

I. Introduction to Discipleship and Doctrine

Last time, when we started our series, we were focusing on the fact that we were going to begin to define some concepts to help you understand how to build a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. We started that first message by really defining what the word "discipleship" means. What does it mean to be Christ's disciple? What does it mean to be disciplined?

We talked about how the root word of "disciple" comes from the word "discipline." We showed you how a disciple is simply someone who is disciplined in the principles of the Word of God. Now we're going to begin a study of different principles and aspects of the Word of God where I can help you lay the right kind of doctrine into your life.

Doctrine is important in the Bible. The word "doctrine" means "to teach." You're going to find that there are different doctrines in the Bible that you need to know. Obviously, all the doctrines of the Bible are important, but there are certain doctrines right now that are more important to you than other doctrines. I say "important" by the fact that you need to learn them first; you need to learn them now.

I look at you here this morning, and we've got people who've been saved for a long time. We've got people who have been saved for a short time. We have people who know a lot about the Bible. We have those that don't, that are trying to learn the Bible. I look at teaching people the Word of God like you ought to look at raising your family.

If you have little kids, or if you ever have little kids, or if you've had little kids, you know that when they're two or three months old up to the fact that they're two, three, four, five years old, you don't necessarily start teaching them math, science, and world history and all of that. They need to learn that, but they don't need to learn that at that age. What they do need to learn are two basic principles: what is right and wrong, and you need to teach them discipline.

Those are the same fundamental things that we need to learn as Christians. That's where it starts. Getting the right doctrine is like the bedrock by which you're going to be building on. That's basically what we're going to do.

We saw how that when we study the book of Nehemiah and we saw the building of the wall, we saw how that figures into how to build a church. The book of Ezra, and we haven't got to that book yet, but we will as we go through this, the book of Ezra really deals with how you build your body. One book deals with the building of the wall, which is a picture of a church in a city. The other one is a picture of building the temple. We know that that's your body. So in time, we'll come through that and we'll lay all that stuff out and we'll find the right process.

Most of God's people today that have been saved for years and years and years are very ineffective for the Lord. There's one reason for that: they were never trained properly. They were never taught properly, or they never wanted to learn the Word of God at all. In most cases, I've

found dealing with people that most people want to learn and do what's right. They just don't have anybody to show them the proper procedure.

When it comes to the Bible, there is a way that you have to learn the Bible. That's the easiest way. When God wrote the Bible, He put it together in such a fashion that it fits all together. God didn't make it... I mean, you look at the Bible, it looks intimidating. My goodness, it's thick, and there's a lot of words in it, a lot of verses in it. You hear preachers get up there and expound this and expound that, and you think to yourself, "How in the world am I ever going to learn the Bible? How in the world am I ever going to get the Word of God down?"

The truth of the matter is, the Bible is not a hard book to learn, but you have to do it the way that God wants you to do it. You'll find that God built into the Bible a series, a system by which the Bible needs to be examined and the Bible needs to be studied. When you do that, you'll find that the system brings the Bible together cohesively.

II. The Bible as a Puzzle

The Bible is like, and I've said this many, many times, the Bible is like one of those thousand-piece picture puzzles that you would buy at Walmart or someplace. Then you go home and try to put it together. When you look at the box, usually on the box, the picture is there of what the puzzle was all about. Then your job is to begin to put that puzzle together. The way you put that puzzle together, the more you get it together, the more you see it, the more you begin to understand that a picture is emerging. When you get finished, you see that the picture there is exactly the same picture that's on the box.

The Bible is the same way. The Bible does one fundamental thing: the Bible gives you a picture. It gives you a picture of what God is doing from Genesis 1 to Revelation 22. It gives you a picture. All the chapters, all the verses, all the words are nothing more than pieces of a puzzle. The same way you would begin to put a thousand-piece picture puzzle together, there is an arc to it. If you just dump all the pictures out and start trying to put them together, you'll be there the rest of your life.

I never had a lot of patience with it. My mother used to do it every New Year's Eve, and some of you have heard me tell this story before, how she would start around 10 o'clock. I was just a kid, and I'd watch her for a while, and every morning she'd stay up all night long with Guy Lombardo, and she'd put that thing together. After I went out and beat on the tin pans at midnight, I was ready to go to bed. But every morning it would be there. One day I asked her how she did it, and she told me that she starts with all the end corner pieces and all the flat sides. You start with that, and then you build it out, and you put the framework in. Once you get it framed, and all the flat pieces are accounted for, because they go together pretty easy, then you start from the outside and you work in.

Now that made a lot of sense to me. To tell you the truth, my idea of doing it is to get a pair of scissors and cut them suckers to fit, and put them in there. You wouldn't get a very good picture, but at least all the parts would be accounted for when you can do it that way. But you know what? That's exactly what some people do with the Bible, and that's why they get a distorted

view of the Word of God. What we are doing right now is we're taking all the flat end pieces. We're building a framework of this picture. That's what we have to do. That's the way it has to be done.

I look at it this way:

- We have Sunday morning where I'm going to teach you the basic framework of how to build a relationship with God.
- We have Thursday night where we can get into the doctrinal things that I can give you, where I have more time, and we can talk about it.
- We have the option that we can meet one on one, where you can get it hand fit to wherever you want to put it in your life.

I don't know what else I can do. I think that's the best operational procedure to follow, but I know this: we have to get some foundational stuff down first. It doesn't do me any good to talk about the deep things of the Word of God until we lay down some basic fundamental things that you need to understand as a child of God. We'll get to how the Bible goes together, but there's a system to it.

III. God's System of Sevens

For instance, God's system is by the number of sevens. Seven is the number of perfection. It's a perfect number in the Bible. God does everything by sevens. You find seven years of tribulation. All the feasts are multiples of seven months and seven days and seven weeks. Everything works by seven. When it comes to the Bible itself, that's how God did it.

The Bible has:

1. Seven mysteries
2. Seven resurrections
3. Seven years of the tribulation period
4. Seven baptisms
5. Seven natural laws
6. Seven changes to this earth
7. Seven trees in the Garden of Eden

All these things are a system by which God shows you things in the Bible. Also in the Bible, there are seven judgments. That's where I want to start today on that aspect. I'm going to talk about just four of them briefly, but I want to focus on three of them because three of them fit into your life and into my life.

Now, there are seven judgments in the Bible. We know one of them is pretty easy: that's the judgment of all the unsaved dead, Revelation 20. There's coming a time when God's going to judge all the unsaved people. We know that there's another judgment dealing with the nation of Israel. In the tribulation period, God judges the nation of Israel. We know that there is a judgment of the nations, that when the Lord comes back at the second coming of Christ, He's going to judge the nations of how they dealt with the Jews. Then we know that there's a

judgment of the angels. The Bible says that we will judge angels someday. There's a coming judgment, probably at the Great White Throne, where the angels that left their first estate and went off with Satan, where they get judged.

IV. The Three Judgments for a Christian

Then there are three judgments that fit to a Christian. These three judgments are the fundamental things that you need to understand about your own personal relationship with God. It does me no good to talk to you about building a relationship with God if first of all, you don't understand how God looks at you. Our daily caring of ourselves and the way we go through life is based on how people perceive us.

You know as well as I do, if you think somebody doesn't like you, it makes your day and your time around them a little rougher. If you get vibes off of somebody that they just don't like you, and maybe they do, maybe it's you, I don't know. But you know as well as I do that our day is made, and our life is made much to the degree of what we think people think about us. When we think somebody likes us, we're at ease and we're ourselves and we have a good time. When we think somebody doesn't like us, then we're a little more on guard, a little stiffer, and things don't go the way maybe they should.

That's the way it is with God. Most Christians do not understand how God sees them. Understanding that is the basic fundamental concept of you building a relationship with God because you have to know what God sees when He views you. You need to know how God views you. Every heresy today, the heresy that you can lose your salvation, the heresy that all the stuff that's out there, it all comes down to God's people not understanding how God looks at them.

When it comes to the Christian, there are three judgments that you need to understand. We're going to focus on the last one today, but we're going to talk about all three of them so you understand it. I make this real simple. I call it the three S's of Christian life. It's simply this: sinner, son, and servant. That's all you got to remember. Sinner, son, and servant. There are three judgments for the child of God, and you've got to keep them separate.

1.) Judgment as a Sinner

When Christ died on the cross, and this is before any of us were born, by dying on the cross, and shedding His blood, and then coming up the third day, by doing that, He judged every man, woman, and child on planet earth as a guilty sinner. At that point, when Christ died on the cross, every man, woman, and child was judged a sinner. At that point, you and I were judged as a sinner on Calvary's cross because Christ died for you and for me, and He became my sin. At that point, it personified the concept that you and I are sinners. The Bible says, "There's none that doeth good. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." So the first judgment you need to understand took place at Calvary. At Calvary's cross, you and I, and every man and woman, was judged a guilty sinner by a sinless Savior dying on the cross. So at Calvary, you and I were judged as a sinner.

2.) Judgment as a Son

You got born. I got born in 1950. You got born wherever you got born. Somewhere along the line, you got born again. Somewhere in your life, you trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. At that point, the Bible says you're born again. The Bible says at that point, "all things are passed away; behold, all things become new." The Bible says, "now you're a new creature in Christ Jesus." All things are passed away, all things become new. At that point, God never looks at you as a sinner again. At that point, when you get saved and you get born again spiritually into the family of God, you are no longer a sinner in God's sight. You now are His son. Sinner, son, servant.

At Calvary, when Christ died on the cross, you were judged as a sinner. When you got saved, at that point, God no longer looks at you as a sinner. Why? Because you took what Christ did on the cross and you applied it to your sins and you get forgiven. God does not look at you anymore as a sinner. Now that's a tough thing for some people to get into because we still sin. We still do things that are wrong. That's why you must understand how God sees you. That's why you must fundamentally understand the three judgments that fit into your life and my life.

When Christ died on the cross, you and I were judged as a sinner. The moment you take that sacrifice and apply it to your life and ask Christ to come into your heart and save you, God no longer looks at you as a sinner because you are no longer a sinner in God's sight. The Bible says now you are seated in heavenly places, you're part of the body of Christ. Without getting into all the details of what actually transpires the moment, the second you get saved, at that point you're now God's son.

Do you still sin? Yes, you do. Here's the key: God doesn't deal with your sin that you sin now as a sinner. God deals with your sin now as His child, as His son. Before you were saved, you were a guilty sinner responsible for your own sin. The moment you trusted Christ as your own personal Savior, you were born into God's family by a spiritual new birth. God pays for your sin and allows you to enter into a time of fellowship with Him where you are now His son.

The question after you get saved is not, "Are you a child of God, are you not a child of God?" The question is, "Are you an obedient child of God or a disobedient child of God?" Before my two girls were born into our family, I didn't have any children. There were no children in our family. The moment both of them got born into our family, I now had children. Now, it's not a question of whether they're our children or not. The only question exists now, are they obedient children, are they disobedient children? We as parents had to deal with them along those lines. It was never a question, "Are you my child?" It was a question of obedience as a child. After you get saved, it is never a question of whether you're God's child or not. The question is, are you an obedient child or not?

Now, this is where the book of Hebrews comes in. This is where some of the other verses come in that talk to us about chastisement. This is where the Bible says that before a man or woman is saved and they're a sinner, God has really nothing to do with them other than try to win them to Christ and convict them by the Holy Spirit of God. But God doesn't answer their prayers. God doesn't take care of them. They're not His children. The Bible says in John 8 that in an unsaved

state, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." That's why an unsaved man lies. That's why he does this. That's why he does that. That's the whole purpose of being unsaved. You live like the father, the devil.

Once you get saved, God becomes your Father. At that point, God says, "All right, I want to teach you to be the right kind of child," just like you do with your kids, just like I did with mine. God says to me, to you, "I want to teach you to be My child. I put things in your life now that will help you learn how to be the right kind of child." So He gives the church, He gives the Bible, He gives the Holy Spirit of God, He gives men and women to teach you. Now you have the ability by which you can learn about God where before you didn't have the ability to learn about God.

But along with that, as His son, God chastises us if we don't do what's right. Just like an earthly mother, father, the Bible says, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" The bottom line is simply this: when I was raising my kids up, if they did what was wrong, I had to discipline them. As a child of God, if you do things wrong, God disciplines you.

Now, God is a good parent. Just like you need to be good parents. God says this, "Okay, once you're My child, I know you're not going to be perfect. I know you're going to do things that are wrong. And I know you're going to sin. Here's the deal: the moment you sin as a son, we break fellowship because I'm holy. When sin comes into your life, we have to break fellowship because I can't keep fellowship with something that's not holy. So here's what you do. My Son died on the cross. He died for all of your sins. He died for the sins you hadn't even committed yet."

I was preaching one time and I was teaching this and some lady came up after me and she said, "Preacher," she says, "I don't know if I agree with what you just said. You just said that Christ has forgiven me and died for the sins that I haven't even committed yet. How can that be?" I said, "Lady, when He died on the cross, you weren't even born and He died for them all then." You see, God died in a few, they're all paid for. Once you become His son, all you have to do, once you become His child, is the Bible says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." And fellowship is restored.

It's just like when I was raising my kids, there was a rule in the house: "You do something wrong, you come and tell me about it. You tell me the truth. No punishment. Everybody makes mistakes. I don't care what you did. If you come and talk to me and tell me what you did, there will be no punishment. If you don't, you try to hide it, you try to bury it, you try to do this, you do that, there's going to be punishment." It's just that simple with God. God says, "All right, once you become My child, once you become My son, here's the deal: if when you do things that are wrong, if you're faithful and just to confess them, I'm faithful and just to forgive them. If you don't, then I will chastise you like a father chastises his son. I'll take you to the woodshed. I'll deal with you because of the fact that you didn't be honest with Me."

In the case, it'll lead a face where God says, "Okay, I'm going to..." Chastisement can come in many forms. I'm not saying that God has one standard way that He does it. Chastisement is chastisement. God will deal with you on an individual basis where you're at. I'm just giving you the procedure. I'm not trying to give you all the nuts and bolts so you'll know exactly. A lot of

people, they're afraid to death of God. I don't want this to happen in your life. A lot of God's people, they live in fear of God. They live in terror that God is going to whack them. That if you do something wrong, God is going to kill your children. That if you do something wrong, God is going to give you cancer. That God is just waiting around the corner for you to slip up and then He's going to drop the hammer on you. That's not God. That's not the way God operates.

That's why, as I said, it's important, fundamentally, for you as a child of God to understand how God sees you. Before you were saved, God saw you as a sinner, as a guilty sinner, as a lost sinner on your way to hell. The moment you get saved, God no longer looks at you as a sinner because now your sins are paid for. God looks at you as His child. As His child, He'll deal with you on a daily basis, one on one, based on your relationship and walk with Him.

That's where my job comes in. My job comes in to teach you. That's where the job of the church is, to edify the body of Christ. That's why I teach you the Bible. It's my job to look out there and to see exactly what you need, to make myself available, that I can give you what you need, as a body and as individuals, to lead you and teach you the Word of God, that you too can grow up a strong Christian in your basic relationship with God, because that's what God requires of us. When you get to the point in your life, then it's your responsibility to take somebody else and teach somebody else and help somebody else. That's the way it works.

V. The Tabernacle as a Picture of Christian Life

I read this morning in the Book of Exodus, and I was coming down through those things. The Book of Exodus is a tremendous book because it talks about the priesthood, and it lays out all the orders of the priest and all the things of the office of the priest. There's a chapter in there, or a number of chapters in there, when you get around chapter 26, 27, 28, 29, that really just deals with the aspect of the ministry. In fact, the whole Book of Exodus is a picture of a man lost, getting saved, getting baptized, finding the Word of God, and understanding what it means to be a priest. It's one of the greatest, most practical books in all the Bible. I mean, it's incredible.

The first three chapters, you've got the Nation of Israel down there in Egypt. Egypt is the type of the world, a picture of an unsaved man. They cry out in bondage, and God sends them a deliverer, Moses, a type of Christ. That deliverer comes down, what does he do? He leads them out of Egypt. What did Christ do the day you got saved? He brought you out of the world. Then the Bible says that they get baptized in a cloud. Then they're out there in the wilderness journey, a picture of being in this world but not of this world. They can't drink the water. There's nothing to eat. What does God do? God brings the water out of a rock, a type of Christ. He brings the manna down from heaven, a type of the Word of God, and He feeds them. The next chapter, they get sanctified. The next chapter, they learn how to pray. Every chapter deals with a different aspect, and the whole book is a picture of that.

When you get up to around chapter 25, 26, 27, 28, and 29, it deals with the order of the priesthood, and it's incredible. It shows you and me what we ought to be. Aaron was the high priest, a type of Christ. Aaron is told to make a beautiful set of clothes, a picture of Christ's righteousness. Along with Aaron working in the tabernacle were his sons, who were also priests,

a picture of you and me. Aaron, a type of Christ, the high priest. You and I, a type of Aaron's sons or Christ's sons, and we work in that tabernacle too. They got the same clothes that the high priest got. You know what that's a picture of? It's a picture of you getting saved and getting God's righteousness just like Christ did. You get the same thing.

You go through there, they're working in a tabernacle. That tabernacle is a picture of us doing the work in the ministry, and it's an incredible picture. You go in there and the candlesticks are over on this side, and it's completely dark. There's no light in there whatsoever. No light in that tabernacle whatsoever. Totally dark. In fact, when you read those things, it's covered with skins and badger skins and goat skins and every kind of skin, bear skins, giraffe skins, elephant skins. You can look through all kinds of material, but when you take a skin that's tanned, you can't see through it. You put that on layer and layer, and it's completely dark. That thing was a big old tent about as long as this whole building and maybe about as wide as this room. It had three compartments, and in the one compartment where you went in, it's all a picture of us ministering and building a relationship with God. It's an incredible deal.

When you look at that, you find that there was a brazen altar on the outside, a brass altar, and that's where the sacrifice, that's a picture of Christ dying. That's where the sacrifice was made. Then the priest and his sons, when they did the sacrifice, then they're ready to go in and do the work inside that tabernacle. Now, the tabernacle was a beautiful thing. It was absolutely incredible. All the furniture was gold, everything was dyed purple and scarlet. It was beautiful, but it had no floor, a dirt floor, no floor, no carpet, no shag, no hardwood. When you go through that thing, it looks like everything is thought of. I think when I was a young Christian, I remember reading all that, and I thought to myself, "God forgot the floor." He didn't forget the floor. There's gold in his furniture and all that stuff, but there's no floor. It's dirt.

That priest, either at his best bet, had open-toed sandals on, or he was barefoot. Every time he went in to do the work, he was on the altar, and they'd do the sacrifice. Every time he would go inside that tabernacle, now, in that tabernacle was a candlestick. It had seven prongs on it, because the Bible says in the book of Isaiah, there are seven spirits of God. Across from it was what they call the shewbread. Shew being an old English word means show. God had the bread on the table displayed to show something. There are 12 little cakes, numbering the nation of Israel, 12 tribes. That's pretty neat. No, wait a minute. It's better than that. There are 66 of them. Six and six, a picture of the Bible. Over here, before you went into the holy of holies, there was an altar of incense. It always was to burn, never to be out. Always incense, a picture of prayer.

Here's what happened, and this is a picture of your life and my life, and this is what I'm trying to get you to understand. I'm trying to use this basic illustration in the Old Testament. That tabernacle was there. That tabernacle was a picture of your life and my life, the way it is right now. You see, there was another compartment called the Holy of Holies. Only the high priest got to go in there. The son didn't get to go there. That's where Christ is sitting on the mercy seat. That's heaven. Right now you and I can't go there, but the high priest is up there. We'll get in later. Right now, you can't get where God's at. That inner court with a table spread and a candlestick, that pictured your life and my life and our ministry right now. It's where he went in and worked.

You had to be careful because it was completely dark. Those skins covered everything. There was absolutely no outside light. The only light in there was the light off of the seven-pronged candlestick. It was right across from the bread, a picture of the Holy Spirit of God, showing me that when the priest went in to do the work, showing me when I'm to do my work in this tabernacle that God has given us, the light that guides me has to be the light of the Holy Spirit of God.

Now that brought up some deals because that priest, you had to be careful how you did it. If you walked in front of the light, you couldn't see what you were doing. A picture of a child of God getting in front of God's Spirit of God and doing it himself. So that priest, when he worked with the loaves and the bread or whatever he did, he had to stay behind the light or to the side of the light. You know what that tells me? As a child of God, if I'm going to ever do anything for God, I'm going to have to let God shine directly on and get the honor and glory. I'm going to have to be beside the scenes or on the side. Or you'll block God's light. It's a picture. It's a picture.

Now, no floor. That priest had to go in there and do that work. Every time he came out and went back to that altar, a picture of Calvary, and he goes back in to do that work, there's a laver of water. It's got spigots on it. You know what those are for? They're to wash his feet. You know why? Because every time he's walking on that dirt going in and out, he's getting dirty. His feet are getting dirty. So therefore, he has to wash his feet by washing of the water of the Word to stay clean to do the work of the ministry inside that tabernacle. That is a picture of you and me doing the work of God. Every time we get in our Bible, we see Calvary. That reminds us before we do the work of God to stop by the laver and let the water of the Word of God wash your feet. Walking up and down in this whole world, your feet are going to get dirty.

I just gave you, whether you know it or not, I just gave you your whole life the way God wants you to do it. I said all that to say this. I told you the whole thing. I've given you the whole picture now of you being a sinner at Calvary's cross and Christ died on the cross and you get saved. You're no longer a sinner. You are now His child. As His child now, God doesn't look at you as a sinner anymore. You're now His son. The picture is the Old Testament tabernacle. You've been to the brazen altar. Now it's time for you to do a work inside that tabernacle that is in direct relationship to what's behind the veil in the Holy of Holies. That's where God is. You do that work in a dark world only lit up by the Holy Spirit of God to light your way, which is over against the Word of God.

What was that Word of God for? You know what that Word of God was for? That bread was for? It was laid out, as I said, shewbread. It showed everybody what God had provided. Then the priest ate that bread and sustained themselves off of that bread. A picture of the Word of God in our work and our ministry of what we do. We digest the Word of God and we eat the bread that God has given us.

I've given you the whole picture. I've laid the whole thing out. I've given you the whole example of how that thing fits to bring you to this point. That priest is out there. That thing was, again, it was about as long as this building. It had an outer court. It had an inner court. That's where the bread of the table is. Then it had what they call the Holy of Holies. That was a compartment or

the third compartment where the mercy seat was where the high priest went once a year and sprinkled the blood on it and made the sacrifice for the people. But the priest's sons, you and me, they did their work in that tabernacle with the bread and the candlestick and incense all the time, going off, a picture of praying without ceasing and all those things. It is a picture of what your life and my life needs to be. That is the Christian life in a nutshell. I just gave you what would have took you four years to get in a seminary someplace, gave it to you in five minutes. That's it.

But I said all that to say this. Those priest sons are out there working around that great. Sun's out, hot day. Just sun out, bright day. They're out there doing their work. It's time to go in and do the work inside that tabernacle. What do they do? They walk into a, pull that thing aside or however it went in there, and now they're absolutely, totally in a pitch black room that is only lit by seven candles. Have you ever walked in a dark room from a bright place and had this just walk in there and you even know maybe there was a few lights on, you can't see anything? You know what they had to do for a while? When they walked in from that brazen altar and the blinding sun of this world and walked into the tabernacle, the place of God, the place where ministry was, the place where they were going to do the work of God, they had to stop and they had to wait. They waited for one thing. That was their eyes to get adjusted to the light because they were coming from the brightness of the world to the illumination of the Holy Spirit of God. When you walk into a room that is totally pitch black with seven candles burning, you really can't see what's around. The longer you stand there and the longer you wait, the more your eyes get adjusted and in time, those seven candles are enough for you to see everything in that room.

Where we are at right now, most of us, you've already been to the brazen altar. When you became part of this church and where we're at, what God is going to do with us and where we're going to go and what God is going to accomplish, what God is going to do with us right now, we're going to take the first step inside that tent and we're just waiting for our eyes to get adjusted to the light. That's what I'm doing right now. You get your eyes adjusted to the light by somebody explaining the basic doctrines about going to make up the fundamental foundation of the Word of God in your young Christian life. That's what we're doing. That's what we did when we started talking about the word discipleship. That's what we're doing today when we're talking about the judgments that fit into your life, the judgment of being a sinner, the judgment of being a son. Those two are vitally important. You must understand those. You must understand those three: sinner, son, and servant. You must understand that the day Jesus Christ died on the cross, He judged every man, woman, and child as a guilty sinner, judged as a sinner. The moment you and I trust Jesus Christ as our own personal Savior, we are now His Son.

VI. Bearing Burdens and the Promises of God

I got looking at that passage today, and I was reading it this morning, and I thought, "Wow, wow." I wasn't even looking at that as being part of what I was going to say today. I was just coming through, transferring some of my notes, and looking at that, I had a couple hours this morning, and I was putting some things together in there and looking at it, and I just got caught up, because I was right in putting those notes where that priest is. Then I looked at that thing, and I thought, "Wow, wow, wow." The whole thing, not only is the tabernacle a picture that, and all

those pieces of furniture are types of what's going on in there, and that guy has to stop right there and wash his feet, and then he steps in there, and then he has to wait, because it just takes time for your eyes to adjust. It takes time for a young Christian to see the light of God, when all he's seen all their life is the light of the world.

Now, most pastors are not patient enough for that. Most pastors will tell you, "Hey, you get saved, you'll be out there tomorrow passing out tracts doing this, doing that." Let me tell you something. It takes some time. It takes some time. You have to learn how to let your eyes adjust.

I'll tell you something about the high priest, and this struck me. This is my job. I was reading down through there, and it talked about the ephod and the breastplate, and it talked about the priest, the high priest. It says that they put the names of the children of Israel upon his shoulders, and he bore that burden. I got looking at that, and I thought to myself, "Well, if that isn't the neatest thing to tie this whole thing together." There is the job of every mature Christian, and certainly a job of every pastor: put your people's names on your shoulders and bear their burdens. You know what the Bible says? You know what that translates to in the New Testament? It translates to Romans 14:1:

Romans 14:1

Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.

That's where it translates to. I got looking at that, and I thought to myself, that's simply my job. My job is to understand where my people are. My job is to understand where we're at. My job is to understand what we need, and then to lay that thing out to the point where I teach you the Bible. Sure, I could be up here with a chart across the room with a book of Revelation and showing you the Antichrist and all these things, and you would all be out there and saying, "Oh, oh, oh, that is great. That is wonderful, man." And you'd go out of here and charge down. But let me tell you, how does that help you raise that little baby of yours tomorrow? How does that help raise little Maddie? How does that help you guys raise your kids? When they come home and they struggle with something, what do you do? Just throw them a tract about the Antichrist?

Now, I'm not saying that stuff is not important, and I'm not saying we won't learn that stuff. But I've got a sneaking suspicion if you're raising little kids right now and you're living in a world they were living in, or you're thinking about having kids, I don't think that's probably the number one question you're asking today. Parents are afraid for their kids, and they should be. This world is going to gobble them up. Parents or wives are afraid for their marriages. Husbands are afraid for their marriages. I'm telling you, the world we live in is no friend to the Word of God or Christianity, but praise God I'm telling you something, that book will stick by you, and you do it right, there won't be nothing in this world.

You know what He told the nation of Israel? They could never get it. He told them in Joshua 1. They went over there, they sent the spies over in the land, and they looked at all that. You've got to remember, here again it's a picture. Those Jews, I told you, Exodus, come out of Egypt, a picture of a man getting saved, started on a journey. That journey was called the Promised Land. Everyone knew why it was called the Promised Land? Somebody said, "Well, it was the land that

God promised them." Good thinking. But there's more to it than that. It wasn't just the land that God promised them. It was also the land that God said, "I'm going to give it to you, but the only way you're going to keep it is to believe My promises."

You know what those promises were? God says this, Joshua 1, He said, "As long as you love My book and stay in My book and read My book," because they'd just been over there. While they're down in Egypt 430 years building that thing, the devil's down there, and he's got giants down there, he's got fortifications. Why some of those spies came back to Joshua, and they said, "Boy Joshua, I'll tell you, I don't know what's going to happen here. I mean, we were down there, some of them giants, we look like, we're like grasshoppers in their sight. I mean, them guys are 30 feet tall. I mean, they're weighing 5,000 pounds apiece. I mean, they've got spears, you know, as big as telephone poles." They didn't have telephone poles back then. But they get incredible. "And I don't know how we're going to do it."

You know what Joshua said? Joshua said, "You know what, that's not your worry. God told us that our worry is staying in the book, because that's the land to promise. Not only was it the land that God promised us, but it's also the land that God said, the only way to stay in it is to believe the promises that I gave you." Every time Israel stayed in the book, and loved the book, and kept the promises, nobody, nobody, nobody stood before him. When they got out of the book, didn't keep the promise, they went down in defeat.

You want the increment of success for raising your kids, or keeping your marriage, or keeping all the things right in the world we live in, it's real simple. You keep the promises of God, and nothing in this life will stop you or keep you from doing what God wants you to do. You say, "Well, I don't understand." I'm going to show you how to do it. I have got it so detailed and so planned. When we get to a point, I'm going to show you the most marvelous system for learning the principles of the Word of God. We're all going to do it together. Some of your older ones, you know what? You're going to have to do it again. It'll be fine for you, really. It'll be good for you. It'll be good for me. It'll be good for all of us.

It's one of those things where you're going to, every week, we go home. We won't be there for a little while yet, because I'm not going to be in no hurry with this. Because I know we got Thursday night to deal with a question and we work one-on-one whenever you want to, and I'll help you with that anyway. But the bottom line is Sunday morning, I want to show you how to build that relationship and I want to show you how to take that. This morning, I wanted to start with that foundation of sinner, son. We haven't got to the servant. We'll get to that probably next time. Sinner, son. Two aspects on a three aspect judgment.

When Christ died on the cross, you and I were judged as a guilty sinner. When you ask Christ to come into your heart and save you, you're now His son. Your job is to build yourself up to enter into the ministry. Picture the tabernacle. You started at the brazen altar. That's where Christ was crucified. That's where the sacrifice was burnt. You come over to the laver, you wash your feet, stay clean, and you walk in there and you wait for a few minutes for your eye, and then you do the work with the bread, the Word of God, based on the light coming from the Holy Spirit of God, the candlestick. All the time you're in there, you're smelling something. You know what

you're smelling? You're smelling the incense, a picture of prayer. You constantly pray. It's all right there. All right there.

My job is to help you. My job is to put all your names on my shoulders and bear those names. Our job as stronger Christians has been to bear the infirmities of the weak. Be there. Help you. Work through things with you. Whatever it may be. There are going to be a thousand and one oppositions come your way because the devil wants you not to get in there to do the work in the ministry. It's as simple as this. It's not hard. Just like the Bible's not hard. I'm going to show you not only the easiest way to learn the Bible, I'm going to show you the easiest way to have a relationship with God. Because it's the right way. The right way is simply through the promises of the Word of God.

Every time we get together on Sunday morning, as long as we're here, I'm going to walk you through. I'm going to mix and match it back and forth. I'm going to show you principles. Then we're going to look at concepts. Then I'm going to show you how to build this. I'm going to show you how to build that. When we're all done, you're going to have everything. Then we get to the point where you go out of here every week. Everybody together. Every week. Everybody understanding. Okay, this is the principle for this week. We build upon it that way. The only way to do it. The best way to do it. Then I'll work with you any way, one on one, however we got to do to make the thing work.

VII. Conclusion and Call to Action

First thing I want you to understand today, that there are seven judgments in the Bible. Three of them are to you. The other four deal with something else. We'll talk about them in time. I'm going to teach you all this stuff. Seven baptisms, seven man. We'll get to all that in time. But not now. Right now we need to talk about the fundamental issues of building a relationship with God. The fundamental issues of how does God see you? How does God look at you? How does God deal with you?

Let me just say this to you also. I'm talking to you people now who have people that you have brought who have gotten saved or whatever. That's why I'm saying this, there are some people that should be here today to hear this. I don't know how else to tell it to you. Young Christians sometimes need some help. They need help getting up. I don't know. They need help getting motivated. I don't know. But I'm just saying, we need to realize that the people that God has given to us, the people that are responsible for, the people that we brought that have gotten saved, and they want to build that relationship. Right now is the most crucial time in their life. They are the most fragile right now.

I would daresay and say, I'm just going to make this statement. I would daresay and say that they're probably not here today, not because they didn't want to be or wouldn't be. Because they're probably not here today because they're too young in their Christian walk and they just got snarled up with something else. All it would take would be somebody saying, "Hey look, let me help you with this. This is where you've got to get. Listen to this tape, man. This is what you need." Now I'll do whatever we got to do. "You need to be there. You need to hear this." That's

how it's done. That's the way it works. That is you and me putting the names on our shoulders and bearing their burdens for them. That's what it needs to be. That's how it works.

I'm just telling you, I just want you to have everything that God wants. I want your family to be the best it can be for you. I want your kids to be the best it can be. I want your kids to grow up loving God the way you do. I want everything for you that God has for you and I'm showing you the way to get there. So today, two judgments to you. There's one more we're going to get into next week. Sinner, son, and servant. You think about it. You pray about it. If you have questions Thursday night, oh Thursday night, you're going to love what I have for you Thursday night.

I'm just going to say this and I'm not going to say anymore. I know some of you can't be there Thursday night and I'm not saying this because I will take care of you. You know I always will and I'll get the stuff to you too if you want it. No problem because I know that some of you work and can't get here. But the bottom line is that I'm going to tell you something. You may think I'm a liar and I never lie unless I know I can get away with it. But I'm telling you, I'm going to give you something that would, if you just sat down with your Bible and tried to put it together, it would take you at least a year to do. I'm going to save you a year of understanding. Remember that picture puzzle I told you about this morning? I'm going to give you the picture. I'm going to give it to you in such a way that it's going to save you a year of your life. We're going to accelerate you that much. Now then we'll have to go to work with it, but I want to tell you something. I'm going to be your best friend Thursday night. You're going to love me. I'm going to bring my pickup truck so the flowers can be put in the back so we don't get them in the back of the car. It's going to be fun. Bring somebody with you.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you and praise you for the Lord Jesus. We love you so much. Thank you for today. We pray now, Father, that you'll continue to bless us in all that we do and we love you. I just ask you, Father, to be with us today. Lead us and guide us in all that we do. We love these people, Lord. It is such a privilege to bear their names on my shoulders. God, they're just good people. I thank you so much for putting this together. Lord, I thank you and praise you for all that you do.

Every head bowed, every eye closed. I'm going to be finished just a moment. Let me ask you a question. Is there somebody here today with every head bowed and every eye closed that you say, "Bob, if I were to die right now, I don't know for sure I'd go to heaven." And God spoke to my heart today. "I don't know right now that if I die, that I'd go to heaven." And God just spoke to me. I want to pray for you. I want to embarrass you. If you make any decision at all, be on your own. Everybody's head's bowed. But is there anybody here, young man, young woman, that would just say, "Bob, here's my hand. I'm not sure if I'd die right now. I'd go to heaven." Anybody? Anybody at all? We're just going to wait for a moment. Maybe everybody's saved. I don't know. Anybody?

Father, we do thank you and praise you for your love. Thank you for all you do. Lord, we ask you now to dismiss us with our blessing. Give us a good day. Let us think about the things of God and the Word of God. Lord, we look forward to the opportunities of service this week to be

faithful in serving for you in this old tabernacle. We'll thank you and praise you in Jesus' name.
For a sake, we ask it. Amen. God bless you.