

## I. The Purpose of Studying God's Word

If you have your Bibles this morning, let's turn to the Book of Numbers. As you know, we have been coming through the whole Bible, book by book. What we want to accomplish for you is to give you an understanding of how the Word of God really lays itself out.

We put a lot of emphasis in this church on the Word of God. In fact, it is our only emphasis. We do not exist for any other reason than to teach you the Word of God. That is all we are here for; that is our job. That is the job of every church. Unfortunately, many churches lose sight of that and get caught up in everything else. God forbid we do not want to go there; we want to stay with the Book. It is the Book that saves you. It is the Book that will keep you. It is the Book that will raise your family. We want to stay true to the Word of God in teaching you the Bible.

You are going to give an account someday at the Judgment Seat of Christ for what you did or what you did not do with the Word of God. I am going to give an account someday as a pastor of this church for what I taught you about the Word of God. So, we cannot lose sight of that.

What we started, as you remember, when we started our church almost a year ago, we came through for months and months talking about every aspect I could think of on how to build a relationship with God, because that is where it starts. We went through things in the Bible and laid out every aspect of how you can build a working relationship with God that will work for you in the time that we live in.

When we got to that point, we decided that we were going to start coming through the Bible. I know the men are meeting on Saturday morning and they are talking about the keys to study the Bible. Thursday night Bible study is your time to ask any question you want to ask about the Bible. As we come through on Sunday, we are coming through book by book.

We have a goal; we have a purpose. What I want to do is not just cram all information in about every book in the Bible. I am here to show you what to look for when you read through the Bible. Many of you are taking the tapes or taking your notes, and week by week, you are cataloging what we are giving you in your own Bible so that when you are done, you understand that book of the Bible as far as what you need to look for, what that book is dealing with, and what it shows you, so that you begin to see the progression of the Word of God as we come through the Bible.

The Bible is like a picture book; the Bible is like a picture puzzle. It is like one of those 10,000-piece puzzles you buy and try to put together. When you buy the box, the picture is on the front of that box. When you dump it out, what you have are a bunch of pieces. You have to put the pieces together to get the picture.

Anybody who has done it knows that you will spend the rest of your life trying to put that picture together of that puzzle by just trying to interlock all the pieces. What you do is find all the pieces

that have the flat corners and build a foundation or a framework of that picture. Once you get it completely framed, then you start and work from there inward piece by piece.

I was never good at picture puzzles; I do not have the patience for it. My mother was a champion; every New Year's Eve, she would stay up all night long and put one together. I could never do it, but I learned how to do it, and that is to start from the outside and work in.

It is the same way with the Bible. The Bible is a puzzle, and that puzzle is thousands and thousands of pieces. Those pieces have to interlock together. When you put those pieces together, you get a picture. Do you know what the picture is of? It is the picture of what God is doing from Genesis 1 to Revelation 22. That is what the picture is.

Most people today do not have the patience to study the Bible the way that they should. So, it is a lot easier today, and the way I always did picture puzzles is I just cut the pieces to fit. That sounds easy, but it does not give you a very conducive picture of what you are looking at. In fact, I am the only guy in the world who can take the picture of a lamp and a piece of fruit and come out with a nice bubbling brook by a farm someplace. You cannot do that.

What we are doing is coming through the Bible, laying out the foundation. We are giving you the framework. The rest of your life, you will be able to use the material to build the picture. There is no way in one hour or fifteen minutes, or however long I preach on Sunday morning, that I can give you everything that is in these books. But what I can give you is the framework of these books to show you what you need to look for.

I do not know, maybe you have seen it already. The Bible is filled with patterns. Remember when we studied Genesis? Watch how this thing worked. The first five books of the Bible are called the Pentateuch. They are the first five books of Moses. Moses writes the first five books of the Bible.

In Genesis, we saw, and watch how this thing progresses. In Genesis, we saw the book of the beginning. We saw God starting it out absolutely perfect and right, man destroying it. Where Genesis 1-3 starts out perfect with God, Genesis 50, the last verse, starts with a man dead in a coffin in Egypt, a picture of this world.

In the next book, we saw Exodus. What do we find in Exodus? We found that man in a coffin in Egypt redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. This is a picture of Genesis, God doing it right, man doing it wrong, but then God coming back in Exodus and redeeming man by the blood of the Lamb.

Then we saw Leviticus. After you are saved, we saw the sacrifice, the priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. You have all the progressions in the first five books of Moses that deal with what happens to you and go over God's entire plan in the first five books of the Bible, just the way they lay themselves out.

## II. The Book of Numbers: Numbered for War

Now, we come to the Book of Numbers. The Book of Numbers brings you to the next event in your life after you are saved, the next event in your life after you trust Christ as your own personal Savior, and you get redeemed. You realize that God brought you from sin, and now you are in the priesthood and understand about the ministry. The next book in that Bible shows you the next major New Testament doctrine you need to understand, and that is the warfare of the believer.

Father, we thank and praise you for the Lord Jesus. We love you so much, and we thank you, Father, for this Bible. We thank you for the Word of God that You have given us. May we learn from it, Father, in every aspect. May we see it as it is: the mind of God, the mind of Christ. May no one or anything ever take us from this Book or this Book from us. May we always just love it like we love You. May we equate it as Your words, as the very holiest words this world has ever seen. Father, we thank You today. Bless these people. They have come here to get a blessing from Your Word, not anything that I have to say, not anything that I know. Lord, I am just as dumb and stupid as anybody on this planet, and Lord, I do not have anything if it was not for You. Lord, I acknowledge today that anything that I say that may sound good, anything that I say that may be true, anything that I say today that may wow somebody or open their eyes to the Word of God, it is not because of me; it is because of You and that Book. God, I give You all the honor and glory. Lord, You are worthy, Father, of our praise, of our worship. You are worthy of the glory because of the things that You have done in our lives and because of this majesty of a Book that You have given us. Help us to always love it, but always look to You as the Author, Lord, of our salvation and our faith. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

The Book of Numbers, that is a strange name. Do you know why it is called the Book of Numbers? Because in that Book, the Bible says that they are numbered for war. Numbers 1:3.

The Book of Numbers has thirty-six chapters. It has 1,288 verses, and it has 32,902 words. If you keep wondering why I keep giving you those, wait until we get to the Book of Psalms, and I will show you why. We do not have time to go there today, but that is why. There is a method to my madness; I am not just quoting that because I have some extra space here. There is a reason for that.

Numbers is a strange name for this Book in the Bible, but we find out the reason why in Numbers 1:3, when the Bible says they were numbered for war. The Book of Numbers brings us to the point where God has brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, redeemed them from the sin of Egypt, as the Book of Genesis says.

Then we saw last week how He explained to us and gave to them the aspect of the priesthood, showing them that there is a priestly order that God wants, a religious statute that God wants them to follow. Now we see the great New Testament doctrine of the warfare of the believer.

### III. Old Testament vs. New Testament Warfare

Let me explain that to you for just a moment. In Ephesians 6, we are told about the warfare of the New Testament Christian.

The difference between the Old Testament battles and the New Testament battles are very easy to understand. In the Old Testament, we are dealing with a literal, visible kingdom: the Kingdom of Heaven. I have talked to you about it before; it is something you have to absolutely understand if you are ever going to figure the Bible out.

In the New Testament, we are dealing with a spiritual kingdom: the Kingdom of God. One is literal, given to Israel in the Old Testament. The other one is spiritual, given to the Church in the New Testament.

The warfare in the Old Testament is a literal warfare. They have literal armies that go out and fight literal battles with literal swords and literal spears. It is a concept that God says, "Okay, I have given you the land." That land is called the Promised Land, and that land is yours. You are going to have to fight to get into it, and you are going to have to fight to keep it.

But He said, "Here is the best part of the deal: as long as you love My Word, and as long as you keep Me as your God, and as long as you and I are just like that, do not be afraid of the other literal nations that are out there: the Amalekites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Jebusites, the Midianites." There is a score of them that hated Israel and wanted to keep them out of the land. God said, "Do not worry about them."

In fact, here is the way it will work: if one of your men will stay true to the Word of God, when he goes out to fight, that one guy will take 10,000 men out. That is pretty good odds. He is saying, "You do not have to worry about the battles. You do not have to worry about the fighting. All you have to worry about is loving Me with all of your heart, with all your mind, and all your soul." They fought literal battles in the Old Testament.

In the New Testament, the Bible says in Ephesians 6:12:

*Ephesians 6:12*

*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

The New Testament warfare is not with guns, bombs, swords, and all those things. The warfare that you and I are up against, and this is what you have to understand, is a spiritual warfare. We do not fight the Amalekites. We do not fight the Hittites. We do not fight the Goliaths. We do not fight the Midianites. Our warfare is with spiritual wickedness in high places, principalities, powers, the devil and his crowd. It is a spiritual battle.

When you come down through Ephesians 6, you will find that you and I are given seven pieces of armor:

- Loins girded about with truth
- Breastplate of righteousness
- Feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace
- Shield of faith
- Helmet of salvation
- Sword of the Spirit

- Praying always with all prayer and supplication

These are seven pieces of armor that you and I are to use in this warfare.

But I want to tell you something: there is a strange thing about Ephesians 6, and there is a strange thing about the warfare that you and I are in. When I read down through Ephesians 6, it talks about "we wrestle not against flesh and blood." It talks about the armor. It talks about the warfare. It talks about all of the things that it is. But I have never found any place in Ephesians 6 where I am ever told to fight.

I have all the armor. It talks about the warfare. But there is not one place in that chapter where it tells me that I, as a Christian, am to go out and fight this battle. To the contrary, in fact, I do not know any place in the New Testament that says I am to fight in this warfare.

I know Paul says in 1 Timothy 6, "I have fought a good fight." But he is talking about the overall concept. I want you to understand when you come down in Ephesians 6, you do not have to turn to it. Let me read it for you. It says in Ephesians 6:11:

*Ephesians 6:11*

*Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

Then it says in Ephesians 6:12:

*Ephesians 6:12*

*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

Then it says in Ephesians 6:13:

*Ephesians 6:13*

*Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

Then he says in Ephesians 6:14:

*Ephesians 6:14*

*Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;*

Do you know what I got from that chapter when I read it? I am not supposed to fight; I am supposed to stand. Jesus does the fighting. My Bible says in Ephesians 6:10 that I am to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. I am not to fight this battle; I am to take a stand. When I take a stand for the Word of God, Christ fights my battles. That is why the Bible says, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." It is Christ; it is Christ.

I began to look at that and I saw that years ago, and I thought to myself, "Wow, here we have a bunch of God's people wondering why they fail every day, wondering why they cannot get the

victory in their Christian life." The truth of the matter is they cannot get it because they are trying to go out and fight it themselves.

I have news for you: you may be the toughest guy in the world. I have news for you: you may be the smartest girl the world has ever seen, but you are not smart enough to tangle with the devil. You are not smart enough to go one-on-one with the devil. The Bible says that God never intended for you and me to fight this battle.

I am to make up my mind and take a stand. When I believe a Book and follow that Book, I do not have to fight the spiritual battles. God fights those battles for me.

## IV. The Laodicean Church Age and the Issue of Bible Authority

I do not know if you know this or not, but in Revelation 1-3, you have seven periods of church history. Those seven periods of church history start with Christ and run all the way up to the time that we live, the Laodicean church right now in the day and age that we live in, and it ends with the Rapture of the Church.

But you realize, in light of what I have just said, that every period in church history had a doctrinal issue they had to stand for. In other words, as the Church grew and came through time, biblical issues came up that the Church had to decide were the issues for their day.

Because all around the world, everybody was saying, "This is not true." The Church had to decide that it was true based on the Word of God and say, "I do not care what the whole world says. We believe what the Book says, and we are going to stand on this issue." They paid the price for it; they paid the price.

In the early Church, they believed that Jesus Christ was God, the deity of Christ. In a world that believed there were millions of gods, the Roman Empire, the Christians believed there was one God, one true God, and all the other gods were false. There were religious groups that were coming along who once believed that, and now were shifting over and saying, "Well, I do not know."

There was a group of people that said, "I do not care what the world says. I do not care what Rome says. I do not care what some of you Christians are vacillating toward. We know what the Bible says, and we are going to stand on that doctrine." They went to the Colosseum for it; they paid for it in their blood.

A little bit later on, in the next period, there was an issue of the virgin birth. There were people coming in and saying, "I am not sure Christ was born of Mary. I am not sure that Mary was not married, and I do not believe maybe what?" The Church had to take a stand on that doctrine.

Every period of church history, there was a time when the Church was bombarded about the doctrine of eternal security. There were a bunch of people out there saying, "You can lose your salvation." The Church had to take a stand on that issue.

There was a time when the Church was faced with amillennialism and postmillennialism. There were people who were saying, "Christ is not coming back to establish His reign; we are going to establish it." The Church had to take a stand.

There was a time when they argued about baptism for salvation. There was a group that was saying, "Well, we know what you are saying, but we believe now that baptism is part of it, and you have to be baptized to be saved. Acts 2:38, and all this." The Church said, "No, we know what the Bible says, and we are going to take a stand on that doctrinal issue."

Every period of church history, every church period, the Church has had an issue, doctrinally, that has had to take a stand. It was the prevailing issue of that church. Every problem, every situation, every turn of events, everything that damaged Bible Christianity was centered around that issue.

We live in a Laodicean church age. Our issue is not the virgin birth. Our issue is not the deity of Christ. Our issue is not eternal security. Our issue is not premillennialism. Our issue is not salvation through the blood. Our issue is not predestination or Calvinism or Arminianism. Those things have been sought out, dealt with, and settled.

Our issue is simply this: Did God know what He wrote when He wrote a Bible? My issue and your issue is, "Is that Book true or is it not?" There are 5,000 translations out there, and they all say something different. Do you have the exact words of God, or does everybody just take what they want?

Do you know what Bible studies consist of today in most churches? We get everybody in a little round circle. Everybody gets their own version of the Bible, and somebody will read a passage and say, "Now, what do you think it means?" Then, "What do you think it means?" Everybody goes around and says, "This is what I think it means." When everybody is done, they say, "Wow, was not that a great time?" No.

God has one absolute truth. We get the guys that went around and said, and this little song that was popular years ago, "God says it, I believe it, that settles it for me." Everybody is singing that around, "That is a really good thing: God said it, I believe it, that settles it." Hey, I have news for you: God said it; that settles it. It does not make any difference whether you believe it or not. Where do you get in this thing?

The issue for this church, not just this church, but the Church today, the Laodicean Church, is: Do you have an infallible, absolute standard? You see, it was not an issue in all the other churches because there were only two Bibles. Now we have 10,000 today, and it is an issue because people do not understand that even though there are 10,000 translations, there are still only two Bibles: one of them is God's, and one of them is the devil's. I am sorry, I do not know how else to say it, but that is our issue.

That is why the Bible says that you and I are to stand. I am not to fight; I am to find out what the issue is in the last days of my church period, and I am to take an absolute stand and pay the price for it.

Do you know what He said in Ezekiel 22:30? Years and years, a hundred years ago, God was talking about the nation of Israel who found themselves in a similar situation, and He said:

*Ezekiel 22:30*

*And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.*

Do you know what God is looking for today? Simple. God is not looking for your intelligence. God is not looking for anything that you have to offer or I have to offer. God is looking over this world, just like He did in every period of church history, trying to find a man or a woman who will take the time from their busy schedule to find out what that Book says and what the issue for God is today, and then stand. That is where we are at.

That is the Book of Numbers. The Book of Numbers breaks down like this. You have to remember, we are told to stand. In the Book of Numbers, the issue was God wanted them to take a stand, and He said, "If you stand, you may have to go out and fight those nations literally, but I will kick the hornets at them before you get there."

There are some places back there where they are ready to fight, and they are going out and sharpening their swords and getting all ready to go. Do you know what God does? He just calls up about 500,000 wasps. He is down there saying, "They are down there practicing, and they are getting all worked up, ready to go." He says, "Take it easy today. I have about 500,000 big old wasps back here, and they have nothing to do. I am going to send them down there to those Hivites, Perizzites, Jebusites, whoever they were." I do not remember this story. I am going to send them down there, and those guys are down there, and I will tell you what, that is God. God takes the most minute things of this world and whips your tail with them.

Those big old boys, those giants, big old giants, big old swords, legs like that. They looked like that girl who knocked you out of home plate the other night. I am telling you, they are standing down there, and they are saying, "We are going to get them!" The sergeants are walking back and forth, saying, "Kill the Jews! Kill the Jews! Baal is great! Baal is great!" And off they go. That is my God; that is my God.

They are going ready to fight, and Israel is coming down the hill, and all they saw was this big old cloud zooming all over these guys, these guys running for home. God says, "You do not have to worry about it. You love the Book, and you love Me; there will be nobody to stand before you." Same thing today. You love the Book, you love Him, take your stand, let them laugh at you, let them make fun of you. It is all right. You will watch how God blesses your life and what He does with them.

## V. The Journey of Numbers: Sinai to Jordan

The Book of Numbers breaks down into two sections. It covers the forty years of their wandering in the wilderness. It follows a line of their march from Sinai, where he got the Ten Commandments, to Kadesh. That would be Numbers 1-19. Then from Kadesh, Numbers 20-36, when they get to the Jordan right before they go over. That is important.

The reason why He broke it down is because He wants you to see something. If you have just been saved, or you are just getting into the Bible, or you are just starting to figure this thing out, let me clue you in: you are going to get into warfare. You are going to get into battle. The closer they got to the Promised Land, the more the battle intensified. The closer you and I get to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the battle is going to intensify.

I am just telling you that; you do not have to pay extra for that. That will come with a standard tape fee. What it does is show the pitfalls and the troubles that you and I are going to get when we, through this world, quit standing for God and let the world intimidate us.

It shows the obstacles in life that you and I have to face. Sometimes they are family. Sometimes they are on the job. Sometimes they are other Christians. Sometimes it is just your garden-variety, idiotic, unsaved man or unsaved woman.

But it leaves you with a big choice because the obstacles are huge sometimes. Sometimes we look at them, and they are almost insurmountable, almost impossible. It brings us to a decision that you find in the Book of Numbers when they are numbered for war: those obstacles will either turn you to God or turn you from God.

## VI. Lessons from Numbers: Part 1 - Preparation for Battle (Numbers 1-19)

In Numbers 1-19, I am going to try to give you the high points. There is no way I can give you everything that is in here. But in Numbers 1-19, they journey from Sinai to Kadesh, and God begins to prepare them for battle.

Do you know what we see? We get a nice idea of the devil's battle plan to keep them. You have to remember now, they are God's people, and God had a plan for them. That plan was for them to get into the Promised Land where they could be fruitful and establish that literal, visible kingdom. The devil's job was to keep them out.

They are down in Egypt for 430 years. Do you know what the devil is doing while they are in Egypt for 430 years? He is raising a race of giants and all these nations that hate God and God's people, and he is putting them right smack dab in the middle of that land that God said to Abraham was going to be their land.

When those children of Israel come out, they start to move. They have heard the stories; they flew their jets over and got photo reconnaissance. They sent their elements out to probe, and they come back and say, "Whoa, you ought to see what is waiting for us over there!"

"Yes, I know, 'a land flowing with milk and honey.' Oh, I know the grapes of Eshcol. I know the grapes are as big as volleyballs, and I know that. But you ought to see the big guys that are eating the big grapes! They are like grasshoppers. There are giants, man! There is not just one of them. It is not a sideshow that has Andre the Giant, the pro wrestler. These guys are twenty feet tall, 3,000 pounds apiece, and there are hundreds, thousands of them. 'What are we going to do?'"  
Yes, that is where it is at.

### *The Redemption of the Firstborn*

*When I come to Numbers 3:40-51, I am just going to have to give you the references; you will have to look them up later, but here it is. Do you know what you find? You find God starting where He always starts. He always wants to remind you about the day He saved you.*

In Numbers 3:40-51, you find the redemption of the firstborn. Let me explain that. What it does here is show you how God is an orderly God, how God has everything lined out. Remember down in Egypt in Exodus 12, when they were told to put the blood on the door, and some of them did not do it? God came through that night and simply said, "Anybody who does not have the blood on the door is going to have their firstborn killed."

22,273, because here He is telling them to sanctify another group of firstborn to replace the group that was killed in Egypt, because "I am an orderly God." Besides, have you guys figured this out yet? The firstborn is never going to get the blessing. No, it was Abel, not Cain. It was Jacob, not Esau. It was Isaac, not Ishmael. The firstborn is never going to get it because the firstborn is a picture of your first birth that puts you into this world in sin. It is always going to be the second born. So He says, "The firstborn are gone; replace the firstborn with the secondborn because ye must be born again." New Testament doctrines all the way back. Of course, they did not understand it. What I do is I have a Bible that tells me those things.

### *The Nazarite Vow of Separation*

*I come to Numbers 6. In Numbers 6, I found the Nazarite vow of separation. This is a picture of your life and my life. That Nazarite was a Jew, and when he took on a special vow to do something for God, he was not allowed to have anything from a vine tree, not allowed to get his hair cut, and not allowed to touch any dead body. It shows you and me a picture of the way our life should be.*

Once you get saved, you have taken a vow to God, and those three things are very interesting. First of all, nothing from a vine tree, because the vine tree has to do with original sin. So He says, "No vine tree." You are going to find in the Bible that God has His wine; the devil has his wine. God's wine is grape juice; the devil's wine is "Mogen David" or whatever you want to call it. God has His; the devil has his. He says, "Nothing from the vine tree."

Then He says, "Do not get your hair cut." The reason why he is not to get his hair cut is because the Bible says in 1 Corinthians that it is a shame for a man to have long hair. That Jew was not allowed to cut his hair because he was to bear the shame and the reproach of who he was as a nation. So He says, "No haircut. Let your hair grow long and scraggly, and people will say, 'What a mess he is!'" because that is the way you really are before I saved you. This is an illustration.

Then He says, "You cannot touch anything dead," a picture of unsaved people. So, they are to take those things out of their lives because it pictures a separation that you and I have the day we got saved from the things of this world.

### *God's Guidance: Cloud by Day, Fire by Night*

*Once He separated them out, in Numbers 9, He says, "Now you are on a journey, and that journey is going to take you a ways." He says, "Here is what I am going to do so you do not get lost in the process: I am going to lead you with a cloud by day"—you will want to mark that —"and a pillar of fire by night"—you will want to mark that.*

What is all that talking about? He led them on the path that He wanted them to go by the cloud during the day and the fire by night. I do not want to get too deep on this, but I will tell you this: do you want a key here? That cloud by day, Acts 1, He says, "You saw Me go up in the cloud; I am going to come back in the cloud." This is a picture of the Second Coming of Christ. Fire by night is the Church Age. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." You have everything you need right there.

God is going to lead you through the daytime. God is going to lead you through the night. He is going to be a cloud in front of you during the day so you cannot get off the track; that cloud is that Book. He is going to put a fire in front of you at night when you cannot see; it will lead and guide you; that fire is that Book. In other words, when you start this journey and you start this warfare, God is going to lead you all the way through the daytime and through the nighttime. There will never be a time in your life when you will have to tread it on your own. God will always lead you the way He wants you to go.

#### *The Problem of Bad Counsel (Jethro)*

*Then we come to Numbers 10. In Numbers 10, we now see the result of the bad counsel that Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, gave him back in Exodus 18. We begin to see it come to fruition now, where it begins to cause the problem.*

I need to say this because this is very important. I need to let you know and you need to understand that back in Exodus 18, Jethro comes to Moses and gives him some advice about being the leader of God's people. This advice is taught in every major seminary and Bible college today as great advice. I know churches today that set their pattern and structure based on this. I have been to seminars where the guys get up and say, "Well, we have the great example down through here, and this is exactly how you do it because Moses came to Jethro, Jethro came to Moses, and he said, 'Now look, let me show you how to make this thing work.'"

I am going to tell you right now, if you do not believe it or you want to see it, make an appointment with me. Bless your heart, I will even buy you dinner. No, you buy dinner, I will use the Bible. I will show you from that Book how that thing is absolutely the biggest, stupidest thing that you could ever get into. What it is a picture of is men today trying to tell you how to minister outside that Book.

He says in Exodus 18:19, Jethro comes to Moses and says to Moses, "Moses, hearken unto my voice, and I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee." All right, I will give you a million bucks. You show me one place in that Bible where Jethro and God ever did anything. Just show me anywhere in that Bible where God did anything through Jethro. Jethro is not even a Jew; he is not even a Hebrew; he is a Gentile. He comes in and says, "Listen to me, hearken unto

my voice, and I will tell you good counsel, and God will be with you." Hey, I have news for you: God was already with him.

We are talking about a man that the Bible says God met with him face to face, and Jethro is going to come in and say, "Hearken unto my voice, and God will be with you." Give me a break. When did Moses need Jethro? God never did anything in Jethro's life.

What you find today is men who have never won anybody to Christ trying to teach you how to win souls. Men who have never built a church trying to tell you how to build a church. Men who do not even believe there is a Bible on the face of this planet that is the absolute perfect Word of God trying to tell you about the Bible.

How would it be if you were going to go to the Olympics and you have never run before? You went up there, and they said, "Well, we are going to get you ready. We have a running coach that is going to work with you." You say, "Great." You went in there, and there was a guy in a wheelchair with no legs. He said, "Oh, I was born this way." "Have you ever run?" "No, but I saw it on TV. It cannot be too hard." "You never had any legs? You have never run? No. How are you going to teach me how to run?" "Well, in theory, it goes like this." I do not want your theory. Do not tell me what it says if I do not see what it has done in your life. I am not interested in what you think; I am interested in what the Word of God says. Let God be true and every man a liar.

We have people today that are telling young men how to build churches who have never built them, trying to tell them how to win people to Christ when they have not won anybody to Christ, and trying to tell them all about the Bible. But if you sat down and said, "Do you really believe you have an absolute, perfect, infallible Book from God?" they will say, "Well, certainly not." "What in the world are you doing?" That is Jethro: "Listen to me, and God will be with you because I am telling you the way it is." Moses did not need Jethro; Moses had God.

I am going to tell you something, and you get it down: do not ever let any man put you above where that Book is, including this man. You stick with me as long as I stick with the Book. When I leave the Book, you drop-kick me through the goalposts of life, just like you would anybody else. I am no better or no different. The only thing that makes me different is the fact that I do believe a Book. But if there ever comes a day when I do not, hit the road, man, and find you someplace that does. I am telling you, mark that down in every book of your Bible. Every time you come to church, remember it. Every time you come to Bible study, think about it. I am telling you, keep me accountable to that Book. I tell you, there is a better way in that Book hitting me down the road. But I am telling you, there is no better than that Book. That Book is it; that Book is it.

Jethro comes in there and starts telling Moses all this stuff to do, and it is all contrary. It is all contrary. He says to Moses, "You need to really focus on the big matters, and you just need to let all these other people do the other small matters." That sounds so good. But do you know what? My Bible says that it is not the big things that mess us up; it is the little things.

I will tell you something else: if you focus on the little things, you will never get to the big things. Do you know why you have big problems in your life? Maybe you have not figured this out, but let me help you here. Do you know why you have big issues in your life? Because you never learned to deal with the little ones in your life. Go ahead, say amen. It is good; that is true. All right, never mind, I will say it myself. Amen, Brother Bob. Amen. I am telling you, that is the problem.

### *The Mixed Multitude*

*In Numbers 10 and Numbers 11, we start to see the source of the problem: bad advice from Jethro. Then we start to see what only destroys them in time: the mixed multitude. The Bible says in Numbers 11:1, "them that were the uttermost part of the camp."*

I do not know if you know this or not, but in the Old Testament, when they moved and set up camp, they put the Ark of the Covenant right in the middle; that is the Lord Jesus Christ. All the tribes moved around that as close as they could. They obviously could get so close, and they got closer. There were people that did not; the closer you got, the closer you were to God, the priesthood, and everything that God was doing. The farther you got, do you see where I am going with this?

I am going to tell you something: every problem in every church today is started by the people who live in the uttermost part of the camp. They do not want to get too close to God. They want to go to church, but do not take it seriously. "Oh yes, we go to Sunday school; we go to church, but you do not have to take that Bible literally, do you?"

I found a long time ago, there are four kinds of people in every church, four kinds. There are people that make things happen; that is the kind you want. There are those that watch what is happening. There are those that do not know what is happening. Then there are those that do not care what is happening. The last two are the crowd you want to watch; that is the crowd you want to watch.

This mixed multitude, the Bible says in Numbers 11:4, "they fell a lusting." They said, "We want flesh! Give us flesh! There is nothing but this dry old manna, a type of the Word of God. We want flesh!"

They say in Numbers 11:5, "We remember when we were in Egypt." "Oh, we are out here now. We have to eat of that old Bible. Oh, we remember on Saturday night in the world back there in Egypt when we used to have the garlic and the leeks and the cucumbers and the melons, and we did freely eat freely." They were killing you by the thousands! Your grandfather was crushed under the stone that built the pyramids! Your mother starved to death! Your brother was killed in the brick kilns! "Freely"?

But do you know what? When you start hanging out with a mixed multitude, they start taking your attention away from what God did and start looking back, and you start thinking that old world really had something good for you.

There comes a point in your life. I do not know where it is for you; I do not even know the exact time in mine, but I know I hit it. When you come to the point of your Christian life where you are sure—I am not saying you are perfect. I am not saying you do not have problems. I am not saying you do not have temptations and fight things. I am not saying you do not fail, but I am saying this: there comes a time in your life when there is no way you are going back to the world.

The time of your life when you look back and say, "Was that stupid, man? There is no way. Here on my worst day, no, I had nothing back there." I am telling you what, but until you get to that point, you have to be careful; you have to be careful.

### *The Perversion of Perspective (Joshua and Caleb)*

*In Numbers 13-14, here you have 4 million people. God said, "I have numbered you for war." They start on that journey. We see the mixed multitude. We see every battle, every opportunity, everything coming against them. Out of 4 million people, the Bible brings to light two men: Joshua and Caleb. What a study!*

Out of 4 million people, there were only two guys. I will tell you what, it brings to light a great principle. I will tell you, do not ever forget this either: I do not care how dark it gets. I do not care if we are in the latest church period. I do not care if we get so black that you cannot see anything. I do not care if everybody in this world seemingly turns on the Book and goes their own way. I do not care if every preacher on the face of this planet turns their back and goes out for his own agenda and does what he wants to do and loses sight of what God is calling me to do. I am telling you right now, and you can mark it down: at any time, in any period of church history, no matter how bad it got, no matter how dark it got, God always had His man. Back here, it is Joshua and Caleb.

But it also brings up another truth: a lack of biblical truth will pervert your perspective. People are scared. They had the spies down the land in Numbers 13:13. They come back and said, "Wait, guys, we need to think this thing through. I am telling you, man, you do not know the Promised Land. Well, it is also the land of the giants. I am telling you, they are big, and they are strong, and they are many. I am telling you right now, they are waiting down there for us, and they are going to get us." The people got scared. They said, "Oh, I do not know. We are like grasshoppers in their sight."

Caleb says, "Let us go right now! Let us not lose the element of surprise. Let us hit them! Let us hit them before they think we are coming. Let us let them go to sleep tonight. Let us go down there. Let them have a nice party, get drunk, and when they are all hungover and stupid, let us just put on the silencers on the Uzis, and put on an airstrike, and go there and wipe them out!" They said, "Oh no, they are too big! They are too big!"

You see, some of God's people, all they see is the negative. The people saw the obstacles; Caleb saw the opportunity. Caleb did not care how big they were.

The last thing you find Caleb doing—I do not want to get into it too much because we will get into it in Joshua—but the last thing you see Caleb doing, they are just on the other side in the

Book of Joshua, and they are down there, and there is one place left where all those giants are hanging out. They are coming in there, and they are all happy and joyful because there is just this one little pocket they have to get out with all these giants. Old Caleb comes in with a smile on his face and says to Joshua, "I want that for my inheritance." He is putting nine millimeters in his clip. He said, "That is what I want," and he is picking frags up and putting them on his belt, and he is getting his stuff and his bazookas and his tanks lined up, and he says, "That is my inheritance; let me have it." The last thing you see this guy doing, and he is eighty-nine, ninety-some years old, is heading up that mountain after those giants by himself. God help us to be Joshuas and Calebs.

There is a lot of misunderstanding about the Church today. I am not fighting anybody; I am just telling you where my heart is and what the Word of God says. I have told you before, my job is not to build a building. We will stay here forever. Knock that wall. What are you doing to get here? I do not know. That makes some pretty big tents, does it not? That is not my call. I do not care if God wants us to have something; that is fine. I just believe this: God always pays for what He orders. If God did not order it, you wind up paying for it, and I am not paying for anything God does not order. If God ordered it, then God pays for it, because that is not my job. I have one job, one job only: to train Joshuas and Calebs. That is my job.

My job is to take young men and young ladies that want to give their life to that Book and take whatever time it takes, whatever I have, whatever it needs. My job is simply to take the men and the women that God brings here that want to be better husbands, better wives, better soldiers, that want to learn how to stand in these last days before God comes back and take their stand on the absolute final authority in a world that does not believe it, and link up hand-to-hand, arm-to-arm, and stand here for the Lord and stand and let Him fight. That is what I am asking God to bring me, and when God brings them, I promise my job is simply to take their lives and to build them into Joshuas and Calebs, so that when everybody else is running for the trees, when everybody else is scared to death, we are moving up that mountain, and we are going to kick some Babylonian tail. That is our job; that is our job.

## VII. Lessons from Numbers: Part 2 - Intensifying Battles (Numbers 20-36)

When you come to Numbers 20-26, we get part two, from Kadesh to Jordan. We see the battles and the troubles intensify. As I said, the closer you get to the Promised Land, the tougher it gets to stand. The more the battle intensifies, the closer you get to home base where God wants you to be in your life, the more you are going to get it. The giants are going to come out of the woodwork. The more it wants you to shine in your life.

I do not care what anybody thinks. I do not care what my friends are saying. I do not care what my friends think. I do not care who thinks. I am going to do this because it is right, and I am going to stand. The moment you take that stand, your battle is going to intensify.

*The Sin of Moses*

*In Numbers 20, you see the sin of Moses, and what a great story this is. I do not know if you understand all that has taken place here or not, but let me just tell you the short version. Oh, it is worth the study.*

You will find that Moses and the people are down in the wilderness, and they cannot get any water. That wilderness is a picture of after you got saved and came out of Egypt to the world. There is nothing in this world that is going to satisfy you anymore. The water was bitter. They could not find any food, and God had to supernaturally bring the food to them: the manna, the quail, and the water—a picture of the Word of God, a picture of you and me. After we are saved, nothing in this world is satisfying anymore, and God supernaturally, through that Book, gives us everything we need.

There are two places in the Bible where there is a rock, and there is Moses, and the people have no water. Moses is told to get water out of that rock. The first one is back in Exodus 17:6. We did not go through it back then because I figured I would throw it in now. I cannot do it all.

In Exodus 17, the first time they do not have any water, God tells Moses, "Moses, you take your rod and you go down to that big old rock, and you take that rod and you smack that rock." When Moses smote the rock, the water gushed up. That Bible says that that rock was a type of Christ, 1 Corinthians 3. That was a picture of God smiting His Son on the cross. The rod that he has in his hand is the rod of judgment; that is the same rod that he turned the waters to blood with in Egypt. When he was told to take that rod and smite that rock, it was a picture of God the Father smiting His Son on the cross of Calvary. Do you know what happened when they put the spear in His side? The water and the blood came out. From His precious death came that precious Book, my water of life. Oh, the type is so beautiful!

When he comes down there and smites that rock, and the water comes forth, it is a picture of the day God smote His Son. Isaiah 53 said He was smitten of God, and the water, the Word of God, the everlasting water of life, came from Him. That is how you and I got saved. You see, that was Exodus, the book of redemption. Then we had Leviticus, priesthood after you are saved. Now we are in Numbers, your warfare, and they are having a tough time in the warfare.

So they do not have any water again, a picture of you and me out of fellowship with God, not getting anything from the Word of God. So this time He says, "Moses, go down and speak to the rock." The rod that he has this time is not the rod of judgment; now it is Aaron's rod, the priestly rod. Aaron is with him here in Numbers 20:12. Aaron was not anywhere back in Exodus 17 because He took the cross alone. We are past the cross; we were redeemed in Exodus. Now we are here, and we are in this battle, and we are having struggles.

He says, "You speak to that rock." You speak to that rock because that rock is a picture of Hebrews 4:16, where it says, "Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace." You only get saved once, and then you have access to the Father, and you go in, and when you have a desire, you speak to Him. Romans 8, and it is a picture in Numbers of your prayer life. Exodus 17 is a picture of crucifixion. Numbers 20 is a picture that after you are saved, you have total access to God as a priest, and you speak to that rock, and you will get the water. You talk with Him through prayer.

But Moses fails. Now, it cannot be too hard on Moses. The people dragged him down. The people wore him out. The people are so unbelievably... Now, we have to blame him to a certain extent. He knew better than to listen to Jethro. He should have gotten rid of the mixed multitude when he had the chance. Moses fails. But all this is the great truth because there are going to be times when I fail. There are going to be times when you fail. Yet, I want you to see the servant of God failed, but God brought the water out anyhow. God is going to get it done in spite of us, folks. I am telling you, he failed, but God gets the job done even when we fail. Glory to God! He has a plan. I am telling you, those are great pictures to show you how these books are bringing you along.

### *The Serpent on the Pole*

*Then you have Numbers 21. In Numbers 21, you have the great story of the serpent on the pole. You took your Bibles this morning and turned to page 195. We could sing this song, "Look and Live, Look and Live, My Brother Live. I Have a Message from the Lord. Hallelujah!" The message is "look and live." That is where that song comes from: Numbers 21.*

Do you know what happened? The Bible says they are out there; they are in sin again. They always are. They are turning from God and turning to God; they always did. They have the same problem like you and I have. They are down there, and the Bible says God sent fiery serpents among them, and when they bite them, they die. Moses comes to Him and prays to God. He says, "God, You have to heal these people." He says, "Okay, Moses, here is what you do: you go and make you a brazen serpent." Brass is a picture of judgment in the Bible. The great altar where the sacrifice was burnt before he went into the Tabernacle is called the brazen altar; it is made out of brass, a picture of God's judgment. "You make this serpent out of brass. You put it on a pole," a picture of Christ dying on the cross. "When you hold it up, if anybody looks at that, looks to the cross, they will be saved."

Do you know what? That thing was so profound, that impact, when these people were bitten and needed to be healed, that they put that serpent on a pole and held it up. Every doctor you go to, every medical man you have ever been in your life, the symbol for medicine and healing is a serpent wrapped around a pole. Numbers 21. You go in the army, get in the medical corps, you get a little collar tab that has a pole with a big serpent wrapped around it, a brazen serpent. You go to the American Medical Association, it is a pole with a serpent wrapped around it. Why? Because Numbers 21 says that there was a serpent. Christ became a serpent; He became sin for us who knew no sin, and He took my place on the cross. When I look toward the cross, and if you are here this morning and you are lost, if you will just look to the cross, God will save you; God will save you.

It was so impacting that in John 3, when Christ was talking about being born again to Nicodemus, laying it all out, He said in John 3:14:

*John 3:14*

*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:*

Oh, and He was.

## *The Story of Balaam and Balak*

*Then we get to Numbers 22-25, the story of Balaam and Balak. Balak hates God, another type of antichrist, by the way. He hates God and he hates God's people. He wants to wipe them out. He is blocking the way; he does not want them to get to the Promised Land. He is part of the devil's scheme. I am going to tell you something: there will be Balaks and Balaams in your life. You can count on it. You better learn this lesson. He wants to stop the people of God, just like the devil has people out there that want to stop you.*

So he calls up Balaam on the phone and gives him the contract to wipe out the nation of Israel. Balaam says, "Well, Mr. Balak, I appreciate the contract. I appreciate the money. But let me tell you the problem: Genesis 12:3 says God said, 'I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee.' If I take a hand against them..." Now, there is a picture of an unsaved man believing what the Word of God said so much that he rejected a fortune because he knew what the Bible said was true.

But he says, "I will tell you what. I have a plan. You want to stop them. You want to keep them from getting where they have to go. Here is how you do it. I cannot do it. But if you can get their boys to marry worldly girls, if you can get the girls to marry all the other men from all the other nations, which God has told them not to mess with, because they will bring in all the other gods, you will not have to kill them. God will come down and kill them." Oh yes.

An interesting word shows up in Numbers 25:18: it is the word "beguiled." That word is such an incredible word because when Eve shows up back there in Genesis 3 and the devil shows up to her, and God says, "What happened?" the Bible says Eve said, "The devil beguiled me." When you go to 2 Corinthians 11:3, where Paul is talking about the Church, he says:

### *2 Corinthians 11:3*

*But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.*

The devil wants to beguile you. He beguiled Eve. He came in and told Eve, "That is not what God meant." He said, "Yea, hath God said?" We shot and we got to the Book of Genesis. Then he changed what God said, and he beguiled her. Do you know what the world does today? Do you know what theology does today? Do you know what churches do today? Do you know what the whole Christian world is about today? It is about saying, "Yea, hath God said?" and then trying to tell you that God did not know what He said, and beguiling you, beguiling you.

Look at it, or listen to it: "I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." Here is the danger of the Church today: your mind should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. God makes it easy; man makes it tough. Do you know why man makes it tough? Because man wants to control you.

When you go to be a doctor, you have to go to medical school. They do a lot of good things in medical school, but one of the things that they do for you there is teach you a language that

nobody else understands. Hence, try to read your prescription. To be a doctor, you have to have the worst handwriting in the world to begin with. But it is a thing; they do not want you inside their world.

When you go to a dentist, he talks to you incredibly. He talks about your upper bicuspid and your lower incisors. To me, it says, "You have holes in the big ones on the top, and your little ones on the bottom are not looking too hot either." But I could not charge you a hundred bucks an hour if I talked that way.

Every trade in this world, you go to a mechanic. He talks about your chilled retainer springs being stretched, your cam being cracked, your piston being scoured. Why can he not just say, "That thing that moves up and down and makes everything run has a hole in the top, and your crank that goes around this way is busted"? No, he is going to charge me two hundred bucks just in labor, and then five thousand dollars for the parts. It is everything in the world that way; everything. I do not care what it is.

You go out and talk to your biologist, and I am sure you all have one on call. You go out and talk to the conservation officer, and he says, "Yes, those *\*Canis latrans\** are really giving us problems." He just said the coyotes are really bad this year. But they put it in Latin so you have to go to their school to learn their terms. So when you want to become a Christian, you have to go to school, and you learn: soteriology, angelology, apologetics, hermeneutics. You go and spend, listen to me, you go and spend fifty thousand dollars, listen to me, to learn to speak like nobody in the Bible ever spoke.

When Jesus came before the masses, and He stood up there on the mountain, five thousand people, did He say, "I want to speak to you about the transitive nature of the verbal Greek participle of the Word, which is going to lay out the inner-sanctum of the heart of the inside crucible, that you may understand the parable which is found in this passage, which we also then will study the angelology of the Bible, the soteriology of the Bible, and then we will conclude with the soteriology of man"? Everybody down there is saying, "Wow, he is really smart. What did he say? I do not know, but boy, it sure sounded impressive! What was that word? Soteriology!" The whole world just goes, "Aw!"

I want to tell you something: when it comes to being a doctor, thank God for your language. But I cannot get into it because you have a trade that is exclusive to you. You become a dentist; God bless you, you need to do it. Lawyers do the same thing. Thank God lawyers need to have it to keep people like me from practicing law. Everybody needs to have that language to protect their deal, and you need to go pay that if you are going to learn because that is a trade. Where it stops is when it comes to this Book.

Because you have the same Holy Spirit of God as Dr. Fine, Dr. Howard, and Dr. Fine's God. You have the same Book. Do not ever let yourself be intimidated into thinking that because you do not know the Greek and the Hebrew, you cannot get on par with God. You have to go learn some dead language that nobody in the world ever speaks anymore, and you have to really just spend the rest of your life digging out the Greek nuggets.

Let me tell you something: the universal language is English. The Bible has only been written in three universal languages all through history: Hebrew in the Old Testament, Greek in the New Testament, and English today. You have everything you need right in that Book.

Doctor. The first thing somebody asks when you go to pastor a church is, "Where have you been to school?" It is not about what you know about God; it is about where you have been to school. "What kind of degree do you have?" "We had Dr. So-and-so here." Doctor, doctor, doctor. We are a Laodicean church. There are so many doctors around here. But do you know what? God is sick. The Bible says He spews the angel out of His mouth.

So, "What kind of degree do you have, Bob?" "I have my BA." "Really? Where did you get that?" "The day I was born again." That is the only one I need. Everything else is a waste of your time. I am saying all this to say this: do not let anybody tell you that you cannot get that Book and you cannot have the relationship with God. It is not about your IQ; it is about your attitude of heart toward what God said. The biggest idiots you ever met in your life have no understanding about what the Word of God said. Do you know why? Because they have beguiled us from the simplicity that is in Christ. God never spoke that way. If you are a doctor, if you are a mechanic, if you are a lawyer, a dentist, I am all for it. But not for a Christian. You are to have the simple things. When God wrote a Book, He wrote it in fifth-grade language that any idiot in this world could understand, and you could have as much with God as you want.

### *The Danger of Complacency*

*Then, in Numbers 31-32, we get into another problem. This is a great picture. All these poor people, they just cannot get out of it. They are on a journey; they are in a battle. They were told to stand, and they just keep getting defeated because of all the bad advice, all the bad teaching, all the mixed multitude, all the people coming in trying to take the Bible from them and laying them out. Here they are; God takes care of them in spite of themselves.*

In Numbers 31, He gives them a great victory. They whipped the Midianites. Balaam, the guy that gave them the problems in Numbers 21, 22, 24, 25, he is killed in Numbers 31:8. In Numbers 31:9-54, they take the spoils; it is all theirs. This is a picture of you and I finally getting to that place where we really get some victory in our lives.

In Numbers 32, they get so complacent and so satisfied. They want to stay right where they are at. They were putting bumper stickers on their chairs that said, "More cattle, less battle." That is where we are at today. They had some great victories; they were enjoying the spoils. Now they are saying, "We do not want to go over Jordan. Let us stay right here."

Numbers 32:5 says they are saying, "The land is good for cattle, and we have much cattle." That is where we are at today. We have too much of everything in our Christian lives. That is where we are at.

We got so satisfied that the greatest event in the Old Testament, the crossing of Jordan, which was the key to the millennial reign of Christ, the key to the establishment of God's nation, the key to everything in the rest of the Bible, God's people, they caused a victory, and they got

success, and they got spoiled, and they got cattle, and they got everything they could ever want. They are now saying, "Why do we not just stay here? More cattle, less battle."

That crossing of Jordan was the most important doctrine in the Old Testament. It is like us today. We have lost the concept of what God is doing, and we are satisfied. We are complacent. We are lethargic. We have everything we want. We are happy. Oh, I know gas is two bucks a gallon, but my goodness, look at all that you have! You have a television set that you can get from the cable company. It should not get fifty channels; five more bucks, two hundred channels, satellite, you get a thousand channels. You have cars, clothes. You have malls that you can go to and walk down the aisle and look in the window. You can go just to see what you do not have.

You turn on the television, and it is just like this: "Go here. Be like this. Drink this. Buy this. Eat this. Go here." Before our eyes all day long, it is everything to make us satisfied. The danger is that as you come to church, you get good Bible here, do you not? Thank you for those three amens. You get good Bible here, do you not? You learn the Bible? Has it changed your life? Would you rather be anywhere else in the world than here today? Half of you said yes, and half of you said no. That really bothered me, but maybe you did not understand the question.

Let me tell you this: I struggle with this because I am so intense when it comes to that Book, and I know it. I also know God gave me the ability for people. I know it; I am not bragging. If you knew my life, you would not want anything to do with me. But if I knew your life, I would not want anything to do with you either. So, there we are.

But the bottom line is this: there is a danger, and some of you know what I am talking about. There is a danger, and you get Bible so good all the time because you get satisfied. You get spoiled. When that happens to all of us, you get complacent. Why should you study anymore? You can come here, Bob, and lay it out on Sunday morning. Why should you dig into the Bible yourself? "Well, I can come on Thursday night, and I can hear all I need."

Let me tell you something: I love you with all my heart, and you are here to learn, but get this one thing in your mind: you cannot exist in this world with my armor. You are going to have to get your own. David could not do it when he went out to fight Goliath. Saul tried to give him his, and he rattled around like a midget in a submarine. They were telling me about the time I preached for a convention of midgets. I did; they had me in to speak. I did, Mindy. I got a standing ovation; I did not even know it. Mindy is always good for the trap play up the middle.

I am going to tell you, there is a danger of being blessed of God. There is a danger of having the power of God in your life. Philippians 3:10 says:

*Philippians 3:10*

*That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;*

Everybody says, "I want to know God. I want to know the Bible. I want to have the power of His resurrection." Well, you better read the rest of the verse: "fellowship of his sufferings." You see,

the power with God without the sufferings of God will lead to corruption every time in your life. The two have to balance them out.

I am telling you, that is what is wrong here. That is the danger in your life and my life and in this church. It is so good. We have so much fun with the Word of God. It is easy to forget, and it is easy to say, "Bob, why do we not just stay here and not go on? Bob, we have everything we need. We have a nice building. We have this. We have that. Why do we not just have more cattle, less battle?" I will tell you why: because that is not the mission.

I will tell you why: my Commander-in-Chief called me to stand. I love you all, but I do not care if nobody wants to stand. I do not care; I will stand by myself. I do not care; I will stand. I know that is the issue of my age, and I am going to stand.

Do you know what? It is not about what your friends think about what you do or what you do not do. Somebody said, "Well, you know..." Hey, let me tell you something: your friends are not going to give an account for you at the Judgment Seat of Christ; you are. When you stand there, He is not going to ask about your social circle. He is not going to ask about your income. He is not going to ask about all the nice things you did, a nice little Bible study, the ecumenical slurpees you went to, and the group hugs you got. He is going to want to know about, "What did you stand for? Did you figure it out and stand?"

These people, they have lost sight of the cause. They have lost sight of the cost. They have lost sight of the consequences. Now they want to stay on this side of Jordan instead of going on in the battle because they have been so intense. Now they got a reprieve; they got a blessing. They won a great victory, and they all just said, "Let us just stay here."

I will tell you why I cannot stay here. I will tell you why I cannot stay here: because there is a cause. God has a purpose and a desire that He saved me for, and I cannot lose sight of my cause.

I will tell you something else: I am not going to lose sight of the cost. He gave His Son on the cross for me for one reason: to save my soul from hell and to say, "Bob, do this for Me until I come back." I am not going to lose sight of that cost.

But for me, selfishly, I am not going to lose sight of the consequences, because there is a Judgment Seat of Christ, brother, that every born-again child of God and every church in this world is going to stand before God and give an account: "Did you figure out where you are at and what God is doing? As you find out the issue, did you stand?" "Stand therefore, having done all to stand." Power of God without the suffering of God will be a mess every time.

## VIII. Conclusion: No Discharge from War; God Blesses Faithfulness

Lastly, and I am done. Numbers 33-36. The battles continue. They get close to Jordan, and in Joshua, they are going to cross over. I could give you one verse of Scripture for Numbers 33-36; it would simply be this: Ecclesiastes 8:8. There is no discharge from that war.

*Ecclesiastes 8:8*

*There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.*

We do not get out until Jesus comes back. I want to tell you something else: they wandered for forty years. Deuteronomy 1:39 says that one of the reasons they wandered was because all of that generation that came out of Egypt had to die. God would not let them go into the land. In other words, they all lost the inheritance that they had. Everybody that came out, over 2 million people. He said in that verse, Deuteronomy 1:39, only the little ones that did not know right from wrong in that day got to go in. Every adult that left Egypt that got all messed up on where to stand, got messed up with the other nations, got messed up with everything in the world, looked at the obstacles, not the opportunities, they got scared and wanted to stay. They all wandered in that wilderness until every one of them was dead. They lost their inheritance because of their lack of faith in what God had said. Every one of them except Joshua and Caleb.

If I were to sum up the Book of Numbers in one sentence, it would be a short sentence; it would simply be this: God blesses faithfulness. When you do not have faithfulness, you lose the blessings of God. Joshua and Caleb were faithful. You are going to either turn to God or you are going to turn from God. He says, "Having done all to stand, stand therefore." The farther you get along in your Bible, the hotter the battle is going to come. But I want to tell you something: God blesses faithfulness.

I will tell you a story. Last Thursday night, a young man got saved. I do not want to go into a lot of details about it, but let me tell you how he got saved. He was separated from his wife. His wife came to one of our Bible studies and got saved, came and talked to me and said, "My husband is unsaved." She said, "I do not know what to do." So I simply told her what to do: "God saved you. You need to stay faithful to God and let God deal with him."

Last Thursday night, he raised his hand. At that invitation, when he raised his hand, he told me afterwards, he said, "I have never wanted to get saved so bad in all my life. I was so scared, preacher." He said, "I just knew I needed to get saved." Do you know how that guy got saved? He said, "Yes, because you taught Bibles, did you not?" Do you know why he got saved? Because his little wife was faithful. She held the line, and she was faithful.

Do you know how that little girl got saved? Because you were faithful. You brought her to Bible study when she got saved, and you were faithful. Do you know why you were faithful? Because she was faithful, and she took care of you and brought you up, did she not? Do you know why you were faithful? It was twenty years ago I was faithful. You remember when it was early times when it started, huh? That faithfulness to you, to her, to him, and him to somebody else. I was faithful because thirty years ago in my life, somebody was faithful to me, and before that to him, and down the line. That is what it is, folks. God is faithful, and God blesses your faithfulness.

It is not about the obstacles; it is about the opportunities. But none of those people in that chain of events would have ever gotten that boy saved if they had just looked at the obstacles instead of the opportunities. When that little girl called me on the phone, she could have given me every

excuse in the world of why it was not going to work. She did not want to hear it; she just wanted to know what to do to make it work.

You see, she had not matured where you and I are yet, where she doubted God. She believed that God could save me. "God can fix this thing too." It is still pure. God help us to stay that way.

But that is it. It is not about being a great preacher or being a lousy preacher. It is not about having some building that has 50 million people in it. It is not about having some church of 10,000. It is not about being on TV, radio, or being a nationally known guy or not. It is none of those things. Do you know what it is about? It is just about being faithful. Faithful to that Book. That is all.

I do not have any endearing qualities; I just have a Book. I have told you before, either God can do it or God cannot. If He cannot, I do not want to. It is His. If that Book is not what He said, and I put all my eggs in one basket, I have told you, either God is going to build this church purely on that Book, and...