

Audio Transcript of Sermon  
December 13, 2025  
Duty

Hello. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Tom Laign with Sabbath Bible Study. "Duty, Honor, Country" is the motto of the United States Military Academy at West Point and represents the core values of its cadets and graduates. The phrase is most famously associated with a speech delivered by General Douglas MacArthur in 1962 at West Point, which has been widely cited as a key moment in the development of the institution's purpose and character. Duty, Honor, Country are also important considerations for Christians, though we will look at these through the spiritual lens instead of the military lens, and today we consider Duty.

When we think of duty, we think of those things which are our responsibility to accomplish. We either accomplish what we must and fulfill our duty or we do not accomplish what we must, and we fail to complete our duty. What duties we have living our lives will vary among each of us. We have duties at home, at work, and in our community, but how these may look individually for any of us will vary based on who we are and what our individual circumstances are. Spiritually, what is expected of us doesn't change. When we think of those with duties in the Bible, we can think of Adam and Eve who were given the duty of tending to the Garden of Eden, only to be kicked out of it for doing something they should not have done. We can remember Noah whose duty it was to build an ark which saved his life, the lives of his family members and so many animals. We can think of Abraham who was given the duty of leaving the country he knew for a country he had not seen. We can think of Moses who was given the duty of leading Israel out of Egypt. Faith and Duty sometimes go hand in hand. In the case of Nehemiah, he came to see it as his duty to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, even when he was in captivity serving the king.

It was the king who noticed Nehemiah was sad and when he asked him about the sadness, Nehemiah told the king that he was sad because Jerusalem was a broken and destroyed city. When the king asked him what he would like, Nehemiah let him know that he would like to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls. He even asked for letters from the king that would let the governors

know he was travelling to Jerusalem to rebuild it under authority of the king, and that construction materials be given him to rebuild the city walls and city gates. Nehemiah two verse one.

### **Nehemiah 2:1-20**

- 1. And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence.**
- 2. Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid,**
- 3. And said unto the king, Let the king live forever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?**
- 4. Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven.**
- 5. And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it.**
- 6. And the king said unto me, the queen also sitting by him, For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.**
- 7. Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah;**
- 8. And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.**

With inspiration of God and letters confirming the work he would do to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, Nehemiah clearly understood what his duty was, and he also grasped what roadblocks he would likely face. Those letters to the governors would come in handy as many of the governors could not understand the reasoning behind anyone seeking to benefit Israel. Verse nine.

**9. Then I came to the governors beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me.**

**10. When Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel.**

**11. So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days.**

**12. And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: neither was there any beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon.**

**13. And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire.**

**14. Then I went on to the gate of the fountain, and to the king's pool: but there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass.**

**15. Then went I up in the night by the brook, and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by the gate of the valley, and so returned.**

Having surveyed the damage in and around Jerusalem, Nehemiah had a better sense of what would be needed to complete his duty to rebuild the city walls. At this point, only Nehemiah knew what he would be doing and what the king had authorized. The occupying government, the remnant of Israel, and the priesthood had not yet been told of his plans. When he did begin to share what would be done, people came up with all kinds of reasons why it couldn't be done. Some thought Nehemiah and those who helped him would be seen as rebelling against the king, even though the king had authorized the work Nehemiah would do. Once they understood that God was the inspiration behind Nehemiah's efforts and the king had given permission to Nehemiah to rebuild, they began to slowly change their minds. Once it was understood what would be happening some of the foreigners, including an Arabian and an Ammonite made fun of the effort, but Nehemiah was quick to defend the effort and the duty he had to complete the rebuilding. Verse sixteen.

**16. And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did; neither had I as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work.**

**17. Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach.**

**18. Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work.**

**19. But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it, they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king?**

**20. Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem.**

Nehemiah did go on to complete the rebuilding of the city walls. During the rebuilding of the walls and as more and more progress was made, more and more verbal attacks came against Nehemiah and those helping him, but those verbal attacks came to nothing. Eventually the city walls and gates were rebuilt, and with a secure perimeter, Jerusalem could once again be a city that would be safe to live in.

Beyond just rebuilding the city walls, Nehemiah made it possible for the law to be reintroduced to the people who under captivity had been living with little access to it. Nehemiah also made sure the city gates were closed on the Sabbath so that buying and selling would not take place within the city. Nehemiah did more than what was his duty to do, which was to rebuild the city walls. Similarly, Jesus taught that while we must do that which is our duty to do, just doing our duty is not anything great of and by itself. It is what is expected. It's sort of like going to a restaurant to eat a meal. Some restaurants are more basic with average food and service. In other restaurants, the food might be great, but the service is just average. Other restaurants might have phenomenal service but serve average tasting food. Eating out is most enjoyable when both the service and food is great, and when the price is reasonable, that becomes a reason to go back.

Jesus taught that we should not consider just doing our duty as anything great. When we are careful to avoid causing offense, when we forgive those

who have caused us offense, and when we have grown in faith where it would be possible by faith to move a tree, we need to consider all we have done is what is our duty to do, and if we have done what is our duty to do, Jesus made it clear we are unprofitable servants. Luke seventeen verse one.

#### **Luke 17:1-10**

- 1. Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!**
- 2. It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.**
- 3. Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.**
- 4. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.**
- 5. And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.**
- 6. And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.**
- 7. But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?**
- 8. And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink?**
- 9. Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not.**
- 10. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.**

The Greek word for duty is, *opheilo*, Strong's Greek word 3784 and it is translated into many different English words. We have a duty to be thankful to God, and Paul expressed duty as being bound, when writing of being bound to thank God. Let's read Second Thessalonians one verse three.

## **2 Thessalonians 1:3-10**

- 3. We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;**
- 4. So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:**
- 5. Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:**
- 6. Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;**
- 7. And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,**
- 8. In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:**
- 9. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;**
- 10. When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe because our testimony among you was believed in that day.**

Later in the same letter, Paul restated that he was bound to give thanks to God for the brethren, and encouraged them to stand fast and hold to the traditions of faith. Second Thessalonians two verse thirteen.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:13-17**

- 13. But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:**
- 14. Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.**
- 15. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.**
- 16. Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,**
- 17. Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.**

We have a duty to forgive the wrongs committed by others against us, and Jesus explained this through a parable using the example of people owing money. When we owe money, it is our duty to repay. In the United States a major part of what makes a credit score, what lenders consider when making a loan, is the prior history of repaying debts as agreed. Jesus taught that instead of exacting all that is owed us, that our duty is to forgive those who have committed wrongs against us. Matthew eighteen verse twenty-three.

#### **Matthew 18:23-35**

**23. Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.**

**24. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.**

**25. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.**

**26. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.**

**27. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.**

**28. But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.**

**29. And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.**

**30. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.**

**31. So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.**

**32. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:**

**33. Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?**

**34. And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.**

**35. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses.**

The duty to forgive wrongs committed against us is so huge that Jesus included it in an example prayer, what so many call the Lord's prayer. Luke eleven verse one.

#### **Luke 11:1-4**

- 1. And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.**
- 2. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.**
- 3. Give us day by day our daily bread.**
- 4. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.**

Our duty includes things we ought to do, or should do, and not do. Sometimes we think words like ought or should give an option, but the option for us is to do what we ought or should do. When Paul was teaching the God of Israel to the Athenians, he explained that people should not think of God as something that can be found on earth, even something very precious like gold, or that God should be something that is made in an image crafted by man, like in a carving. Acts seventeen verse twenty-three.

#### **Acts 17:23-30**

- 23. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.**
- 24. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;**
- 25. Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;**
- 26. And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;**
- 27. That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from everyone of us:**



**28. For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.**

**29. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.**

**30. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent:**

Paul taught the Romans that those who are spiritually and mentally strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please themselves. As Christians, we shouldn't be denigrating people by using degrading language to describe them. Having worked a lifetime working with people who have disabilities, I've seen too many people use degrading language to describe these people. There is no reason to make fun of what we see, because when we degrade others, we are doing so to please ourselves. Within the disability community and especially among people with intellectual disabilities use of the R- word is considered demeaning whether that word is directed at a person with a disability or not. At one time recently the R- word was used as part of a clinical diagnosis. Conversely within the same community is typical lack of understanding surrounding a couple of I- words and an M- word that were also previously used as part of a clinical diagnosis, and so I would hope that those understanding these words would avoid using them. Also found in schools is bullying. When one understands bullying it is mostly about pleasing the self. Those who bully, bully to please the self. If we were to study the history of words previously used to clinically diagnose people with disabilities, many of these are now used as words to demean others. If we take Paul's example to not please ourselves, we should avoid use of words that demean others. Romans fifteen verse one.

### **Romans 15:1-6**

**1. We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.**

**2. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.**

**3. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.**

**4. For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.**

**5. Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:**

**6. That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Other things that we ought to do is recognize those who serve even if what might be seen is a leadership role. Paul mentioned that he ought to have been commended to the Corinthians, and that indicates beyond being an apostle that there were those who thought little of Paul most likely because of his past history of persecution. Today, we can't think less of a brother or sister in Christ because of their past history. If a person is a brother or sister in Christ, they are a brother or sister in Christ. We might still be cautious about the person because who the person is or was, but that caution and any actions we might need to take to safeguard our family, and possessions does not negate the person is a brother or sister in Christ. If there is a brother or sister in Christ who shouldn't be around your children or property, then don't have them around your family or property, but that doesn't negate they are a brother or sister in Christ.

Spiritually, we have a responsibility to lay up for the next generation. Just like it is not the responsibility for minor children to provide for their parents, it is not the responsibility for minor children to lead us spiritually. As parents age adult children might need to provide for elderly parents, but that's much different. The older generation is to spiritually lead the younger generations. Second Corinthians twelve verse eleven.

## **2 Corinthians 12:11-19**

**11. I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.**

**12. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.**

**13. For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong.**

**14. Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.**

**15. And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.**

**16. But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile.**

**17. Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you?**

**18. I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? walked we not in the same steps?**

**19. Again, think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you? we speak before God in Christ: but we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying.**

Within families, husbands are to love their wives as much as they love themselves. Loving their wives is something husbands ought to do. Ephesians five verse twenty-five.

#### **Ephesians 5:25-33**

**25. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;**

**26. That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,**

**27. That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.**

**28. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.**

**29. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:**

**30. For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.**

**31. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.**

**32. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.**

**33. Nevertheless let everyone of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.**

A duty of the high priest was to make offerings for sin. Hebrews shows how Jesus Christ died with incredible suffering as an offering for our sins. Hebrews five verse one.

#### **Hebrews 5:1-14**

- 1. For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:**
- 2. Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.**
- 3. And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.**
- 4. And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.**
- 5. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee.**
- 6. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.**
- 7. Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;**
- 8. Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;**
- 9. And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;**
- 10. Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.**

We are also reminded that as we spiritually mature there comes an understanding, we ought to be teachers of spiritual truth instead of needing to be taught spiritual truth. If we are always learning and have no capacity to be teachers, we need to consider if all we are doing is always learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth. The Bible doesn't speak highly of that. What we learn through study and devotion needs to be more than something we quickly forget. What we spiritually learn needs to become part of who we are. Verse eleven.

**11. Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.**

**12. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.**

**13. For everyone that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.**

**14. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.**

As Christians, we proclaim we are followers of Christ. If we are followers of Jesus Christ, then it makes sense that we should do what Jesus would have done. If we know Jesus lived His life one way and we live our lives another way, we have a problem because we are not doing what we ought to do. First John two verse one.

#### **1 John 2:1-6**

**1. My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:**

**2. And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.**

**3. And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.**

**4. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.**

**5. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.**

**6. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.**

Similarly, we have all been touched by the love of God which was made manifest through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Because God has shown love towards us, we ought to love one another. First John four verse seven.

### **1 John 4:7-11**

- 7. Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.**
- 8. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.**
- 9. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.**
- 10. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**
- 11. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.**

In our journey of faith, we will encounter others who might not be closely associated with us. Just because a person isn't closely associated with us is not a reason to exclude them when they speak truth. Truth is taught through the Holy Spirit and is not limited to a human organization that teaches truth. Truth is to be taught by all who have the Holy Spirit, and in teaching truth they become coworkers in truth. Third John verse one.

### **3 John 1:1-8**

- 1. The elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth.**
- 2. Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.**
- 3. For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth.**
- 4. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.**
- 5. Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers;**
- 6. Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well:**
- 7. Because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles.**
- 8. We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.**

What we owe is a duty to repay, and Paul writes that we are to owe no many anything but to love one another as this fulfills the law. Romans thirteen verse eight.

### **Romans 13:8-10**

**8. Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.**

**9. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.**

**10. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.**

In writing to Philemon, Paul encourages him to treat Onesimus favorably. Previously Onesimus had been a dead weight but recently had become profitable. We can't consider a person's current actions to be less because of who that person once was. It's not uncommon for younger people to make bad decisions that negatively impact themselves and even others, so that past history should not be used to diminish what the person is currently doing. With Onesimus, he must have been such a dead weight that Paul offered to cover for him while he was with Philemon. Philemon verse ten.

### **Philemon 1:10-22**

**10. I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds:**

**11. Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me:**

**12. Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels:**

**13. Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel:**

**14. But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.**

**15. For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him forever;**

**16. Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?**

**17. If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself.**

- 18. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account;**
- 19. I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it: albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.**
- 20. Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord.**
- 21. Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.**
- 22. But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you.**

When we think of what our duty is, Jesus taught in the Olivet prophecy not only about end time prophecies, but of the need to be found so doing upon His return. While understanding end time prophecy can help us understand where we might be in the end time, if we aren't so doing at the return of Jesus Christ, that knowledge of prophecy will do nothing for us. Doing what we need to be doing is much more important than understanding end time prophecy if we seek a blessing at the return of Christ. Matthew twenty-four verse forty-five.

#### **Matthew 24:45-51**

- 45. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?**
- 46. Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.**
- 47. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.**
- 48. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;**
- 49. And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;**
- 50. The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of,**
- 51. And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**



Finally, there is a verse found in Ecclesiastes that summarizes the whole duty of man. Fearing God and keeping His commandments is the whole duty of man. Ecclesiastes twelve verse nine.

#### **Ecclesiastes 12:9-14**

**9. And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs.**

**10. The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth.**

**11. The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.**

**12. And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh.**

**13. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.**

**14. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.**

“Duty, Honor, Country” is the motto of the United States Military Academy at West Point, and was brought to light by General MacArthur. I am so grateful to all who serve and have served in the military to defend the country in which I live. Duty, honor, and country can all be explored Biblically, and today we looked at duty. We know that when we have done that which is our duty to do, we are unprofitable servants. While we today looked at many examples of duty and various words translated from the Greek from which duty was translated, the reality is everything that is written in the Bible, is our duty to do, and if we do that, well Jesus Christ tells us to consider ourselves unprofitable servants. To be a profitable servant, we have to be doing more than what is expected, and next week we will consider the concept of honor and how that spiritually looks.

Thank you for joining us today. God-willing we'll get together next time on the Sabbath. Until then, thank you for joining us today.