

Job 26

Sunday 11/23/2003

SEC: The Christian's Relationship with God and Society's Ignorance

As you are well aware, we have been in the middle of a study on how to build a relationship with the Lord. This is so important as a Christian, and God has given us so many young Christians in the last couple of months who just really want to build a foundation in their life. We have talked about those areas and will continue to talk about them, but we have been defining some things. Obviously, there are things in the Bible that you need to know to build a relationship with God, and I guess the most important teaching in the Bible would be the Judgment Seat of Christ.

It is so important that we, as God's people, understand how God sees us. I think so many times we operate under the false idea of how God looks at us, and you would be surprised at the people I talk to in life who alter their whole life based on how they view God viewing them. There are people who actually live in terror because they think that because they maybe did something wrong or because they have had a bad past, God is just looking for the opportunity to do something terrible to them. Of course, that is not true. We have tried to show you from the Bible how you build a relationship with God and tried to show you how God does look at you.

Now, that does not mean that as a believer there is not going to be any accountability for the way we live our lives, because the Bible teaches that every born-again child of God someday is going to stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ. We are going to give an account. God has a plan. God saved us for a purpose and for a reason and gave us the Word of God so we could find out that plan to understand what God wanted us to accomplish. Then there is going to be a day when Christ comes back that He is going to hold us accountable to the Word of God for what He did. It is an incredible thing.

We talked about the book of Ecclesiastes the other night, and I thought to myself, "What a book for the day and age that we live in." I told you how people today just do not have an understanding of God. There is no knowledge of God today. I was watching the news this week and all the different things that were taking place and transpiring, and the big issue, as I said Thursday night, over the Ten Commandments down in Alabama, and all of that. People were just unbelievably ignorant of the fact of who God is. We talk about God all the time. We talk about God as far as the concept of God, but we put God now on the same level as all the other gods out there. The issue came up and it struck me; it was very obvious that this country, and if not the whole world, has just lost sight of the power of God. Isaiah 45 through Isaiah 50 are just some of the greatest chapters that talk about there being no other gods besides the Lord.

I was sitting there and watching it this week, and a verse came to mind. I told you Thursday night that the five books in the Bible that are called the wisdom books—Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Psalms, the Song of Solomon—within those books lies everything that is the foundation. I was watching this argument going on about religion, God, man's rights, and all this stuff, and people were acting like, honest to goodness, they were acting like they were in charge of everything and that God was just some obscure concept out there.

SEC: The Ant Farm Analogy: God's Ownership and Man's Delusion

Then a verse came into my mind; it is in Proverbs, and it just flew in, and it was in Psalms, and the wisest man that ever lived said this: "Consider the ant." I thought of that, and I thought to myself, "That is an incredible thing." The wisest man that ever lived said one of the wisest things at that point, and yet when you look at that and we think, "What is so wise about that?"

Do you ever go out in your yard and watch the ants? I went one step farther than that when I was a kid. I owned a legitimate ant farm. My goal was to have an ant circus at one time and make millions of dollars, but they all died. Believe it or not, years ago you could buy ant farms. You could send away to Edmund Scientific catalog and those places, and you would get a glass thing about that big and about that wide, and you would put dirt in it and you would put ants in it. The ants burrowed, and you could actually—it was glass on both sides—see all the runways and all the little things down through there. It was for kids. I was a kid, and my uncle or my aunt, somebody, gave me an ant farm, and I had it for a long time. I cannot remember if the ants came with it or you had to supply your own. It was maybe dry ants, and you had to add water. I do not remember how it was, but anyway, there it was, and I had that for years.

After I was saved and I read that thing in Proverbs, it all came together because I used to, as a kid, go out in my yard and watch those ants. You realize that ants have somebody who is in charge. They are a little society. They have a queen. She has attendants. It is a little society. They have worker ants. They have warrior ants. You know, ants come in all different kinds of sizes. You know, ants are different colors. The ant society is much like our society. You have big ants, small ants. You have red ants. You have black ants. You have white ants. I never looked that close, but I guess you have good-looking ants and ugly ants. I do not know, but Solomon said, "Consider the ant."

Proverbs 6:6-8

> 6 *Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:*

> 7 *Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler,*

> 8 *Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.*

He talks about the ants. I was struck this week with all this that goes on because, you know what? Those ants get into your yard and they build their kingdoms. They build them up and they build them down under the ground, and those ants live in your yard, and they are oblivious to who you are. You know what? You go out and you see the little ant things and you stamp them all down, and you feel good about yourself because you just wiped the thing out. You come back the next day, they have it built again.

My ant farm, I mean, I sat there and I watched that thing, and those ants, I would watch them as a kid. I even got a magnifying glass, and I would watch what they were doing, all those things. Never one time did I ever catch an ant looking back at me. He was oblivious to the fact that they were in an ant farm. As far as they knew, that was their world, and they were in charge of that world. In my yard, they have no idea. If you could get them to pay rent, we would be rich, but

you cannot. You know why? Because they are oblivious to that. They think that what they are doing is the only thing that they are doing, and that is their little world and their little kingdom.

My little ant farm, as a kid growing up, they did not care who I was, and one day I tired of the ant farm. So I went in and I just picked—I was getting older then, and getting interested in girls; the ants did not interest me anymore. I was about 15 or 16, 17 years old, and I just took that whole ant thing. My mother said, "Get rid of that. We do not want it around here." The ants had gotten out of the top of it a few times; that was not a good deal either. So I just took that whole ant farm and just took it out and threw it in the trash. And those ants were dead. The fact that they were living in there and they had their own kingdom and they had their own world and they were doing their own thing made nothing to do with me. You know why? Because the bottom line was, I owned the ant farm. Being an owner of the ant farm, I did with the ant farm what I wanted to do.

I go out in my yard, I stomp those little things down all over the place. I hate to confess this to you because it is kind of silly, but sometimes I pretend I am a bomber pilot flying over my backyard. I do this a lot at night because the neighbors do not want to see it, and I put my arms out, and I am swooping over that thing like a B-1 bomber. I am looking, first I survey it, and I look at all these little—I have a lot of ant kingdoms in my yard. They build little castles, and they are really neat, they are intricate, boy. I fly over those things and I look at them, and I swoop back and I come into my run, and I stomp them down like I am just bombing the whole thing to pieces. The next day they build it up again. I tear it down again. One of these days I am going to get a bulldozer and do the whole thing out of the backyard.

But the bottom line is, they are oblivious to me. They do not understand that that yard that they are living in was bought and paid for by me. We bought that lot twenty-some years ago. A long time ago, we bought that lot; that is my lot. But they are living on it like they think it is theirs. That ant farm was mine, but those little ants thought that that was theirs. I learned this great truth when Solomon said, "Consider the ant." You know what? We are like a bunch of ants. We think we own this thing down here. We are living our lives like it is our ant farm. We are living our lives like this old earth down here and everything on it belongs to man, and God does not figure. I have news for you. He bought the field. He created this world. He made this world, and it is His.

The fact that man loses sight of that and suddenly puffs himself up and blows himself to the place in his ego that he thinks he is in charge, that he is really in charge of his own destiny and he is plotting the course of mankind. I have news for you. There is coming a day when the owner of this ant farm is going to walk in and say, "I am tired of it." The Bible says the elements are going to melt with a fervent heat, and God is going to build a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

SEC: The Provability of God and Man's Accountability

Now, the wisest man that ever lived saw that. When I see all that stuff out there and I see men, human beings, acting like they are God, thinking that God is dead, thinking that God is not interested, thinking that God is some obscure concept somewhere that is a crutch for a man to lay

on, and yet the whole concept of God—somebody said to me one time, "Could you prove, can you prove there is a God? You show me a God and prove to me a God, and I will believe it." I can prove to you there is a God, no question about it. I can prove to you to such a certain degree that you will have to walk away with one of two things. You have to walk away saying, "I believe in God, he was right," or you will walk away and say, "I do not want to accept what he said, and I do not believe." You can prove it.

Everybody says, "Well, you have got to trust Him by faith. You just have got to believe in God by faith. That is what you are going to have to do. You are going to have to just believe in God by faith." I can prove to you there is a God, no question about it. I can prove to you. Jesus Christ Himself said, "Hey," He said, "I can prove to you who I am. I can prove to you who I am." So it is one of those things where when I look at my life as a Christian, I know this. I know if an unsaved man is going to give an account to God on this old ant farm, and God is going to come down and just wipe this thing out, and man is oblivious to it, and man thinks he is in charge, and he is in charge of his own destiny, and he is down here to make all this money, to live all this good life, to have all this fun, and then, you know, maybe when you are dead, everybody has got their own idea of what happens when you die. The Bible has got its own idea too, and it is the right idea.

But the bottom line is this: one of these days God is going to come down and He is going to hold mankind accountable. The Bible says God judges unsaved men. The Bible says God judges nations. The Bible says, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." God judges nations just like He judges individuals, unsaved men and women. If God judges nations and God is going to judge the world someday, I can promise you that God is going to judge His people because God put us down here as part of that plan. Your job is figuring out the ant farm concept. That is just a little thing, but boy, I tell you what, Solomon spent a lot of time studying ants, and he realized the fact that, you know what, this is God's world, it is not mine, because it is easy to believe that.

The more educated you get, the smarter our culture becomes, the more nice things we have and the flashy things, and the more man is in charge of all of it, the more he elevates himself to the place where he thinks he is God. Pretty soon he puts the concept of God aside. God is an abstract now. God is not reality. God is an abstract, and now I am in charge, and I am God. Hey, hey, hey, hey, you better go back to see who bought the ant farm. Just as I walked in that room and took mine and threw it away, one of these days God is going to come back and wipe this thing out, and God is going to set up His own kingdom.

SEC: The Six Questions of Job 26: Understanding God's Expectations

Now, with all that being said, I am telling you, the thing that bothers me about the Bible, and I told you this last week, is the questions that God asks. I told you, you go through that Bible, you find that God asks some questions. He said, "I know it is of a truth, but how should man be just with God?" Man says, "I am going to be just with God. I am going to be just with God. I can be just with God." He says, "How are you going to contend with God?" He says, "You cannot

answer one question in a thousand that God would ask." Yet when I come through that Bible, I find a lot of questions.

I told you last week, the first question the devil asked in the Bible is, "Did God really mean what He said?"

Genesis 3:1

> Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

The first question God asked in the Bible is, "Hey, Adam, where are you?"

Genesis 3:9

> And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

Those are the two questions that have permeated mankind's existence all down through history. The devil wants to put a question mark behind everything that God says and God does. In the years that we live in now, in the 21st century and the 20th century, we really doubt that God meant what He said. That is not original; that was the devil's plan in the beginning. The first thing he said to the first man and woman on this planet is the thing that he says to every man and woman today: "Did God really mean what He said? Is there really a God? Is God really real? Can you really trust the Bible?"

Is it with all that you have got, and all modern science, and all psychology and psychiatry, and all the strides in medicine and science, is God really relevant today? That is the question. You see, God showed up to Adam and Eve back there, and God told Adam and Eve some specific things, and then God went on about His business. While He was gone, the devil showed up, and the devil came in, and he so doubted what God said. God told Adam and Eve how to get along in life, and if they did what He said, everything would be just fine. You know what the Bible says? The Bible is the book that tells you how to get along in life, and if you do, everything will be fine.

You know what? The devil comes in, and then he comes in and says, "Did God really mean that? I mean, does God really, does God really, does God really care for you?" Every time a little baby dies or some tragic illness or death, the devil steps in and says, "Is that a loving God?" Every time some great tragedy happens, the devil comes in through the news media or somebody and says, "Where is God in all of this? Does God really care?" The dumb, stupid people of this planet, because they have no concept of God, they have no knowledge of God, they have no understanding of God, they fall right into the trap, and they think that they are running every day.

God's people fall into the same trap. Oh, you may be saved and on your way to heaven. I may be saved and on my way to heaven, but let us face it. God's people are afflicted by the same things that afflict the world. Do not think for a minute that God's people do not get lost in the shuffle of all that is going on and come out not having a working relationship with God either.

The thing that I want to talk to you about that we started last week is found in Job 26. I told you there were six questions here, and you saw it last week when we talked about the first two, and I stated it to you before we ever talked about it, but if you were here last week, you are aware now that the only ones that can answer these questions are saved people. These—I mean, in the Bible there are questions—I will show you some questions for lawyers, I will show you some questions for doctors, I will show you some questions for scientists, I will show you some questions for atheists, I will show you some questions that God is going to ask you.

You know, the Great White Throne Judgment is going to be like a court trial, do you know that? You realize that if you study the Bible, you realize that you, as an unsaved man—not you because most of you are saved or all of you are saved—but you realize that an unsaved man or woman is going to stand there, and they are going to have a chance to defend themselves. It is not a thing where God is just going to come and drag somebody and throw them in hell. No, no, as the old expression goes, "You will have your day in court." You will be able to stand there and try to give a defense of your righteousness against God's righteousness. Because in essence, what a man or a woman is saying is, "I do not need the death on the cross, I do not need God, I do not need those things, my good works, my righteousness is as good as God's righteousness." You will have your chance to stand there before God and the assembled universe to show everybody how much you know about the subject. At your right hand will be the prosecuting attorney. Now, the prosecuting attorney, this one in this case, will know everything about you. It will be the devil himself, because he has one plan and purpose in life, and it is to get you to do for him everything that you can do, and then he is going to damn your soul to hell and get you in hell. He knows more about you than anything in the whole world, anybody in the whole wide world, and he will stand there, and everything you say to answer God to the questions that God is going to ask you, and you try to open your mouth, he is going to knock you down because he is going to know what really was in your heart. Oh, it is going to be a tragic time. It is going to be a terrible thing.

I look at that and I think of all the people that lived down through time, and that thing could last a million years because you are going to have a chance to stand there before God as an unsaved man, an unsaved woman, and plead your case. You do not like God now, you do not like the Bible now, you think religion is stupid, you think that Christianity is for old folks and kids, fine. You will have your day to stand there and show the assembled universe how tough you really are. It is not a matter of whether you will or whether you will not, it is just a matter of when it will happen, because there are questions in this Bible, and I know enough about the Bible to know that this is God's book, and God never does anything in this book without a reason. When God asks questions, God is going to ask them to somebody. Now, for you and for me as believers, someday God is going to ask us questions. God saved you, God called you, God told you to study the ants, figure it out, find out what is going on in life, realize what is happening because someday you are going to give an account.

God has a plan for everybody in this room if you are saved. God has something that He wants you to accomplish, He wants to put people in your life. It does not matter what circumstances you are in—good marriage, bad marriage, no marriage, whatever. God says, "If you want to do

what is right, I will take you where you are at, and we will accomplish something." Maybe all you will ever get done in life is to raise your kids the way God wants you to raise them and train them up, get them saved, and have them do what is right. That is a major accomplishment in America today. The Bible says, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the coming of the Son of Man." When I look back there, Noah preached for 120 years, and the only ones that I find God saved was his family. I am not too sure about one of them.

Last week we began to talk about, we have been talking about six questions. We talked about two of them.

1. The first one was, "How hast thou helped him that is without power?"

We talked about the fact that someday God is going to ask me the question of what I did after I was saved to help people who have no power. That is an unsaved man or an unsaved woman. We went through that last week. The ability to help people that have no power—an unsaved man or an unsaved woman is powerless to do anything in this world to overcome the circumstances that they have. You say, "Well, I know somebody that overcame." Well, the bottom line is that I am talking about death. It makes no difference that a man rises out of the slums of New York, becomes a multi-millionaire, and does all kinds of good if he dies and goes to hell at the end of his life. I am talking about overcoming the ultimate, the thing that every man and woman really wants to overcome. The reason why our society spends millions and millions of dollars every year for scientific strides to try to cure cancer, try to do this. My goodness, folks, you realize right now as we speak, there are men and women that wanted to live so bad and have so much money that after they died, they had themselves put in big steel containers filled with dry ice, and they are now cooling off someplace about 400 degrees below zero, thinking that someday when medical science or medical stride comes along the line someplace and has a cure for that, they can be resurrected back to life. Now, what is wrong with that? Where is that coming from? People want to live forever. I know you want to live forever because of the way you live right now. Oh, you find some people that are disjointed with life, but our bottom line, you find people that commit suicide, sure you do, but that is because they have come to a point in their life where they do not see any way out. The average person in this life wants to live forever. I mean, there are men that have millions and millions of dollars, and they get some terminal disease, and they will spend every dime that they can, every dime. Why? Because they want to stay alive. The bottom line is that man wants to overcome the one thing that man will never overcome, and that is death, because the only way you can overcome death is to hook up with the one who did, and that is Christ, because He died, was buried, rose again the third day. If you can put your faith and trust in Him, you never have to worry about dying in the sense of the Bible dying. I say man has no power.

2. Then the second question was, "How savest thou him that hath no strength?"

Once a person gets saved, he is now part of the body. He is part of the body, but he has no strength. We talked about how that when a man gets saved, he has power, but he has no strength. We talked about how you transfer power into strength by exercising your senses in the Word of God. We talked about that last week.

SEC: Question 3: How Hast Thou Counseled Him That Hath No Wisdom?

Now the third question we want to get into today, and we are going to finish this up today, and this will be our—I hope we do—and this will be our last study on the Judgment Seat of Christ. We are going to move on to another subject next week. But the third question that is here is simply this: "How hast thou counseled him that hath no wisdom?"

There are people out there that get themselves into some real messes. We look at the word "counsel," we think of "counselor," and we think of a specific group of people within our culture. We think of, in the afternoon, my wife likes to watch Dr. Phil. I like some of the things that he does. I always give her a tough time about it, but he has some good things to say. In the Christian world, we like Dr. Dobson, Dr. Gothard, Dr. Naramore, Dr. Falwell. If you are unsaved, you like Dr. Brothers. Everybody has people that they listen to to get life straightened out. So we think of the word "counselor." We think of the word "counselor" in a specific setting, that if somebody has to go and spend years and years and years learning all of the psychology traits and the therapy traits and all of the different types of counseling, and the aesthetic and all this stuff—we do not have time to get into this point—and finally then you are some kind of counselor.

Or on the other hand, we think of somebody in the Christian world, somebody who uses the Bible, knows the Bible, and they are specifically—I mean, you could go down through the thing and you will find counseling services that specify Christian counseling. You will find other places that are state certified, state certified counselor. You can find it all you want. That is not the Bible's definition. Let me tell you something. Counseling from the Bible's definition is just telling somebody what they need to do based on the Bible. Now, I know we make a lot of that, and obviously, the more you know about the Bible, the more depth you can go in dealing with people.

For years, I have put people that come in to see me with problems into three categories. I always put them in:

- 1.) Band-Aids and Mercurochrome
- 2.) Heart attacks and broken legs and appendectomies
- 3.) Heart transplants and brain surgery

The first group is just this group that just maybe has some social malfunctions that you can work with very easily. The second group has a little more serious problem. You have to spend some more time and get a little deeper and deal with some things. The third one, man, I mean they are very tedious. They take a long time. They are very deep. But I found that no matter whether it is on one end or the other end, I found that simply counseling is simply this. I tell everybody this. Some of you have heard this before. But if you do not get anything else of what I—you know, every time I preach, I always tell you there is one thing you want to get. There is a design behind that. I do not care if you hear anything else I say. I mean, I hope you do. No, I hope you do not so you buy the tape. Because then when you are done with it, you give it to somebody else. And you do not have the courage to throw it away. They probably do.

Anyway, I used to tell people that people come in, and they come in with marital problems or they come in with personal problems. I would tell them, I would listen to them. You have got to

let people talk. Let them get it out of the system. Because everybody feels better when they are sick after you throw up. No, I am serious. That is true. When you are sick and you do not feel good and you are really feeling bad, when you know when you go and you have a bad stomach, you know when you throw up you feel better for a while. You get it out of your system. Well, in dealing with emotional, spiritual problems, it is the same thing. Only the throwing up is verbalizing what you are feeling. In one case, it is verbalizing the spoiled sausage you ate last night, and the other one is verbalizing what you are feeling inside your emotions. So I let them talk for a while, and then I say this. Because here is the crux of counseling. I am going to give you your degree in counseling. You can pick it up on your way out this morning, and you will be certified. But here it is. You have heard, some of you have heard this before. I always tell this.

You know what? Now I have listened to him for 40 minutes now. I listen to him. I listen to her. Or if it is just one, I listen to them. They told me all about the circumstances. They told me all about this. Sometimes, you know, there were two of them in there, and they were really going at it. I stopped them for a minute, went to the next room, and put on a striped shirt with a whistle and came back in and refereed. Sometimes it was very violent. Sometimes it was very violent words. Sometimes it was just very hard. They struggled through what they were struggling with. When they were all done, I looked around my office, and I mean there were chunks of stuff lying everywhere. I simply would say there. I would tell them a story. I would say, "You know what? This is like one of those things where the guy just, it seems like, you know, where the guy is telling all these things, and then you say, 'You know what? I have some really good news.' He says, 'You have an answer to my problem?' 'No, I just saved a lot of money on my car insurance.'" That is the way this thing kind of starts out. But it does not end that way.

SEC: The Bible as Man's Owner's Manual

I would say, "Last week I came home from work, and my wife told me that the refrigerator was on the blink. It was not keeping stuff cold. She said, 'We are going to get a new refrigerator.' Well, the refrigerator is \$500. We are going to get a refrigerator. Being the handyman that I am, I can fix that refrigerator. In fact, when we bought that refrigerator, it came with a manual that had all the troubleshooting spots and even had an 800 number that you could call if it was not working right, and they would walk you through it. I said, 'I can fix this. I know I can. We are not going to spend \$500 for the refrigerator until I get in there and see it because I am pretty mechanically inclined.' So I went through the thing there, and I said, 'Honey,' and she said, 'Well, all those books are in this drawer over here.' I went over to the drawer, started on there, you know, television, microwave, television, microwave. This one over here, stereo set. This one over here, here is the car stuff over here. This one, we have not had this for two years. Finally, I went through there, 'Honey, I do not see it in here.' 'It has got to be in there. That is the only place it would be.' When my wife says that, do not ask any more questions. It is in there. She cannot find it.

"So then I come to the point where I say, 'You know what? I do not know where that thing is, but you know what? Here is the handbook to my microwave oven. I am going to fix my refrigerator based on the handbook to the microwave oven.'" Now, before we go any farther, you know that is absolutely ridiculously stupid. You know why? Because it is two different designs involved. First

of all, the microwave was not designed by the same company that made a refrigerator. The electrical schismatic is not the same. Nothing about it is the same. My refrigerator is real big and real wide. My microwave is real small and real short. You put things in the refrigerator to keep them cold. Now, this is deep. You put things in the microwave to make them hot. Write that down. You do not want to lose that thought. But here I am, Bob Alexander, determined to fix his broken refrigerator with the handbook from his microwave. Needless to say, the odds of me doing that are astronomical. In fact, it will not happen. In fact, that is probably the stupidest thing. The Geico illustration was much more prevalent than what I just told you because it will not happen.

I tell him this. Then I say this: "Now, here is your problem after I just told him this story. Man is made by God. He is made of the elements in the ground. He is like my refrigerator. My refrigerator is a Maytag. You are a carbon 14 unit. You are made of the basic elements of the ground. God made man, and God gave the handbook by which man was to operate by. Not only is it the handbook that God was made to operate by, but it is the handbook that tells you how to fix what is wrong with man when the lights go out, when you go on the blink."

How stupid is it for me to think that I can fix my refrigerator with a handbook from the microwave? It is just as stupid that you think you can fix something that God designed by a standard that man designed. You cannot. You cannot. There is only one thing that will fix man. That is the owner's manual that came with man. That God tells you how you work, how you operate, and how to fix what is wrong with you. He said the Word of God is good for what? It is profitable for what?

2 Timothy 3:16

> All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

What is the first one?

> Doctrine. To tell you what is right.

What is the second one?

> Reproof. To tell you what is wrong.

What is the third one?

> Correction. To tell you how to fix it.

What is the last one?

> Instruction in righteousness. To tell you how to keep it fixed.

The owner's manual. So when I start to deal with somebody, I do not care if they are saved or not. It is the same issue. The faces are changed. One is saved, one is lost. But here is the problem. If you are an unsaved man, you have tried to live your life, or an unsaved woman, you have tried to live your life outside the guidelines by which God told you to run it. Therefore, consequently now, you are on the blink. You are trying to paddle upstream. God put life, put man down here, and God said—I do not know how many thousands of times He said that to the nation of Israel—"If you do what is right and you keep My Word, you are not going to have any

problems in life at all. If you do not, my, my, my, Katie bar the door, you are going to have some problems."

So an unsaved man, he comes, he gets into life. He gets confronted with God, whether going to church or his parents or whatever. He says, "I am going to do my own thing. I have the answers. I do not need God. I do not need the Bible." After 20, 30 years, as Dr. Phil would say, "How is that going for you? How is that working for you?" "Well, I have been divorced six times. I am depressed. I am on drugs. I have lost I do not know how many jobs. I am not happy. I go buy new boats. I go to my new cars, and nothing satisfies. My wife does not please me anymore. She only nitpicks. I do not have any joys in life. I do not understand, doctor, what is the matter?" Your refrigerator is on the blink, and you cannot fix it by going with the microwave.

SEC: The Clogging of the Soul: Sin's Impact on the Christian Life

Now I get a saved person. He comes in and he says, "Well, I am just all miserable." He says, "I am not," I said, "I have all kinds of problems. What do I do? How do I counsel him?" I counsel him this way: "You know what? You are a child of God. For you, other than the unsaved man, you have the Holy Spirit of God living inside you. When you do something wrong, the Bible says it grieves Him. When it grieves Him, it comes to the point where He cannot, He cannot, He cannot function. It is like stopping up your sink. Your sink is designed to flow. You wash the dishes. It flows. You put the things in, the water goes down. You may hold water in it for a while where you are washing the dishes and doing something here. But when you are done, you pull out the plug, and there is a hole there called the drain, and the water flows."

Now what happens in our house anyhow, when my wife throws stuff away that she needs, she lets it go down the sink. I let it go down the sink, not her. I eat a bowl of Cheerios. You never get them all. But I am too busy to walk over to the thing and just dump it all out. No, it has got milk in it, but it has got six or seven Cheerios. Just put it down the drain. We do not have a garbage disposal, or we do, maybe it is broke. I do not know, but we do not have one. So you just keep dumping that stuff down there, dumping that stuff down there. It is just a few things. I mean, four or five Cheerios here, but you know what? You have four or five Cheerios, you eat Cheerios every day, but at the end of the week, you have got 20 or something Cheerios down your drain. Then you know, you go to the place when you eat spaghetti. You know what? Unless you are using your tongue licking the plate, there is always spaghetti left on the plate. Now, what do you do? My wife says, "Honey, what does it take for you to walk over and just scrape the plate off?" "Darling, you do not understand. I am ministering to people. I do not have time to scrape that plate. I am about God's business this day." So what do you do? You scrape it down in the sink, and now the spaghetti goes down. Then you come to the place where you eat something else, chili, another one, and you take it over there. Pretty soon you have got a week's worth of Cheerios. You have got kidney beans. You have got spaghetti fragments. You have got down there, and you just wash them down the sink. You know what happens one day when you turn the water on? Water does not go down. You put all that garbage down your sink, and now the water cannot flow.

I am telling you as a Christian, when you start putting all the garbage into yourself, water, typical of the Holy Spirit of God, water, typical of the Word of God, cannot flow. It cannot flow. It cannot flow. So what do you do? You look up Old Paths Baptist Church in your phone book and it says, "Oh yeah, Bob the Roto-Rooter Man. He will clean my pipes out." You know what you do? You get into the Word of God. Where an unsaved man, I counsel him to get saved and start living his life with God. For a saved man, I tell him to confess his sin, get out of his sin, and start doing what is right with God. In both cases, the answer is the same. You just have to apply them differently because an unsaved man has no power. He cannot overcome it. He needs to get saved. A saved man has the power within him, but he needs to realize that in both cases, he is a unit made by God that God gave the owner's manual for, and trying to live your life by another set of standards will not work. It may work for—you say, "It has worked for me for 20 years." Yeah, I got away a week and a half one time before my drain blocked up. I thought I was getting away with it, but you know what I was? I was just making it worse. Boy, when a plumber finally came, there was a price to pay because plumbers are not cheap. He said, "I had so much stuff in my pipes, I was blocking the neighbors."

Now why, this is where the devil gets into it. Why in designing houses that the pipes coming out of your sink come down, up and down? To me, that is a trap of plumbers. That is how plumbers make their money. Somewhere in this government, there is a conspiracy that says, "When you build a house, plumbers need to work. Therefore, fix those pipes so that it will catch everything because they have to work." I am telling you, it is the same thing in your life and my life. You cannot just put something in your life that is not right with God to get away with it. You either confess it, and God forgives you and God cleanses you, or the bottom line is it builds up, and very shortly it is going to cost you more than it would have cost you if you would just get right with God. You know what? That plumber cost me \$500. \$500 because Bob Alexander was too busy ministering to walk over and scrape the plate and scrape it down the sink. The bottom line is what goes in, clogs. That thing was not designed for anything but water to go down. Your soul is not designed for anything but water to go down. When you put the junk and the garbage of this world, it is going to block your pipes. Counsel. "How hast thou counseled him that has no wisdom?"

SEC: The Wise Man Versus the Foolish Man

You know, there are two men in the Bible. I do not know if you know that or not. There are two men in the Bible, and they are all the way through the Bible. They do not have names, but they do. But they do not. It is one of those weird things. In the Bible, you come in through the book of Proverbs and the book of Psalms and the book of Ecclesiastes, you find this man defined, but they do not have any names. Then when you come through all the rest of the Bible, you do not find them defined, but you find them with their names. You know what it is? It is real simple. It is a wise man and a foolish man.

Now in Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, you find out what makes one wise and one that is foolish. The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." The wise man says there is. The wise man builds his house upon a rock. The fool builds it upon sand. The wise man takes oil in his lamp. The foolish one does not. The wise man follows what the Word of God says and is blessed. The

foolish man does his own thing and is unblest. You find the cause and effect in those wisdom books about those wise men and those foolish men. Then going through the Bible, you find names put to their foolishness. Jacob and Esau, Cain and Abel. The list is David and Saul. The list is endless. It goes on and on and on. You find what makes a wise man and what makes a foolish man.

The Bible says in Proverbs 11:14:

Proverbs 11:14

> Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.

As I said when we started this lesson today, to the average Christian, to the person in the world, when it says, "Where there is no counsel, the people fall. But in the multitude of counselors, there is safety." Let us talk about in the Christian world. It always struck me, being years and years and years dealing with people, almost 35 years now. It always struck me that when they read that verse, they always thought of Christian counselors. Every 20 years, 15 years in the Christian world, the counselors change. They make millions and millions of dollars off writing books on how to solve your problems. They have seminars that you go to, how to learn to live victorious Christian lives. They talk about all that, and I do not know how many times I have heard somebody get up before they introduce that speaker or that seminar and say, "The Bible says, 'Where no counsel is, the people fall. But in the multitude of counselors, there is safety.' And we are so blessed today to have Dr. Fine, Dr. Howard to be here to tell us how we are to live victorious Christian lives."

I never saw it that way. I guess I am just too narrow-minded or too biblically focused. I do not know. I always looked at that verse when it says, "Where no counsel is, the people fall. But in the multitude of counselors, there is safety." I always looked at that as Dr. Proverbs, Dr. Ecclesiastes, and Dr. Psalms, and Dr. Solomon and Dr. Isaiah. Because within that multitude of counselors, there is safety. Why is it that when God's people get into a problem, the first place they go is to somebody else, and the second place they go, or maybe even sometimes the third, and maybe they never even get there, is the Bible that God gave them? Why is that? Why do we put so much confidence as human beings, Christian people, in what man says over what God says? I mean, why is that?

Now, I know there are times in your life and you need wisdom. I do not have a problem with that. That is why God gave you a pastor. But I have never found anything that anybody ever got into in their life that I dealt with—and I dealt with some pretty hairy things—I never found anything in my life that somebody got into, no matter what it was, that the answer was not pretty simple: just get into the Word of God. When you looked at counseling the way that the Bible lays out counseling, counseling is simply telling an unsaved man he needs to get saved, and telling a saved person he needs to start living by the principles of the Word of God. That is all.

SEC: The Binding, Blinding, and Grinding Nature of Sin

Now, I am not saying that there are not some technical things and some hard things. Because as the Bible says, again in the book of Proverbs, "A threefold cord is not easily broken." You take a

little piece of thread, and that thing is just a piece of cotton thread, and you take that thing down and you can just snap that. You can put it around your finger, you can snap it. Put it around twice if you are really strong, you can snap it. Well, there are guys who can tear phone books in half. Well, they take that thing and wrap it around four or five times, snap it. You know what? You wrap that same little piece of cotton thread around your finger 500 times, and you will die trying to break it. You know why? Because just like sin, yeah, you may do it once and laugh and get away with it. You may do it four or five times and think it is funny and get away with it and not have a real effect on it. You may do it 100 times, but you give it 20, 30, 40 years of doing it. One of these days you are going to wake up and say, "Well, I am going to break off this thing that I have been doing now," and you are going to find out how you are shackled to it.

I told you before, Samson is a great story. I told you this the other day: when you look at his life, he is a perfect picture of a child of God who disobeyed God all over his life. When you look at that thing, it is incredible. When you look at that thing, you see the process of his life and the sin of his life that he is out there doing what he wants to do, and he has no idea that while he is doing it, his sin is binding him. Then he is out there doing what he wants to do. He finally was playing games with everybody. He probably played games with the wrong gal, Fatal Attraction Part 2, Delilah. Samson, he did not understand that his sin put him in a bind. His sin bound him. Delilah showed him that his sin blinded him, and the Philistines took him one step farther and showed me how sin grinds you. Yeah, it does. It blinds you. It binds you, and it grinds you. The problem is you are 50, 60 years old by the time you get to that point, and it is too late.

I told you this on a Thursday night a couple of weeks ago. Three people in the New Testament that get saved. What a story. What a principle. It is found in the book of Proverbs, found in the book of Ecclesiastes. Wise man to foolish man. That is why the Bible says:

2 Corinthians 6:2

> (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)

Proverbs 27:1

> Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

Today. Why? There is a little girl back here. She is 12 years old, and she is dead. In the Bible, dead is a picture of lost people. I have given you this before, but I am going to say it again because not everybody was there, and we need to hear it again because I am trying to show you that in the Bible all the principles line up, and this is the book, the fixed carbon 14 unit that you are.

Little girl down there, 12 years old. She is dead. Picture of an unsaved person. Jesus comes up, brings her back to life. Picture of her getting saved. You know what the Bible says? The Bible says she gets up and she walks. Twelve years old. Up and walks. Up and walks.

Then another story in the New Testament. Guy about 30, 40 years old, dead. Picture of an unsaved man. The Bible says that Jesus comes in, Jesus gives him life. Picture of an unsaved

man getting saved. The Bible says they have got to help him to walk. He just did not get up and take off. You have got to help him walk.

Then John chapter 11, Lazarus, an old man, 70, 80, maybe 90 years old. He is dead. Picture of an old man that is lost or a woman that is lost. Jesus comes in, gives him life. Picture of that elderly person getting saved. What happens? He is bound in grave clothes. Do you not know your Bible says that all of our righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of God?

Isaiah 64:6

> But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

That is grave clothes. Here is a picture of a man that is 70, 80 years old that has bound himself up with his self-righteousness that now that he is saved, he cannot even walk. Jesus has to say, "Unwind that guy and get those things off him so he can walk." You know what the principle is? The longer you wait to get saved, the harder it is. That little 12-year-old, she got up and she walked. The 20, 30-year-old, he needed help. The old guy, he already made it. Why? No counsel. Why? Because we deceive ourselves. We do not understand that sin, sin, sin, it blinds us. Sin binds us. And then finally it grinds us. That is why I am telling you.

Back there in Exodus chapter 12, when I read in that Passover lamb, it is a picture of Christ, and it is a picture of salvation of Israel. You know what he says? He says, "In haste."

Exodus 12:11

> And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S passover.

You cannot get saved too quickly. The longer you wait, the more you bind yourself. The more you bind yourself, the more you blind yourself. And the more you blind yourself, one day you will wake up and you are a slave to it, and now you have ground yourself. "How hast thou counseled him that hath no wisdom?" Helping people get the right counsel.

SEC: The Enduring Counsel of the Lord

The Bible says in Proverbs 19:21:

Proverbs 19:21

> There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.

Oh, there are many devices. Psychology, psychiatry, theology, philosophy, religion, science, all of them. Man, and we talked about it the other night in the book of Ecclesiastes, man stays up all night long thinking about devices that will get him around the Word of God and then wondering why his life is as miserable as it is.

You know, I do not know how old you are, but most of you at this point are midway in your life. Some of you are a little older, some of you are a little younger, but most of you are at midpoint. I

would think now that you would begin to figure a little bit of it out. I would think that you have lived long enough to see a man like Howard Hughes, who was the richest man in the world, and understand that riches do not bring happiness. I would think that you have been around long enough now to see your teenage idol or your pop music star or your whatever. I am not saying there is anything wrong with listening to that kind of stuff to some degree. I am just saying whoever you put yourself up—I think now after Marilyn Monroe's death, Freddie Prinze, Jimmy Hendrix, after all of the dope and the drugs and all of the mess and all of the things and all of the suicides, I would now come to think that you would be getting to move toward the conclusion that there are not any answers in that. I would begin to deduce that.

I mean, I am not the smartest guy in the world, but I have a reasonable form of intelligence, and I can look around me and I can see men who have money, and people say, "Oh, I would like to be like that." Would you like to end that way? People say, "Oh, look at all the fame that he has," as I said Thursday night. Do you think Michael Jackson is happy this morning? I do not know if he is guilty or not, but I am just telling you that that kind of lifestyle brings that kind of stuff in your life. As the Bible says in the wisdom books, "It is vanity. It is vexation of spirit." There are people in this world that we look at and we would say, "Oh, I would like to have that. Oh, I would like to be like that. I want to work to get to be just like that." You know what? You do not see, you do not understand. You do not see the inside. You do not see that by the time they are 50, 60, 70 years old, their life is miserable because a life without God blinds you. It binds you, and it grinds you. The only counsel in this world worth getting is the counsel from the handbook that God gave for you and I who are God's creation to run by.

Consider the ant. Do not sit there and tell me, "Well, God is an abstract in my mind. You cannot prove God." You give me an hour, and I can prove it. I will put you in a position where when you walk out of my house, you either say, "He is right," or "I do not want to believe it. I want to be the way I am. I know there is a God, but I refuse to accept the truth." That will be the issue. It will not be, "Well, that was a pretty good argument, but I just do not know for sure." It will not be that way. It will be one or the other. You will have to say, "Yes, I buy it." Or you will say, "You know what? Let me tell you the truth, Bob. Really deep down inside, it is not about whether there is a God or not. I know there is. I just do not want to believe it." Thank you. That is what it will be. It will not be any, "Well, he is kind of, he is kind of right." And, "You know what? Well, he, he made me think." No, it will be, "He made you decide." Because when I am done with you on one area, there will be no somebody, "You cannot really prove there is a God." Give me, give me an hour. If you do not believe it, I will give you a hundred bucks. I bought a hundred dollars. I am telling you, it is an illusion on your part. All I am trying to do is to get you to wake up, hear the alarm before you get to be 50, 60 years old. Then come to the conclusion that you are like Lazarus, that you cannot get out of it. If you are 30, 40, you are halfway there. My God, man, the Bible says, "Three score and ten," 70 years is all God promises you. You are halfway there. You are walking around like God is an extinct dinosaur someplace who does not even exist, that the concept is abstract. I have news for you. I have news for you. Consider the ant.

The day I walked into that room as a 17-year-old young man, the ants were doing their ant thing. They had been there for years since I was nine, ten, seven years they had been doing their little kingdom. That morning I walked into my room, my mother told me the night before, "Bob, get rid of that ant farm. They are crawling out of the top. They are doing everything. You do not have time to take care of them. You are not feeding them. You are not doing anything with it. Get rid of it." The ants heard that conversation with my mother because she could, when she talked, everybody could hear. "See, how do you know that?" Because the neighbors called up and said, "You have an ant farm you are going to throw out tomorrow." You know what? The ants laughed. They said, "His mother said, 'Look at the tunnels we built. Look at the eggs we have laid. Look at our queen. Look at our worker ants. Look at our armies.' Yeah. Right. That old middle-aged lady down there says to get rid of it. Ah, morning. I walked in. He said, 'All there is.' He was here every morning when he gets dressed. Do not even look our way anymore. We have got our little kingdom over here. We are the ants. Oh, we have got a queen. We have got eggs. We have laid. We have got this. We have got a storehouse. Why, we even designed this thing for a water trap. But if it rains, we can go to high ground, and we will not drown. We have got it all figured out, and we do not need that 17-year-old guy." "Hey, what is he doing? Hey, he is not doing, he is not going to work. He is coming this way. What is going on? Hey, what is going, Hey, he is picking up the ant thing. What is happening here? Where are we going? Where are we?" Crash.

My point is this. The ants' opinion of my mother and me did not matter. You know why? I owned the ant farm. Your opinion of God in this world does not matter. He owns the ant farm. The answer to men's problems, "How hast thou counseled him that has no wisdom?" In a word: Jesus. Jesus. Well, I failed today. I only got through one. We have got three more to do. Next week, Job chapter 26, Part 3.

Every head bowed, let us pray. Father, we thank You so much for Your lovingkindness and mercy. Thank You so much for all that You have done for us. Thank You, Lord. In the world, in the midst of this old world, it does not know what in the world they are doing. We are so thankful that You have given us a book that we never lose sight. Oh, I am not saying we are perfect. I do not mean to even suggest that we do not do what is wrong. Could we do? Well, Lord, we understand. We know. We know, Lord, we know that sin never leaves a man any better than it finds him. We know, we know that sin blinds us, and it binds us, and it grinds us. Lord, we know that God is not an abstract concept to us, but He is everything. We know that the way that CNN and ABC and all the world portrays this world and this life as belonging to us, and that God is out of the picture, He is just one of the other gods we hang on the wall of history, we know that that is not true. We know that this world belongs to Him because He is the Creator. Lord, it is not a fact of we have faith. We can prove it scientifically without a shadow of a doubt that God is who He says He is. Lord, we are just thanking and praising You today for being who You are, for allowing us to be part of Your great plan. May we, Father, look at these questions and know that someday, Lord, as all the questions in the Bible, we are going to have to answer these particular ones. Help us, Father, to pass the test. What an easy test, a test that You give the answers before the test. Let us be found faithful. Let us understand who You are. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name, for Jesus' sake we ask it. Amen.