righteous have been called the need for me to call the righteous again. It's not something that needs to have. I've called them they have accepted the challenge. They have accepted this calling, if you will. Now the most important thing is I'm calling sinners to repentance. Jesus is not saying at all but he's

unconcerned. Because the righteous have no need of a position we all have needed for position. But what is the most important in this context? Jesus said, I want to call the sinner to repent, not the righteous but I want to call the center to repentance. So, like, the shepherd who leaves the 99 sheep, right, and goes after the one – are the 99 sheep unimportant? No. They're equally as important as the one but why is the one in the context more important because the ones lost? And that's what Jesus is trying to help us. Understand in this context of Matthew nine.

Well, there's passage in John six. Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you because God the Father has said his seal on him, do not labor for the food which perishes let me ask you a question in this life white food perishes. It all perishes away not to labor are we not to work for food that we can that we can sustain ourselves in life? Is that what Jesus saying? says what it means what it says don't labor for the food which food went pear trees? No, that's not what Jesus is saying at all. He says don't work for the food that perishes. More importantly, work for the food that endures to everlasting life. These really are not hard to understand but if you don't understand the concept and how Jesus and others are teaching, we may miss understand and there are people who use these things out of context, don't labor for the food which perishes they say saying don't work for a living. No. He said don't make that the priority. What you need to work for is a food which endures to everlasting life. Which the Son of Man will give you. Well, this passage in John six Jesus said to the most of your left side of you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven. But my father gives you the true bread from heaven for the bread from God is he's coming down from heaven and gives life to the world. Didn't Moses give bread from heaven? You say, well, that was the last one that was the Lord. But in a sense when the Israelites it was Moses who said this is what God is going to do. He's going to rain down bread, that manna from heaven. He's going to rain it down. And Jesus said, most shared I said, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven. Well, there was a sense in which yes, he did. But what Jesus is saying is what you need to understand is that bread is not the most important. Most important bread that you can ever have is this bread that your father is going to give you ultimately, this spiritual bread if you will even have his own son. Stay in John six four I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of Him who sent me Are you saying that while Jesus was on earth, he never did anything that was according to His will? Is that what he says? I have come down from heaven. Not to do my own will. Jesus you never did your own? Well, sure, he did. Sure, he did things that he wanted to do, but the will of Him who sent Me was the most important thing that he did, and he understood that not this. But this doesn't exclude this, but it makes this more important. And Jesus said, my father's rule, the most important you see, you see, sometimes people say well, you know, passages like this are not as practical. Oh, yes, they are.

Do you see how this passage is practical to you? And me? Well, one of the most difficult things for us is doing our own will. We wake up daily and I will tell you more for most of us, if not all of us, that the idea when I wake up every day is what am I going to do? And one of the primary motivations is for myself, it's me, it's my life. It's what I do. It's my will. I'm determining that and I get that and there's some level of degree that that is correct. But what ultimately happened is not my wheel today, Lauren, it's your will. It's the will of Him who sent Me. For all of us really well, this passage in John 12:44, Jesus cried and said he who believes in me, believes not in me not can you imagine he who believes in me does not believe in me, hold on, Lord, what? He who believes in Me believes not in me, but in him who sent me there is a higher established belief. It's nature's not saying you don't believe in me, he said you don't believe in me as the primary import. What's the most important is you believe in him who sent me then

that allows you to believe in me because you believe in him? You see how easy that is? That's what Jesus said. This passage in John 12 If anyone hears my words and does not believe I do not judge him. says what it means what says Do you mean to tell me and then people say, you know, Jesus, is Jesus not going to judge? That's not who he is. It he says I do not judge him. Anyone hears my words and does not believe I don't judge him. Is that true? Jesus said, unless you believe that I am He you're going to die in your sins, which is it, Lord. Jesus said I didn't come to judge the world but to save the world. You're not going to judge the world. He's saying I'm going to judge the world. But he says the most important thing that I do is I save people. See that? So, if somebody points this out to you, I don't The Lord doesn't judge you. We've got to understand no, he does judge. He judges, He convicts, and he judges people everyone according to his work, but the ultimate thing he's come to do and a primary input he's come to save the world.

This passage in John 15 Calvinist friends like this, you say, you did not choose me. I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain that whatever you ask in the Father in my name, he may give you You did not choose me. I chose you; our Calvinist friends would say you know, God chooses people against their will. It's not it's not up to me to decide whether I'm going to follow God each up for God to decide whether I'm not one of the chosen few if you will. And Jesus said you didn't choose me, but I chose you. Let me ask you a question. Like about the apostles. You remember what Jesus said really? My guess is he said it to all of them all the documentation is not said that he said it to every single one of us but wasn't the intention with what he said his follow me follow me. Do you think Peter and Andrew were forced to follow Jesus? Do you think that they were moved to follow Jesus and while they might not have wanted to that force was beyond their control, and they had to do you think that's what happened? Not for a minute. When they said we're going to go away, and when Jesus said you're going to go away and you're not going to follow me. They chose to do that. And that's what they did. And when they chose to return to Him, they came back and followed him all that had to do with what they did. What Jesus saying the most important thing is that I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain. That's the most important thing, but he's not saying that you didn't have you weren't able to have an ability to respond. This is not this is not Calvinistic in any kind of way. That she's showing us what Jesus said is the most important thing about this. We do not wrestle against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers and rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. All your battles against spiritual opponents are all your battles against the devil in his minions and all these hosts of wickedness in heavenly places? Are all your battles that? No? You do wrestle you and out wrestle against flesh and blood? Paul said we don't wrestle against flesh and blood. What is the main that's not the most important thing you're going to deal with, with flesh and blood battles. And as a matter of fact, those battles may find their foundations in these in the devil and in the spiritual hopes, wickedness. But what is more, the most important battles that we face are against principalities, against powers and the rulers of the darkness. That's what he's saying. And if we don't understand that, then we miss out on what the most important thing actually is. Do we struggle with flesh? And blood and everybody does? Everybody does that.

Let me give you another one. This will be the with a lot of people we talked to this will be important. Titus three not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, He saved this through the washing of regeneration renewing of the Holy Spirit whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become

heirs according to the hope of eternal life. What's that passage say? What that passage says if we're not saved by works of righteousness. That's what that's what Paul would say to Titus. He's saying to Titus, I want you to preach this and a lot of people this morning who are preaching that we're not saved by works, and in a sense, that's true. We're not saved by works of righteousness. We don't merit salvation. There's a lot of there's a lot of areas to go into with this whole idea. But what Paul is saying to Titus here is that yes, that's the case we are saved according to his mercy. Is he saying that being saved by works or doing work is unimportant? That's not at all what he's saying.

The wisest man who ever lived other than Jesus himself said that God will bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil. Do you think for a minute that that's unimportant? No! This business um, you know, it's not works. I understand the concept and I agree with the concept in principle, but to throw all of that out and say is our works have nothing at all to do with our salvation, folks? It's a mistake. And we have to understand again what it means and it's not an easy solution. But we're saved according to his mercy. That's the most important thing without it. None of us have hope doesn't matter what we do. But here's again, see, that's one of these not/but statements you see. Look at just a few more and then the lesson will be yours. Matthew 5:17 Jesus said, do not think that I came to destroy the law of the province I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. Surely, I say to you till heaven and our shall pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till it is all fulfilled. I think we make a mistake sometimes and when I say we, I'm talking about me. Sometimes make the statement when the Lord came, he did away with the law.

No, he didn't, no he didn't. He didn't do away with it. He came to fulfill it. He came to complete it. Do not think that I came to destroy the law or the prophets. I did not come to destroy, but to fulfill. You see that it's another not/but. I didn't I didn't do this. But I did do this. What the What the and I love this. This. This is the picture that I absolutely love. When you think about what the new what the Old Testament was the Old Testament began to paint a picture became began to paint a picture of a man who would come in the flesh who was God. And as the Old Testament artist, if you will, if you allow me to use that image as the Old Testament, artists began to paint that picture. They began to paint that picture on this on this panel. And they began to paint, and they put this in, and they put that in and when the New Testament came along, the finishing touches were put on that structure, on that image. So, when you saw that image, it was completed. That's what Jesus is saying. I mean come to destroy what was on the painting. I came to finish it. What's more important in the final analysis. In the final analysis, what Jesus did was more important does it make the other unimportant? No. Does it make it less important? Yes. It's exactly what Jesus is saying. These passages from the book of Hebrews helped us with that for if that first covenant had been following us, then no place would have been sought for a second. If that had been perfect, if that first covenant had been perfect, there'd be no need for the second and wasn't perfect. In other words, it wasn't completed it wasn't finished. That's what the second one did. That's what the Hebrew writer saying, or this patch is in Hebrews eight further than that, he says a new covenant. He has made the first obsolete now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away? Is he saying it's completely gone? He's saying no, something's taking the place of it. That's obsolete. That no longer fulfills its purpose completely, because something new now is coming along, and that's going to be filled completely. You think that's important for us to understand he hadn't done away with the law. It's obsolete. It no longer has the same pull it. No, it no longer has the same fortitude as it once had. But even when it was only by itself, it wasn't filling anything. It was helping us put in some of the strokes in the picture.

John 1, beginning in verse 12. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God. Again, some of our Calvinist friends, See? We're born by the will of God. Nothing that we can do about that is what God is what God's will is for us were born by the will of God. That's what that passage said. That is what that. But all men are born of blood. Not of blood? Yes. Yes all this says not of blood nor of the will of the flesh. Were you born as a result of the will of the flesh? Yes. Were you born as a result of the will of man? Yes. But what's most important, you were born of the will of God. That's what John is saying.

And then the final verse this morning. In a text where Paul is establishing the value and the importance of spiritual gifts and the first century where he's saying this is this is how one understands the will of God at this day and age in this day and age. And as he's talking about the idea of tongues speaking and prophesying, he would say, therefore, tongues are for a sign not to those who believe but to unbelievers. But prophesying is not for unbelievers, but for those who believe. We've got two right here, right here together. One is about tongue speaking and the other one is about prophecy, both of which were spiritual gifts. Both of whom helped fulfill some obligation that God wanted to help people understand what his will is. tongues are for a sign not to those who believe but don't believe it. Do you think for a minute and in the assembly, when tongue speaking went on, that whoever was in charge of that assembly said you know what we're going to do tongue speaking right now. Those of you already believe y'all just, you know, go outside, take your break, whatever, come back. We're not saying that. He's not saying that at all. He's saying the impact of this initially on those who are unbelievers is astounding, that was the whole purpose in having those spiritual gifts. It was to help the message be communicated, but it was so that unbelievers would look at that and go, Wow. That's something beyond what a normal man can do. He would help that unbeliever go from an unbeliever, hopefully to a believer that what Paul is saying. He's not saying that the unbelievers when they saw the signs were unaffected by it. He saying they'd already seen it. They'd already seen the value of these tongues. But it was unbelievers who could be affected more than the believers. And then he says, But prophecy is not from believers. But for those who believe and you see that there was an another gift that when it was given, and when people were instructed to do it when they were they were the prophets who could do this kind of spiritual prophesying when unbeliever saw that that didn't have the same effect on them than it did on the believer. Why? Because they were more advanced, the believers were more advanced in what they knew. So, Paul's point is one is more important to one group, and one is less important to another group. What I've given you this morning is not an exhaustive list.

As a matter of fact, what I hope this does is when you read in Scripture as you're as you're doing your readings and as you're doing your study, I hope that the next time you come across one of these statements, you'll go, Hey, I know what that's about. I know what that's about. And again, we talked about several passages. Again, as I've said this is not an exhaustive list, but I hope it helps us understand how the New Testament writers teach us. It helps us understand Scripture more clearly. My god help us toward that end. I hope that you will make a note in your Bible at some point where you can refer back and maybe what I've discussed with you this morning is something that you have known for a long time. And if it is then maybe this was just a good reminder. But if it's not something that you've thought about before, I hope it challenges your thinking and I hope it helps us understand as I said scripture more clearly.

You're in this assembly this morning and you have a spiritual need, as always, we would not want to leave here without encouraging you in some way. And the way we choose to do that is to sing a song. We don't have to do that. I could just say if you have a spiritual need, raise your hand. But that's not what we do because we all want to encourage you if I said that that would basically be me encouraging you and just some singular kind of way. But we're going to sing a song and we hope that by the singing of the song and by the thinking that we're singing it together, we would encourage you to respond. There's nothing greater in your life than having a relationship with Jesus Christ. And if you don't have one, this would be a great time to do that. If you've never obeyed the gospel. You need to come believing Jesus as the Christ. You do need to repent, you do need to confess with your mouth, according to Matthew 10 that Jesus is the Christ. Let people know that, let them know that you're not shying away from it anymore. You're, you're valuing it and then be buried with him in baptism so that your sins will be washed away. If you need to do that, this would be a great time to let us know or if you just want us to pray for you. God is the one who needs to forgive you first. And if you're not in the right relationship, you need to pray to God that he'll do that. But if there's something that we can do to help you fulfill that, to be strengthened by that then we'd love to do that too. If you have any need, come as we stand and as we sing.