

Proverbs 2

March 31, 2024

We are going to turn back to Proverbs chapter 2, and we are going to finish up chapter 2 today. Hopefully, Lord willing, we will be moving on with some other things we want to look at in the Bible. We are getting ready for our time where, in just a short time, we are going to start coming through the whole Bible book by book, not trying to teach every book, but basically giving you an understanding of how the Bible goes together. We have spent a great amount of time talking about your own personal relationship with the Lord, and now we want to come to the point where we just really focus on how that all comes together for you.

I hope next week, as I said earlier, I am going to preach a message next week on all the excitement about the Passion of Christ and all of that, and all the different characters in it. I told you when we did our study, we did a study on Thursday night, came through a biblical study, I told you that probably the most interesting character in the whole movie, as in the whole story of the Bible, and the Bible portrays a lot of different characters in a lot of different ways, but I think one of the greatest character studies in that whole series is Pontius Pilate. I am going to preach on Pontius Pilate next week. So it will be a time that you can bring your friends, unsaved people, bring your family, whatever. It is a time that God gives us, but I am going to preach on Pontius Pilate next week, and we are going to look at some things, and I think it will be an interesting thing for you to see how the Bible takes those stories and really does some things through the Scriptures to show you some things in our own lives. So we will plan on that next week on Easter, and then we will just go from there as the Lord leads us.

I. The Importance of Proverbs 2

We are going to finish up Proverbs 2 today. I told you probably no greater chapter in all of the Bible has really helped me in my own personal relationship and growth other than the book of Proverbs, and specifically Proverbs chapter 2. As I told you throughout our study, the first seven chapters of the book of Proverbs start out talking about "my son," and every chapter starts out that way, and it all lays itself out along those same lines. After chapter 7, then he starts to deal with doctrinal issues that you need to know. It is almost like the first seven chapters really focus on the intimate things that he is talking to you personally, that he is saying, "Before you ever get into my book, Proverbs, and you ever really get into the meat of it, this is what you need to know." He shows you not only what you need to do in those first seven chapters, but he shows you what the book of Proverbs and the Bible itself will do for you. So we have talked about that, and that is where we are coming to the end of this today. If you are just coming in on it, you know that is where we have been. I do not want you to think that I just picked this subject this morning to talk about. We are coming through a long series in here and coming down through the end of it.

In fact, we talked about in Proverbs chapter 2, we talked about the first five verses there where it really focuses on the things that you need to do: receive the Word of God, hide the Word of God, incline your ear, apply to wisdom, and all those things. Then we have talked about now what the Word of God will do for you and how it really will impact your life.

II. Bible Numerology and the Fruit of Discretion

In fact, when you really look at the book of Proverbs, in your Bible there are certain numbers that mean certain things. We call it Bible numerology, and you are going to find that there are specific numbers that we use every day that in the Bible mean specific things. For instance, God is perfect, so the number seven in the Bible is the number of perfection. Man was created on the sixth day, so the number six in the Bible is the number of man. Death in the Bible is always associated with the number five. I am not saying you can find every number that will line out that way, but there are certain numbers in the Bible that are laid out that way. The number thirteen, the reason why it is an unlucky number, is because it is Satan's number. You can go through the Bible and you can find all kinds of illustrations to show that. That is not what we are looking for today.

I want to show you that in the Bible, the number nine means fruit bearing. When you find the number nine in the Bible, it is always going to be associated with bearing fruit. You go to the book of Galatians, there are nine fruits of the Holy Spirit of God in the book of Galatians. Abraham was ninety-nine when he bore that fruit and got Isaac. It just continues all the way through the Bible. In the book of Proverbs, lo and behold, the book of Proverbs, the Bible says, teaches you, and as you come through it, it will do nine things for you. Nine things you can accomplish.

But first of all, the Bible said the book of Proverbs is to:

1. Know wisdom and instruction.
2. Receive the words of understanding.
3. Perceive the instruction of wisdom.
4. Justice.
5. Judgment.
6. Equity (that is balance).
7. Give subtlety to the simple.
8. Give the young man knowledge.
9. Give the young man discretion.

Now, discretion is the number one thing that you need to get as a child of God. When I talk about you being disciplined or I talk about me teaching you the Bible one on one, you see, that is my job. My job is to help you figure out the Word of God. In the process of that, there are some things that you are going to get. But the bottom line that you ought to be striving toward as a child of God is to get discernment, discretion. Discretion is the ability to use all the wisdom that God gives you.

A lot of people study the Bible. A lot of people read the Bible. You could go to other churches in this town today where there are people that study the Bible all week long. I mean, that is all they do. But they do not understand the Bible, and they teach a wrong way of salvation. Many people that are going there, I mean, do not get so naive that you think just because it is a church that it is God's church. The Bible tells you over and over and over again that there are false religions.

There are false teachers. There are false preachers. You have got to deal with that reality. You have also got to understand that God gives you the discretion. The discernment is the ability to be able to find out what is right and what is wrong. It is as simple as that. That is what the Bible does for you. It fine-tunes your senses to the place that in time, in your own life, you can look at circumstances. You can hear a man preach. You can go to a church. You can sit down and talk to somebody about this. You can turn on the radio. You can watch TV.

III. The Devil's Deception

Suddenly, we know now that the world, its whole format, its whole platform, is to deceive you. Everything in this world is run by the devil. The Bible says that he is the prince and the power of the air, and he is the god of this world. His whole function is to deceive you, to get you off track from what is right, to get you in the wrong. Now, if you are unsaved, he is going to do that so he can damn your soul to hell. He is going to blind you. He is going to show you, give you everything that you could want. He is going to get you to believe the lie that life is what you make it, and you keep going on and looking for the gold at the end of the rainbow. You try this and you try that. By the time you are eighty-five years old and you are ready to die and hit the tombstone, you have come to the conclusion that all that was a sham. Everything you tried to do and everything you tried to apply yourself with, as the book of Ecclesiastes says, was folly. It is over. You have been deceived. If you are an active trick of the devil, he wants to deceive you as an unsaved man, unsaved woman, to think that religion will save you, that you can do it yourself, or whatever education, whatever, everything to mask from you the truth. That is what he does.

Now, if you are a saved person, he wants to confuse you. He knows he is not going to get your soul in heaven. If you are saved this morning and you are truly born again, the devil knows he can never get your soul in hell. He knows that. There is not anything he can do because you are bought, you are paid with a price. You had nothing to do with your salvation other than receiving Christ. God did the work. There is not a thing he can do about it. He does not like it, but that is the facts. So what he does is he knows in a Christian's life that he cannot get your soul in hell. But if he can keep you confused, if he can keep you all messed up, if he can keep you stupid, if he can keep you blinded, if he can keep you messed up and with your emotions, your feelings, and you never get your life sorted out, though he will never get your soul into hell, he will get a hundred other people in hell that you might have reached with your life, reached with your testimony, if you had gotten discernment and discretion.

When a man or a woman gets saved in this church or any other church, and we lead them into Christ and show them the Bible, they now have the platform in their life, the foundation, to get to a place where they can figure things out. They can find out what is real versus what is wrong. When a man gets saved and he gets into the Bible, he has the ability then to come to it, to fine-tune his senses to the place where he can discern between good and evil, right and wrong, what is real and what is phony. Now, that is what the whole book of Proverbs is about, and specifically chapter 2.

IV. Discretion Preserves from Evil and Strange Paths

Last week we talked about down here in verse 10 where it says this in chapter 2:

Proverbs 2:10-22

When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;

Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:

To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things;

Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness;

Who rejoice to do evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked;

Whose ways are crooked, and they froward in their paths:

To deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words;

Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God.

For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead.

None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life.

That thou mayest walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous.

For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it.

But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.

Now, Father, we ask you today to give us wisdom and insight into the Word of God. We love you. We thank you for all that you do for us, and we pray, Father, that you open up our hearts, open up our minds, and we will receive the Word of God that you have so graciously provided for us today. Lord, look inside every one of our hearts. May my heart be as clean as it can today as I put forth your words, and may the people's hearts be as clean as they can be today, that they may receive those words. Lord, let us look inside, and any unconfessed sin in our life, Lord, even in this moment, may we ask God to forgive us that we might receive all the things that God has for us, and we will thank you and praise you in Jesus' name. For his sake, we ask it. Amen.

Now, the Bible says in the book of Proverbs that everything the Bible does for you brings you to the point of discretion and discernment. That discretion and discernment focuses on two aspects. Last week we talked about the evil man, and I showed you how that the evil man was the theology of man, unregenerate, unsaved man coming up with concepts about science, art, music, whatever. We call them theologies of man: psychology, psychiatry, theology, and on and on it goes. All that we, and we traced that through history, and I showed you how that the devil began to take the teachings of the Word of God, and he began to corrupt them to the place that he put forth many other things that are against the Bible, that have nothing to do with the Bible. The Bible gives you and I the warning that we are to bring every thought into captivity under the obedience of Christ, and we are to cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, the Word of God. So we know from that, we know from

that, that the Bible gives us discretion. It gives us the ability, it gives us the ability to discern when we read something.

V. The Importance of Knowing the Bible

I have told you this before, and I continually will tell you this: one of the greatest things you can ever do if you want an education, if you want a real education that you can stand up to anything or anybody on the face of this planet when it comes to that book, let me tell you how to get it. It is real easy. First thing you do is study that book till it comes out your ears. Learn it. When I get up here and say I will spend an hour weekly, you study the Bible. You should have been up here before I got the words out of my mouth saying, "Put my name down. You got a list up here? I want on the list. No, I want on the top of the list. Bug me to death to learn the Bible. Do everything you can to learn the Bible." When I give you something to do, do it.

The way I started the Bible learning years ago, and I did not know anything about the Bible, I wanted to learn it. I went to a Thursday night Bible study, much like the one that we have, and in that Bible study, you were allowed to ask any questions you wanted to ask about the Bible. That is how I learned the Bible. I never asked one question in all those years I went to that Bible study. Barb and I went to that Bible study for five or six years. I never asked in six years one question about anything in the Bible. And look at me today. No, no, no, okay, do not look at me today. I do not care, hurt my feelings. I never asked one question. You know why? I will tell you why. Here is the key: in those years, I never asked one question about the Bible. I let everybody else ask that question, but I had a goal. My goal was this: my goal was that I listened to every question. I went to every verse, and as fast as I could, I wrote down that question, wrote down where they went, wrote down the answer. You know what? In an average night, I might have gotten two or three questions about the Bible, sometimes more, sometimes only once, like ours. Sometimes somebody asks one, it just takes the whole night. Otherwise, you get three or four things done. But I did not care. My goal was I was not there to ask any questions. My goal was I was there to learn, and I learned by simply doing this. Now, you need to ask questions, but for me, this is what I did. And I asked questions, just did not ask them there. I went home and I said, "Here is my goal. You know what? I am going to write everything down tonight, and next Thursday night when I come back, I am going to take from then to now, one Thursday to the other, that I am going to go through my Bible, and I am going to catalog every question. I am going to put it in my Bible. I am going to write every question down. I am going to put everything in there, and by the time I come back next week, if somebody asks me that question, I am going to know the answer." You know what? You do that every week, you get four questions a week, you do that for a year, that is forty questions you got answered. No, more than that. How many now, John? Okay, fine, fine. See what? I got a hundred done because I was putting overtime.

No, I am not saying you do not ask questions about the Bible, and I am not saying that. I am showing you, I am showing, I am making an illustrated point. I am showing you, you have got to get into that book and grab it. When you get it to the place that you really know that Bible, you are sound mentally, mentally and spiritually in the Bible. I probably had to define that. When you

are sound spiritually and mentally in the Bible, you know what that means? That means nobody can shake what you believe. That means you can sit down with a Jehovah Witness, and he does not faze you a bit. That means you can sit down with the Church of Christ, and they will not bother you for a second. That means you can sit down with whoever you or whatever you find wherever, and they will not shake your faith. Most Baptists, I could confuse them in fifteen minutes to the place where they would be wondering. I used to do it when I used to preach places, and I tried to motivate people about the Bible. I would say, "You know what? This is the Baptist Church. You all know the Bible?" "Yeah, Brother Bob, we all know it." "You know the Bible says there are three raptures. Which one are you going in?" Sure, prompt up here, those three times, bang, bang, bang. Sure. By the time I was done with them, they were questioning whether they were even saved or not. You know why? Because they went to church, though they had a Baptist name on the church, though they all had the right Bibles, but they were not sound spiritually and mentally when it comes to that book. That is my goal for you. That is why I teach you the Bible with the intensity that I do. That is why I do not get hung up in all these other things. I get hung up on one thing, and it is the book that I am preaching out this morning, because I know that if you become sound mentally and spiritually in that book, nothing will faze you.

Now, when you get to that point, now you have discretion. Now you have discernment. So now you take on the evil man. You know what you do? You go by every book by every secular psychologist, historian, everybody you can get. You read everything you can get your hands on. I used to go to the UMKC library and buy all them textbooks on science and this and that, and I would digest them. I got, I got, I buy them all in psychology, and I, you know what I was doing? I was going through every one of those books: science, education, art, religion, theology, you name it, every psychiatry, everybody I could get my hands on, I would read. I read everything that the most Baptist preachers tell you, "Do not read, it will mess you up." No, no, no. The reason why you are messed up is because the Baptist preacher telling you that has never prepared you mentally and spiritually to be sound. No, no, no. You get the book down, you devour everything that unsaved man ever wrote against the things of God, and then you have, because you have the ability to discern, and as you see what is right and you see what is wrong, you become a formidable weapon for God in his arsenal to be able to take on anybody. You will know more about the Catholic Church than most Catholics do. You will know more about the Jehovah Witnesses than most Jehovah Witnesses do. You will know more about what they believe and they believe, and when you have that ability, you also get the ability to use it right, and you win them to Christ, and you love them, and you deal with them, and you show them. But what it does, it gives you discretion over the evil man, discretion over the evil man whose way wants to confuse you and discourage you and confuse you in all the annals of things.

VI. The World's Complexity vs. Christ's Simplicity

I was listening to a radio program today, and they were talking about how defunct our eternal revenue system is, that every year they keep adding tax laws and tax laws and tax laws and tax laws and tax laws. He said, "You know what?" He says, "We need to overhaul the tax system in our country. It is absolutely out of control." He said, "You know what? Right now, as we speak,

there are nineteen volumes, five inches thick each, of rules and regulations from the IRS that they have to follow with codes and everything about how it all works, what you can take, what you cannot." He says, "There is not anybody in the IRS who even understands it. It is a monster that has gotten totally out of control." The IRS stands there, and they say, they pretend like they know, and they pretend like they have got it figured out, but they do not. They do not. They know it less than we know it. I am telling you, that is what the world does. The world makes it in so many thick volumes and so complex and so hard and so unbelievable to reach that you just look at it and you just say, "There is no way I will understand all this," just like you look at the tax laws, you just say, "Oh man, I do not even know where to begin." That is what the devil does. That is what the evil man does when he portrays history with the complexity and the depth and the magnitude that match the simplicity that is in Christ.

Last week we talked about the evil man, and we talked about how that the evil man represented theologies of man, man-made concepts without God for the purpose of destroying your faith in the Word of God. You find it in the university, you find it in the college, you find it in the Bible college, you find it everywhere because that was the strange man's mission, and he accomplished it.

VII. The Strange Woman: False Religion

Today we are going to talk about the counterpart. We are going to talk about the strange woman, and the strange woman, my friend, will represent religion. The two ways that the devil destroys man and the two ways by which he takes control of the world is one through politics or the organizational structure of knowledge in a secular sense, and religion, the organized concept of religion coming together to portray Christ and God but in a false way that damns people's souls to hell. Let me just say again, please do not be so naive, do not be so naive that you think that every church on the face of this planet and every man that stands in the pulpit and everybody who gets up and talks about Christ is God's man. I am telling you, I hope you are not that naive. You cannot even get out of the New Testament before Jesus takes on the scribes and the Pharisees, and he just, he fights with them all the time, and they were his people. They claimed to believe the same God he did. It was he that they rejected, and there is where the problem lies today. Oh yes, yeah, for sure.

But I am telling you something, you are about to enter in, when you study this strange woman today, we are about to enter in the most complex, the most unbelievable study that entails the whole history of man. Now, there is not any way that I am going to do this justice this morning, but I am going to try to whet your appetite and give you the high points. But I am telling you what, if you want to delve into this thing in depth, I mean, it is a five-year venture, and you need to do it at some time in your life. But I am telling you, you need to understand what this strange woman is.

If we would go to the libraries today, we would find thousands and thousands of books, but we would have to wade our way through it. But fortunately, as always, the Bible makes it pretty easy because the Bible told us last week that the devil wanted to destroy you and me in our minds from the simplicity that is in Christ. So the Bible is very clear. Here is what the Bible says. First

of all, you do not have to turn to these because we are going to be going through a bunch of them, but you can just write them down, look them up later.

2 Corinthians 11:14-15

And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

Paul says in the book of 2 Corinthians that the devil transforms himself into an angel of light. He transforms himself into God. He wants to mask religion, and he masked it all down through history, which you are going to see today, and he is masking it today.

Now, I am not one of these foolish people that believes that Baptists are the only ones going to go to heaven. I do not believe that for a moment. Most Baptist churches, they become all-inclusive, and they think if you are not a Baptist, that you are not going to heaven. I do not buy that. I heard a story one time where a guy died, he went to heaven, and when he got up there, he met Saint Peter, and walking around, and he is coming over here, and he goes in, heaven had all these big rooms, and he walks in here, and there is a bunch of people eating chicken. He asked Saint Peter, "What is this?" And he says, "Oh, these are all the Methodists." He says, "Oh, okay." Walks another big room, and a bunch of people playing bingo. He said, "What is this group?" He said, "All those are all Catholics." He said, "Okay." Walks into this other room, and there are signs all over the place: "Shut up, be quiet, no speaking, no talking, nobody says anything." And he says, "Well, who is this group?" He says, "All those are the Baptists." What all the signs were because they think they are the only ones up here. You know what? That is not the way it works. You know how it works? It works when you ask Jesus Christ to come into your heart and save you. Now what you do with what you have got after that may be another story, but if you think joining this church is going to save you, or joining any church is going to save you, you are crazy. You get saved because you see your personal need and a personal Savior. You put aside your Baptist traditions, your Catholic traditions, your Methodist chicken, or whatever the case may be, and you simply come to Him, nothing in your hand, simply cling to the cross and say, "God, save me." I am telling you, that is the way you get saved.

The devil shows up, he wants to make salvation religion. He wants to make it church. He wants to make it formal. He wants to give you a set of rules. He wants to do everything he can do to get you off track. Let me just tell you something now, you may not be able to grasp this right now, but it is the truth. If the devil walked in that door right there, came up down here across here and stood right there, and the Lord Jesus Christ came in the same door, walked around this side, came up here and stood on this side, and you got the devil over here and Christ over here, you know what? I am going to tell you, dying through, you could not tell them apart this morning. You see, you have got the concept that the devil is red suit, cleft foot, long tail, horns, and a pitchfork. That is your concept of the devil. And you think your concept of Christ is, "Well, my mother had a picture of him, you know, and he has got the long brown hair and the flowing beard and, you know, nice general features, you know, and, you know, I saw him one time in a picture, you know, carrying a little sheep with a staff, you know, a little sheep around him, you know, the

little sandals on and a little white robe, and it was the," that is your concept. You know what? Let me tell you something, the devil is the greatest imitator of Christ the world has ever seen. You know how you know that? You get discernment. You know how you get discernment? You get a book. The Bible says he is an angel of light. He transforms himself into an angel of light, and when he transforms himself into an angel of light, I am telling you, if a devil walked down on this side and Christ did on this side, you could not tell them apart. You say, "Oh, I would know him. I would know him by the nail scars in his hands." No, the devil has got them too. Do you not know those statues down in South America, Central America, they bleed on Easter? You think that is God? You have got little Mexicans up there with little blood things squirting behind so you cannot see him. No, that is the devil. He is an imitator. He imitates him, and you can come up with every concept you want about how you know which was which, and I am telling you, you cannot tell them apart. There is only one way you can. You know what that way is?

Who shall discover the face of his garment?

You know how I know if the devil walked in here and came here and the Christ walked over here and came up here? You know how I know which one was right? Because my Bible says I have got a more sure word of prophecy, and that more sure word of prophecy in 1 Peter chapter 1 verse 19 is more sure, if you go to the preceding verse, than the very voice of God. Or how I know which one is which is because in the day and age that I live, God does not manifest himself down here in any form. He is inside me. So when the devil shows up and somebody says, "Oh, I saw a light from heaven, and I know it was God, and God spoke to me," or "I saw this," or "I was driving down the road in a lightning," or "I saw the clouds and he fell into a shape of Christ in his face that I could see the beard." Oh yes. No, no, no. You have got the wrong Christ. There are two in the Bible. The devil is the greatest imitator in this world.

I will show you in Revelation chapter 19, the Bible says when Christ returns, he comes on a white horse. Revelation chapter 6, when he and antichrist comes, he shows up on a white horse. Imitate. Imitate. Christ is called the Prince of Peace in Isaiah chapter 9. The devil is called a prince in John chapter 14. The devil is called, Christ is called the right hand of God down through all through Christ is called the right hand of God down through all through the Old Testament. In Psalm chapter 144 verse 8, Satan is called the false right hand. Revelation chapter 19, the Bible said Jesus is King. Job chapter 41, the devil is king. John chapter 20, Jesus was called God. 2 Corinthians chapter 4, the devil is called God. John chapter 8, Jesus is light. 2 Corinthians chapter 11, the devil is light. Revelation chapter 5, Jesus Christ is a Lion of the tribe of Judah. 1 Peter chapter 5 verse 8, the devil is a lion going around who he may devour. He imitates him in every form and fashion, and there is only one way you can get the discernment to figure out what is real and what is right and what is wrong and what is good and what is evil when it comes to the strange woman and the evil man.

VIII. The Devil's Latitude and the Bible's Authority

You know, the devil operates, I have told you this before, I am going to say it again, you will probably hear it another thousand times before Christ comes back, and he is probably coming back Friday, I mean, Good Friday, he would come back Good Friday, would he not? You know,

the devil operates, it is one little word, it is called latitude. Latitude. You know what latitude is? I will show you. You have a point right here, and you have stop right here. You know what is in between? That is called latitude. The distance between there and there, I mean, it is called distance, it is called space. You can measure it and say it was ten feet, but it is latitude. It is from there to there. It is the latitude that you have from that wall to that pulpit. You know, the devil operates. God has given you an absolute standard.

You ever notice when the devil showed up to Jesus, every time he shows up and tries to tempt him, tries to get him to do something, you ever notice how the Lord never got into a conversation with him? He never started, he never started going to the place where he tried to argue with him for five minutes. Do you ever notice there is a difference between how Jesus dealt with the devil then Eve dealt with the devil? You ever notice that comparison? When the devil shows up to Eve and the devil says, "Yea, hath God said?" Oh, Eve just, she is in it, man. Boy, she jumped right into that thing. She is going, man, she starts to get theological. She says, "Oh, you wanted to study the Bible? Oh, I would be glad to study the Bible." There she goes, and the devil tricked her into that. When he comes to Christ, he says to Christ, "Hey, you are the Son of God. I will tell you what, make these breads into stone." You know what the Lord said? "It is written." One verse, bang. Come up the high top, bang. "It is written." Every time the devil showed up to Christ, he did not get the dissertation with him, and he was God's Son. He is showing us a model of how you deal with the devil in your life. When he comes to, like he did with Eve, it simply is, "It is written." You know what you do? When you just give the devil the book back, you do not give him any latitude. You know how the devil works in your life? He will work in the life and the latitude you give him. You know what latitude is? That right there. You know what that is? That is what God says. You know what this is here? That is what you do. The distance you have in the middle is where the devil plays. Keep the distance down to a minimum. Ephesians 4:27 says it when he says, "Give no place to the devil." Do not give him any latitude. Stay with the book. The book will never forsake you. The book will get you through when nothing else will.

I am telling you, when the devil, when the devil came to Eve, that is exactly what he did in Genesis chapter 3 verses 1 through 6. He got Eve talking about this and that, and, "Oh, Evie, baby," just jumped into the theological discussion way over her head, and before she is knowing, she is ripping up the Bible. Just like he did. Jesus, on the other hand, said, "You know what? Pow! It is written. Book, chapter, verse." You know what the devil did after three shots? Left him. Why? Because three strikes and you are out. You never knew baseball was built on Matthew chapter 3, did you? That is okay, that is okay. I will teach you a lot of neat things. I am still trying to figure out why in baseball the umpire has to be named Al. Well, they all got their name on their hat, Al. I do not figure it out. I have seen John, John is deceptive. I have seen John umpire in baseball, his name is not Al. No, I do not know those things. But I know this, I know discernment. Discernment will keep you from the evil man, and it will keep you from the strange woman. That is exactly what he did. She gave place to the devil, and you give the devil two inches, and he will drive an eighteen-wheeler through it. You never could give him any latitude. You can never give him any latitude from what the book says and what you do. When you try to get creative, when you try to get theological, when you try to get fancy, all you do is just open that latitude up, and he just plays through it. Give no place. The book is the book, and that is

what it says. When he comes to you with this or he comes to you with that or he comes to you with this, "It is written." End of discussion.

IX. The Strange Woman's Historical Manifestations

Now, this strange woman in the Bible is defined many times. She is probably one of the most talked about subjects in all the Bible. She goes right along with the devil. Now, in the Old Testament, this woman is represented by Baal worship. Baal is the worship of the sun god. I am not going to give you a big dissertation on Baal worship, but Baal worship was the worship of the sun, and Baal worship goes all the way back to the book of Genesis. In the first nine chapters, you have God doing some things, you have the flood, you have all of that, and in Genesis chapter 10, you have what is commonly called the genealogy of the Gentiles. In Genesis chapter 10, you find the first Gentile kingdom, and when the Lord comes back, you are going to find the last Gentile kingdom, and they are the same religion on both ends.

When you come down there, the man back then is Nimrod. He is listed in your Bible. Now, Nimrod is an interesting guy because Nimrod is a mighty hunter. Nimrod is the beginning of Baal worship as we know it throughout the Old Testament. Nimrod shows up back there, he is in Babylon, that is right where Baghdad is today. In fact, Hussein thought he was Nimrod incarnate, and he wanted to rebuild Babylon. That is where Baghdad is, and it goes all the way back to Genesis chapter 10. Here is what happened: Nimrod dies, and Nimrod's wife, after Nimrod's death, kind of takes over. You see, Nimrod was the evil man. His mother or his wife, Semiramis, was the strange woman. Always got them matched up through the Bible. And his wife, now after his death, she claims that Nimrod has now become the sun god. And lo and behold, she finds herself with child through no man. She never had a son with Nimrod. Now suddenly she has, she is with child, and she says, "My child has been divinely conceived by my husband Nimrod, who is the god of the sun." And lo and behold, she says, "This is Nimrod reborn." Oh man, you find a virgin birth long before Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. It is just the wrong one, but the devil is an angel of light, counterfeit virgin birth. She says Nimrod has now become the sun god, so they begin to worship the sun. Baal means bull, so they, in more ways than one, so they, they, they, they bring up, they bring up the calves. That is why in the back in Exodus chapter, in the book of Exodus, Aaron makes the golden calves. The Assyrian Empire, they had a winged bull, and all their nations and their religions, they got it, they always worship the golden calves. Gold because it is like the sun, shiny. Men love gold because it reminds them of the sun, and it is all the way through it. And so they overlay this stuff with gold, they put, then they kissed the calves, they did all this, they did all that. Then they had, they had human sacrifices. Psalm 106 talked about somebody drinking blood and they ate flesh. And a can, Baal, Baal, Baal, Baal, canna, you know, when the natives over there eat people, they are called what? Cannibals. Cannibal. Cannibal. B-A-L, bull, Baal. The word Baal is in the word cannibal. You know where the word cannibal comes from? It comes from Baal, where they ate sacrifices. So somebody in Africa that eats people as a cannibal, it is canna, carne, like chili con carne, meat eater. That is where it comes from. Well, get mad at me because I know something you do not. Do not laugh at me. Jimmy just underlined the word bull and put a circle around it. I want to know what he is doing that for. He is looking at me like, anyway.

Now, all the Baal worship had a female deity. In Genesis chapter 10, it was Nimrod's wife. When you come through the Old Testament, you will find in Jeremiah chapter 7, Jeremiah places like that, Jeremiah chapter 44, she is called the queen of heaven. Next week we are going to celebrate Easter. Easter is not a Bible word. The concept of Easter is not a Bible concept. Now, I know we are going to have an Easter service next week. No, we will not have a sunrise service. No, sorry, sorry, sorry. No sunrise service. And I do not know how Baptist churches do sometimes, I just think that some of these preachers were hung on meat hooks for too long or something. I do not figure it out. What a sunrise service? What? What sunrise? Well, yeah, I want to come out in the morning and we want to stand out here in the cold and we want to say, we want to see what we are going to do. We will go someplace, we will watch the sun. I do not know. Church, they go also, "Well, we are just all going to get together, we are going to have an, we are going to have outside sunrise service." They all get there, you know, and it is still dark, people are coming in, but it is quiet because it is a holy moment, you know, and you are sitting down there, you know, and buddy is saying, then the pastor takes something like this, "Well, we are here today, and you know, we just need to reflect today on what it must have been like back there when they came to the tomb. It was dark just like this. They came to anoint the body, so we met together just like they did." About that time, a little nine-year-old says, "Where is the tomb, preacher?" "Shut up, kid, I am not done yet. We are in a pasture, and there are cows over there, they smell really bad." "What tomb?" You say, they say, "Well, we do not have a tomb, but they," "Shut up, kid." And you go on to that thing, you said, "Now, let us just stand here and reflect." Then you watch the sun come on, you say, "Oh yeah, look at the sun coming up. Oh, this is how it was. The sun was coming up, and I can almost see Mary coming down that road." But that time, three heifers crossed the road over there, you know, say, little kid says, "There they are." "Shut up." We will not have one of those. You know why? Because no church in the New Testament book of Acts ever had one. That stuff does not come into Constantine in 325 A.D. because, you know why? Because Easter is Ashtoreth. Ashtoreth is the female deity, the Sidonians. She is a god of fertility. So next week, and bring all your friends, we are going to have a great message, and wear your Ashtoreth bonnet with all your frills upon it, and we will have an Ashtoreth parade. I use it, but you know what? I got discernment. I am not going out in the morning to watch the sun come up like the Baal worshipers used to do.

What do you think Stonehenge is? Well, Stonehenge is a thing, it looked like, because my head, when you jump over, you find out it is made of rock. Oh yeah, okay, mhm. Stonehenge is in England. It is a position of rocks with rocks all around it. It is set up that on the equinox, that in the right time of the year, that those pagan Baal worshipers went around there, and the sun lined up with this and with that, and the sun made all kinds of streaks down through there, hit all kinds of spots, and they worshiped the sun god. So we will not be doing it. The day star that I am looking for to arise will not be up next morning at 6:30. It is going to rise in my heart with the rapture of the church. That is the only sunrise I am looking for. I am not a morning person, can you tell? But that morning will be different. I will not need an alarm clock.

So we see Baal worship, female deities. You find that in Acts chapter 19 with the great goddess Diana. You find it all down through history because Baal worship, going all the way back to Genesis chapter 10, is the religion that the devil orchestrates to counterfeit God's religion. You

said, "Well, yeah, why? But how in the world could anybody ever mistake that for the truth?" Well, Israel did. Oh, Israel did. Boy, when that Baal worship got operating back there in 1 Samuel, 1 Kings, 1 Chronicles, in those places, they left God so quick and made his head spin. I am not kidding you. I mean, Baal worship starts its foundation, it is the foundation of all religions. I do not care where you go today in this world, down through history, Baal worship and all false religions start in Genesis chapter 10 with female deities, human sacrifices, worshiping in the sun, high towers, and everything else that goes along with it. When you come down through history, you find it impacting everything in this world. I mean, every religion traces itself back to Baal. I do not care, I do not care if it is the American Indians, if it is the Aztecs, it is the Incas in South America, in Africa, in the Far East, and the Middle East, if it is Buddha, if it is Confucius, if it is Brahmanism, even in America today, every religion that is not Bible-based, and I am not talking about Baptist, I am talking about Bible-based, runs right back to Genesis chapter 10. They all are in the same boat.

So in the Old Testament, she, they worship the sun, have female deities, they worship the bull, and they worship Baal, who through Easter and Christmas, that is his birthday, December 25th. The birthday of Baal back in Genesis chapter 10 when all this stuff took place was December 25th. It has been time, and you can go a hundred places in your Bible and figure that out. Now, I am sorry if you are sitting here today and saying, "Well, I just do not believe you. I just do not believe." Okay, fine. You know what? There are a lot of people who do not believe rattlesnakes will kill you, but you pick one up, you will find out the reality of that message. It will bite you.

In the New Testament, she is defined many places, but Revelation chapter 17 verse 5 is the greatest one. And again, do not turn to it. She is called Babylon, or excuse me, "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth." All right, first part, "Mystery, Babylon the Great." She is a mystery. She starts in Genesis chapter 10, and she worms her way through history, through the Bible. She destroys everything that God tries to set up where she can, and she is a mystery. She starts out as a pagan, and she winds up in the 21st century as the organized religions of this world who put their emphasis on everything except the Word of God. Remember now, Job chapter 41, we talked about it a couple of nights ago, God says when it comes to the devil, "I will not conceal his parts, his portion, or his comely proportion," and you can discover the face of his garments if you get discernment. I am not a very smart individual. I just believe what God wrote, and because of this, and she is "Mystery, Babylon the Great," and down through history, you can find the chain of events that as you go through secular history, you go through American history, you go through world history, you go through European history, you will be lost to it. When you get the Bible, you will find it and trace it through, and you will understand in complete clarity this mystery is unveiled.

Then the next part of that title is "the Mother of Harlots." The Mother of Harlots. The reason why she is called the Mother of Harlots, I have already given you the answer. She is the key and the foundation for every false religion on the face of the planet today. I do not know what to tell you. I do not know what to tell you. Every false religion on this planet today, now you get into the Far East, you get some weird stuff, but it follows the same basic line. But you are going to find that America, every false religion in America, for all, and I do not care what they call themselves, and

I am not against anybody, I am just preaching the facts, but every false religion in America, I do not care where you go, it will be founded on these same things, and they will all believe the same thing. You know what they are?

First of all, every one of them will believe that you have got to be baptized to be saved, baptismal regeneration. You know why? Because it goes back to Baal worship. They believe that you get your sins away by being washed with water. Every one of them, every one of them. You know what? I can name you six false religions in America right now. Every one of them believe you have to be baptized to go to heaven, but none of them will accept the other church's baptism of salvation. It is only theirs. That is the second thing about them: totalitarian in their concept. It is their way or the highway. Every one of them will believe that their church is the only true church. I do not believe there is any true church other than the spiritual church that you are born into the day you get saved. You think you say, "Well, this is the Baptist Church." Let me tell you something, this is a good Baptist church based on the Bible, but if you got some time this afternoon, you buy me lunch, I will take you around and show you some weirdos. Forget the lunch, after I am done showing you, you will not want to eat. Well, there are Baptist churches in the country, you go into their main foyer, and they have got a statue of Buddha there. You have got Baptist churches that think that they run like the mafia. Do not you ever think that I am for any church. You say, "Well, you call yourself a Baptist." Yeah, you know why? Because I believe what the Bible teaches, and they are the Bible-believing group, so I identify myself with them. But I, I think I am going to be a good for them, but if I had my way with it, and you asked me what I am, and I have had people ask me for that, I was there one time, and it says, "Now, what church do you go to?" And I said, "Well," they said, "What, what denomination?" I said, "Well, I am a Bible-believing Christian." And he said, "Okay, but what denomination are you?" And I said, "I am a Bible-believing Christian. I believe the Bible is the Word of God." That is all the farther I take it. "Well, you know, go to." "Yeah, I go to church." "Where do you go?" "Well, I go to a Baptist church." "Well, then you are a." "No, I am not a Baptist. I am a Bible." He could not get it. I go to a Baptist church. I have started a Baptist church simply because I believe that the Baptists have a heritage, but you know what? I am not such a fool to think that there are not Baptist churches you could not go to in this town or any town in this country that you hear the guy leave, you would be lost as a goose. It is not about the church, it is about what you have got in your heart. Do not care what you are. Do not care what denominational ticket you hang around your neck. Are you saved? Now, once you get saved, you may say, "Well, I cannot stay in that anymore," but that is your call, not mine. But I know this, I know they are all the same. I know they all teach baptismal regeneration for salvation.

I will tell you something else, every one of them steals the promises given to Israel and see now they, they apply to them. That is why they dump the book of Revelation. That is why they, they bring in Old Testament sacrifices and holy days and all that stuff because they, every one of them, I do not care where you go, they are all amillennial, they are postmillennial, there is not a one of them that is premillennial because they believe that God is finished with Israel and now they are the called, the elect, that God replaced the nation of Israel with. Go take a long walk up a short pier.

I will tell you something else, they believe that if you do not join their church and get baptized in their water with their baptism under their church covenant doctrine, slash whatever the case may be, you can never, never, never be saved. See, everybody beats up on the poor Catholics for that. I have a lot more respect for Catholics than I do a lot of the other little puny, punk-nosed religions that are around here, not worth the powder to blow them to hell. And Catholics get a bad name sometimes because they are always in it. A lot of it may be true, but the bottom line is they are not. I am telling you what, there are many churches out there and said, "If you do not come to my church and you do not get baptized in our baptistery and you do not get baptized by our covenant of our church, you can never be saved." To which I always said, "What about the thief on the cross? How did he get baptized?" Did that ever bother you? You see, somebody gets up there and he says, "Well, baptismal regeneration, you have got to be saved." Bible says you have got to get baptized. "Baptized in water, baptism saves you by Acts 2:38. Repent, be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." You have got to be baptized, you have got to be baptized, you have got to be baptized, you have got to be baptized. And people hear that and they say, "Wow, he is up there, I am down here. I am just a little bit of a mess, and I am just a little bit of a mess. I am down here, I am just a little guy. He has been to Bible college. He is down there, he is just preaching, preaching, preaching about that. He must be right. He must be right." Now, the guy with the sermon says, "Baptism, I have got to be baptized to be saved. I have got to be baptized in your church to be saved." Well, first of all, the thief on the cross never got baptized, and Jesus did say, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." Second problem is, your church was not anywhere around when that happened. So how did the thief get off that cross? Did he say, "Hey, boys, could you do me a little favor here? I know you do not believe this guy, and the other guy on the other side does not believe it either, but you know what? I do. Now, look, let us be reasonable. Can I get about a fifteen-minute break? No, no, no, no, no, no. I did not say a fifteen-femur break. I said a fifteen-minute break. Just, can I get down for a minute? I mean, I just believe, I believe he is the Son of God, and he said this day he will be in paradise, but I have not been baptized yet, and I need to get baptized. And so if you just cut me a little slack, I know you are going to kill me, crucified, sure, no problem. I will be back, I promise, I will be back, I will be back. I just, I just want to get over here, and, you know what? We do not even have to go far because we can just get water out of the canteen. Yeah, I just need to get sprinkled, and, uh, and then I will be back, and we will finish this job, and, you know, it will be fine." No, he did not get off that cross. He died, never got baptized. You know what that is called? That is called discernment. Somebody says, "You have got to be baptized, you have got to be baptized, you have got to be baptized, you have got to be baptized, you have got to be baptized, and baptism of salvation, baptism of salvation." Really? Did you ever study 1 Corinthians? You know the church of Corinth is the most screwed up church the world has ever seen. Do you ever study that? You know what they are arguing about in chapter 1? They are arguing about who baptized who. You know what they are arguing about in chapter 3? They are arguing about who won who to Christ. Now, if they are both the same, why do we have two different arguments about two different things? You know what that is called? That is called discernment. God gives you the ability to pick up little things that tells you the guy is lying. And then what you do with it from there? Latitude. See, I do not have a problem with it. I just take the

guy, his message, the church, little T, check the wind. And then Jesus over there in his grandstand holding up John 3:16 says, "Touchdown." That is just me, part of my charm.

You know, you see it in Matthew 13. I do not know if you ever studied or not. In Matthew 13, you have the parables. In verse 33, you have a parable of leaven. And you have got a woman, wonder who she would be, who takes leaven, false doctrine, book of Galatians. And you have got meal. Meal is made of wheat, wheat are a type of people. And she takes the little bit of leaven, mixes it with the meal until the whole meal is destroyed. And the Bible says in the book of Galatians, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." It is a picture of this woman taking the Baal worship, mixing it into the New Testament Christianity and destroying the concept of God's church. I am telling you, I am telling you.

Now if you look at this woman down here, I want you to see this. Come down here to verse, it says down here in verse 16:

Proverbs 2:16

To deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words;

All right, this church will flatter you with words. This woman will, she will use nice religious words, holy words, Christian words. She will talk about Easter. She will talk about the brotherhood of man. She will talk about the fatherhood of God. She will talk about love your brother. She will talk about love your enemy, love your neighbor. I mean, she will go down through the, this woman will lay out everything the way you wanted to hear it. I mean, she will talk about all the good things because the Bible says Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. She will say with all the wonderful, lovey, gushy, flowery stuff she can say that her church is the only church. And if you are not baptized in our church and you have not done it our way and you do not become one of us, you can never make it. But she will make that sound so acceptable. She will run you to the Bible and give you verse after verse after verse. It means absolutely nothing about what she says. And there will be no room for discussion.

You find these churches coming up in Europe during the Middle Ages, and they all worship the sun. To them, they are talking about a different sun that you and I are worshiping. So they have a theology of architecture. You see it in Germany. You see it in France. You see it in the great cathedrals all through Europe. The reason why they put stained glass windows in them is so that when the sun comes up in the morning, the sun filters through the stained glass windows and shines down and sets the holy mood for God to be in our presence. Oh, it is so beautiful. Walk into those churches and everybody whispers, "We are in the place of God." What? Did not hear you. "God is here." Where? I need to talk to it. Shh. I am telling you. I mean, you can talk about the theology of architecture. You know what meridian is? Meridian is, it goes across the sky. You know what meridian is? It was back in the 12th, 13th, 14th century when they built these great cathedrals. They put little holes that were lined up with the sun that went 12 o'clock on Sunday. You think Sunday is a Christian term? I know we use it. You know what it is called in the Bible? It is called the first day of the week. No Christian on the face of this planet would ever use the word Sunday. You know why? Sunday goes back to the day the Baal worshipers worshiped God on Sunday, and they had the service when it was 12 o'clock when the sun was right overhead,

