

### I. Introduction and Ministry Vision

In just a moment, we are going to get into the book of 2 John. Let me just give you a little report about yesterday. As you know, a group of us went down to the Old Friend's Camp Meeting, a Bible conference down in Joplin, Missouri. I was preaching down there throughout the day, and it is kind of a sister church down there that really loves God, really loves the Bible, and is really trying to do what is right. We just had a great time down there yesterday. I appreciate everybody that went down. It is good for you to go down there and to see people that are like-minded as you are. They always treat us very graciously when we go down there, and the food was great. It was just a great time. Our Cornerstone played, and they did a great job of ministering through music.

I think I wound up, when I figured it all up, they had me slotted for three two-hour sessions with 40 minutes in between, and I think I talked to and answered 9,000 questions between sessions, so I think I wound up preaching about eight hours yesterday. I was beat last night, but you know what? I am tired this morning, but I will tell you what, it is a good tired. I was telling somebody this morning, you know what? There have been many times in my life when I was tired and worn out for something that I did or something I did for the world or the devil. It is a good feeling to know you are tired because you did something for God. So if I seem a little punchy this morning, that is why, but I will snap out of it here when I get kicked into it. Anyway, we are glad you are here this morning, and as I said, if you have your Bible, let us turn to the book of 2 John.

As you know, I told you we were going to try. I said initially when some of you asked me, and I really thought I would do 2 John and 3 John together because they are such short books. But I have to tell you, when I started laying 1 John out, and it had been a while since I really went through 2 John, I read it all the time or I take verses out of it, and somebody asked me a question in Bible study or whatever, but nobody really much asked questions about 2 John or 3 John. But when I got into laying it out and all the material I had there in my Bible, I thought to myself, it is never going to happen. There is so much in 2 John, and you would not think that there would be, but there certainly is.

As you know, we have been coming through the Bible. Our church has been in existence for a little over two years, and we started basically laying out some key material in the first probably six or seven or eight months of our church, and then we moved to coming through the Bible book by book. I wanted to lay a foundation in your life because of where we are going ministry-wise. Now that we are ready to start the athletic ministry and the outreach and how we are approaching that, you can better see how we have used our time wisely. God in the process has brought in a host of young couples and singles, and we are in the process of bringing them along.

The really neat thing about the Bible is that the principles of the Word of God always are the same. Because of that, it does not matter where you get in the Bible. It is not like, "Well, I did not start when they started the church, so I really do not have, I will never catch all that stuff." Or like somebody would say, "Well, you know what, I am coming in here in 2nd John, and he has

been teaching all these books of the Bible, I will never get caught up." That is not the way it works. The Bible is such a book because it is not human and by design. God put it together supernaturally, so the same principles that work in 2nd and 3rd John are the same principles that work anywhere in the Bible. So wherever you jump in, you can learn the Bible and you can begin from there. It is a great concept, and that is because when God wrote this book, He wrote it for everybody.

So today, as we have been coming through, we are coming into the book of 2nd John, and then next week we will do 3rd John, and then we are going to do the book of Jude, and then we are going to do the book of Revelation. Somebody said, "Well, then what are you going to do?" We are going to move right on into this thing. Because once we finish the books of the Bible, we have got a great platform for going back in and showing you how the individual books break down by going through God's systematic study. Have you heard me say a thousand times that God has a systematic study by which He lays out the Bible? That is the study we are going to begin now that we have got the foundation laid, we have got the books defined. Now we are going to go in when we finish these books, and this will take us probably two or three years, but when we are done, if you can stay in it and get half of it, you will be ready to do something for the Lord. Most of you are ready right now, and that is my goal. My goal is to train you for ministry, train you for what God wants to do in your life, to help you get your marriages where they need to be, to help you get your families where they need to be, and all of those aspects. Then in the process, getting yourself where you need to be in your own relationship with God. So that is where we are at, and today we are going to look at the book of 2 John, and we are going to take it as we find it and kind of lay it out.

## II. The Unique Perspective of John

You remember last week when we started 1 John, I told you how the books that the Apostle John writes are very key books. The Apostle John is a very unique character, and we talked about character studies. Some of you on Thursday night really asked some good questions in the last couple of weeks about how to lay out character studies, and those are very important. I told you, if you remember, that John is probably the most unique writer in all of the Bible, and there is a reason for that.

When John writes his books, and we talked about it that week, he writes the Gospel of John. He writes 1, 2, and 3 John, and then he also writes the book of the Revelation. When John writes those books, he writes from a very unique perspective. John is the only man in the Bible when he writes that he has everything else in front of him that has already been written in the Bible. He has the completed New Testament minus his books right before him. There is nothing that he lacks. He understands how it all begins to come together, and of course, God chose him to write the final books of the Bible because of his relationship with God, and we talked about that.

We talked about how the Apostle John is one of the greatest character studies of really what your life and my life should be in our relationship with God. We talked about how that of all the apostles that Jesus had, only John finished the course. John went all the way. I always thought it was unique. When Jesus Christ is hanging on the cross there when He is dying, John is standing

at His feet, and Jesus makes an interesting statement. He says that John, and He looks at Mary, Jesus looks at Mary, His mother, and then He looks at John, and then He says, "Woman, behold thy son." At that point on the cross, He gave His mother, Mary, to John for custodianship. In other words, John is supposed to take care of Jesus' mother from this point on.

I always thought that was very instructive, and I know that from a historical aspect that that was the right thing to do because Mary, she is losing her Son, and Jesus said to John, "Take care of my mother." Now, who of us that was not going to die, and we had a wife or a mother or somebody, we would say, "Hey, look after them." Now, that is the practical historical thing. But you know when you come to your Bible, Mary, the mother of Jesus, she is a type of the nation of Israel. She is a type of the nation of Israel. In fact, when you go over to Revelation 12, you will find about the woman who is in travail, who pains to be delivered, and she brings forth a man-child. That man-child is the Lord Jesus Christ, and He is caught up to God and glory on a throne, and of course, that is a reference to Christ. Now, the reference to the woman there is Israel, but the story is about a woman having a child, and that makes Mary, the mother of Jesus, a type of the nation of Israel.

I find that it is very instructive because here is a man, John, who is a type of the church in every way, shape, or form. Yet, we find that at this time, Jesus turns His mother, Israel, over to the custodianship of John, a type of the church. You know what that tells me? That tells me exactly what Paul wrote in Romans 11:25-27. The blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles come in, and then he goes down and he explains to the church that we are the custodians of the nation of Israel. He says that they are the enemies of the gospel to you, but you are to understand that they are the elect of the beloved. It shows that the church's job is to look after the nation of Israel and to take care of the nation of Israel, typified by Jesus giving His mother, a type of the nation of Israel, to John. All kinds of things like that.

So when John writes, he writes with a very unique perspective. When John writes, he lays things out from an angle that fits right into your life and my life. That is why when John writes, his books have dual applications. There are practical things there that line up with what Paul says. We are going to see that today. Then there are things in this book that line up to the nation of Israel and what God is dealing with them. We will see that today. That is the way you and I ought to be. You and I ought to have two sides to us as a child of God. We have to have one side that understands what God is doing with us, and then we have to have another side that we understand what God is doing with the nation of Israel. You will see that as we get through it today.

### III. Structure of 2 John

The book of 2 John is a very easy book. It has only got one chapter in it, and it has only got 13 verses in it. It breaks down basically right in the middle. I am going to give you the breakdown of the book so you can follow it through in your own personal study.

- Verses 1-6: A practical teaching of how that we are to walk in truth.

➤ Verses 7-13: Watching for error.

Now, that has a practical side, and it has a doctrinal side. What I am going to show you today for the most part as we come through here is I am going to lay out the practical side of things, then I am going to show you the doctrinal side. I am going to show you how this book fits to you. I am going to show how it fits to the nation of Israel. So verses 1-6 have a practical side and a doctrinal side. But the theme of the first six verses is walking in truth. Then we have verses 7-13. We also have a practical side to this and a doctrinal side to this. The doctrinal side and the practical side are under the theme of watching for error.

As always, we are going to follow the systematic study that we have laid out so far. We are going to just come through it and we are going to look at it as the Bible lays itself out and we will get some truth out of it for your own practical relationship with God and also to help you better understand the nation of Israel.

Let us pray. Father, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. We thank You for those that have come today. We pray for the many that are out sick or traveling. We pray that You will be with them as they nurse their families back to health or they make their way back to Kansas City. We just pray, Father, that You will watch over us, take care of us. Lord, give us a good time in Your Word today and we will thank You and praise You in Jesus' sake, for His name we ask it. Amen.

## IV. God's Two Plans

Two plans in your Bible. If you want to keep the Bible very simple and you want to remember the Bible in a very simple form, just remember these two plans. God has two plans that are unfolded in the Bible. The first plan is the plan that He has for His people, the nation of Israel. It is a very entailed plan and it covers the whole space of the Bible, the Old Testament, including the New Testament. I do not care the fact that we are in the church age right now. God is still working with His people, the nation of Israel, because God has got something that He is going to give them that has got to happen to do with the future.

God has two plans in the Bible. If you want to just remember those two simple concepts, you are already ahead of 98% of God's people in the world who do not know that. God has two plans that the Bible is written around. Every verse in the Bible, every book in the Bible, every chapter in the Bible, every man and woman in the Bible, everything in the Bible will weave itself in and out of those two plans. Your job, and my job, is simply to learn those two plans, learn to identify those two plans, learn to define those two plans, and then learn to take the scriptures and rightly divide them, which ones go to one plan and which one goes to the other. That is all the Bible is. That is what I do. That is what I try to help you to do. Everything we have done in these lessons has been to help you understand those two plans.

I do not see any value in making the Bible more complicated than it already appears to be, and I told you, God wrote a book that anybody could understand. The Bible is written in fifth grade English. The Bible is a book that anybody that understands basic English can read. God did not write it in a way that only an elite group could understand it. God did not write it a way that only

educated people can get it. God wrote it that people like me could get it. I am not an educated man. I have never been to Bible college. I do not want to go to Bible college. I had a hard time getting out of high school. I was in the seventh grade so long the kids brought me the apple. They thought I was the teacher. Nothing great about me in the sense that I just believe what God gave me. He wrote me a book. He wrote it in a simple form because I am a very simple individual. He wrote it so any idiot could get it because I am definitely an idiot. He wrote the thing out that if I just wanted truth and wanted to find the truth of God, He gave me a book that was simple.

Now I have spent 35 some years of my life coming through that book. I understand it a lot better now than I did. I do not understand it all, but I believe what I understand. So now I have the ability to show you how simple it is to help you in your personal life, to help you in your family, to help you in your marriage, to help you raise your kids, to help you in your individual walk with God to be the man or the woman God wants you to be. That is the way it works.

## V. Walking in Truth

When we come to chapter one, here is how it works. Look at chapter one. I am going to begin to read the first six verses because that is what we are going to talk about here and we will see how this thing works. Some great things here.

*2 John 1:1-6*

*The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth;*

*For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever.*

*Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.*

*I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father.*

*And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.*

*And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.*

Wow, what a great passage of scripture. Let us take this thing and break it down. The first part of these first six verses, and I told you this has to do with our walk. I told you there are two plans in the Bible and these two plans really lay out around the nation of Israel and the body of Christ. Let me show you how it works. Come back to Psalms 1. Psalms 1 is a great passage in the Word of God. I want to show you how this thing works. I am going to show you the practical side of it and I am going to show you the doctrinal side of it. I am going to show you how the practical side lays out to your life and my life. I am going to show you how the doctrinal side lays out to the nation of Israel. Remember John now. John is what you and I should be. John has the ability

to understand both plans. He has the ability to understand God's plan for the nation of Israel and he has the ability to understand God's plan for the church, you and for me.

Psalms 1. It says this, and I am going to read the first three verses here and then we are going to look at it.

*Psalms 1:1-3*

*Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.*

*But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.*

*And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.*

And then a simple verse in verse 4:

*Psalms 1:4*

*The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.*

What a great concept. Now let us talk about this for a moment because we want to talk at it from both aspects. We want to see it first of all from the personal aspect. It says here that blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly. I do not know if you know this or not, but the whole book of Psalms is a book that God wrote so you could be blessed. 67 times in the book of Psalms you find the word "blessed" or "to be blessed" or "blessed." You cannot start reading the book of Psalms without beginning to understand the great concept that God wants to bless you and me. We are going to look at this from the practical side first, then we are going to look at it from Israel's side.

God wants to bless you. I looked at this. It says, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." You know when I see in that verse, I see the progression that gets you and me into trouble. I see the progression here that gets you and me in trouble because God wants to walk with us. God wants you and I to walk together. In fact, the Bible says in the book of Amos, "How can two walk together, except they be agreed?" God wants to walk through life. Let me clarify that. God wants to walk through life's issues and life's problems with you. The Bible says during that walk He has given you a light because He does not want you to walk in darkness. The Bible says, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another." That is your walk.

Now I want you to notice what gets you and me into trouble. It says, "Blessed is the man that walketh not." See, the moment you stop walking with God, now I am talking to Christians, the moment you stop walking with God and you start walking with the counsel of the ungodly. Now that is a great phrase because the counsel of the ungodly are people who are against God who are going to counsel you differently than your pastor would or the Word of God does. When you come to me, I tell you what the Bible says. When you run out with your friends that are part of

the counsel of the ungodly, they are going to tell you what the world's status is. That is what they are going to do.

When you stop walking with God and you start walking with them, it is only a matter of time that once you start walking in the counsel of the ungodly. I mean, just follow the progression. He says, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly nor standeth in the way of sinners." Once you cease walking with God and you start walking the way of the ungodly, it is pretty soon that you are standing in the midst of them. The longer you stand with them, pretty soon you are sitting in the midst of them and you become one of them. That is the progression. In other words, every young man, every young lady, every mom, every dad that suddenly quit coming to church and quit doing what they needed to do in their life. When you look at their life and the mess that they are in, when you look at all the screwed up ideas that they have got now, when you look at failed marriages and all the things that go along, it is not complicated. I do not have to have a degree in psychology or have a PhD to figure it out. I will tell you what it is. If you are a child of God, someplace in your life, you quit walking with God and you started walking in the counsel of the ungodly and you were not just walking, you were taking their counsel. Pretty soon you were standing with them and pretty soon you are seated in the seat of the scornful.

You know what that means? That means the scum of God's people right now will make fun of you coming to church. You used to come to church and you sit there and scratch your head and say, "Why is so and so, does not he want to come to church? Why is so and so? Why does he want to come to church? And why do they make fun of me when I come to church?" Because they began that downward spiral progression of life that when you quit walking with God and you start listening to the counsel of the ungodly, pretty soon you are standing with the sinners and pretty soon you are sitting in the seat of the scornful and you are making fun of God, the things of God, just like the unsaved world does. See how easy it is? You can all pick up your degree on the way out. You are now licensed counselors. It is just that simple. It is just that easy. It is just that basic in everything that you do.

He says, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." Now here is the alternative. "But his delight is in the law of the Lord and in his law doth he meditate day and night." Your delight is the Word of God. I do not know what you delight yourself with. Now I am not one of these kind of preachers that says you cannot have fun in life. I am really not. A lot of you guys like to hunt. I like to hunt. A lot of you guys like to fish. I like to fish. I never shoot anything or I never catch anything, but I like to go. There are a lot of things I like to do. I am not one of these guys that thinks that you cannot do those things. Hey, you know what? I am going to be honest with you. You guys work hard every week. You work hard and you do things that you have to have some time off. You have to be able to enjoy the things that you want to enjoy. Hey, I am the first one. I have things that I like to enjoy. I have things that I like to do. But you know what? I am going to be very honest with you. I do not know of anything I delight myself with more than being in the Word of God.

I am not some stick in the mud that thinks that you cannot have fun. I mean, I like watching football games. I like skeet shooting. I like fishing. I like hunting. I like when that little rabbit bumps out of that thing and chucks zigzagging all over the place and you miss him and kill your dog instead. I enjoy those things. I like all kinds of things. I cannot think of anything. I mean, there are lots of things I do not like to do. I do not like golf. What were you laughing at? You cannot play it either. I tried playing golf one time and I went out and I will tell you what, I had the scare of my life. I could hit the ball harder and farther than anybody ever, they told me. But I just cannot get it to go straight. I never forget, we were playing one time and I hit that thing and there was a golf cart coming down the thing. I mean, I am shooting this way. The golf cart is over here. Man, I whacked that thing and that ball went outside. It was almost, it was like in slow motion. You know how you have those dreams when you are somebody big monster chasing you and you are trying to run and you cannot run fast and you like your feet are stuck in something and everything stops time. Well, that is what it was and it was real, it was not a dream. I can see that golf ball leaving that tee and just going in slow motion and these guys are driving down, and there are four guys in it. That golf ball is getting closer and suddenly I see the stark terror on their face when they realize that there is a golf ball coming right for this golf cart. That golf ball hit inside that thing and I can see it rattling around. Those guys, beer is going everywhere, and the cart was going crazy, and I am seeing it right now. I am seeing my name in headlines, "Bob Alexander up for four counts of first degree murder." I mean, that thing went around there, man, and shot out the other side and I thought to myself, that was it. That was it. That was my last game of golf for which I got four thank you cards from the guys that were in that cart. But anyway, that was it. That is not my game, but I like it. I watch it on television. I just watch it because I want to see if they can hit somebody in the cart. None of them can. That Tiger Woods guy, he can put it in a hole out there, but he cannot aim this way, go that way and hit four guys in the cart. I can. Now you have got to give me four million dollars. I can do what none of these guys can do. I have got an angle on my golf ball that just will not quit.

Anyway, but you know what? I cannot think of anything I do in my life and I like to do a lot. I like the outdoors, man. I grew up trapping coyotes, trapping red fox, gray fox. I grew up trapping all that kind of stuff. I paid for my whole first baby being born by catching and trapping snapping turtles. They are that big. We did not have any insurance back then and I grew up in a trapping family and boy, I will tell you what, I had a restaurant that paid me eight dollars a pound for turtle meat and frog legs. I paid for my first baby being born. We did not have any money. I went out and trapped turtles and frog legs. We went out one night and I will tell you what, we are on this big old 25 acre backwater dam with a backwater come up and it was dark out that night and the bullfrogs were so, if you were standing next to me, I could not talk to you in a normal voice. They were "boop, roop," everywhere. You take a flashlight, shine over that bank line, all you would see would be, it looked like little headlights coming to you, frog's eyes. We giggered frogs all night long, brought back 600 frogs that night and then we stayed up all night cleaning them out, cutting them up. We went down there one night, man, and I will tell you what, one day down in turtles, man, I will tell you what, I love to do that stuff. I still got turtle nets in my garage just in case medical insurance runs out. I will go back to trapping turtles. I do not know. But I get them, you want a challenging life? Get a 65 pound snapping turtle out of something about that big. You have got a neck like that and a head like that. I mean this movie Jaws 1, 2,

and 3, hey, I make my own movie called Snapper. I will tell you what, them suckers bite the whole deal. They do not let go. I will tell you what, but I like that stuff. I mean I get into it. I get out there, you know, and get out in the morning, take the dogs out in that old air, crisp out there, boy, and I can just, you know, doves are flying back and forth, man. I mean I am in South End of Raytown and people wonder why shotgun blasts are going off, man. I will tell you, you know what, I enjoy it. I enjoy watching the Chiefs play. I enjoy watching the Royals play. I hate baseball, but then them big old hot dogs with chocolate on it are great. There is something about getting a hot dog at a ballgame and nachos that is better than any other place in the world. I will just tell you what, and the beer is good too. I am just kidding. I am just kidding. I am down there, you know, and I will tell you what, and I love that kind of stuff, but I am going to tell you something. I do not know of anything that delights me more than getting into that book. That is my delight. That is the way it should be. God does not want you to quit enjoying life. He just wants you, once you get saved, He just wants you to enjoy it with Him. That is all.

Then it says in verse 3, "And he shall be like a tree planted by the river of waters that bringeth forth his fruit in his season." Now that is a great thing. You are going to find that there are four seasons to your life and my life. There are four things that we have in our life that are seasonal. When the Bible says "bring forth his fruit in his season," these four aspects in your life have to do with fruit.

> The first aspect in your life is your life itself. There is a season to your life. You are young, springtime, you grow up, summertime, you go into the senior years of your life, fall, and then you hit the wintertime in your life, and it is over. Everything dies in the winter. That is the way it works.

> The other thing that is seasonal is your family. You have kids, that is the springtime, and you grow them up. They come to the place where the summertime in their life, they go through the fall time of their life, and they will go through the wintertime in their life too.

> Something else that is seasonal in your life is the Word of God. You start out not knowing it all. You know a little bit about it. In the springtime, you come into the summertime of your life when you really get a handle on it. That is why there are seven stages of spiritual growth, folks. You start out as a baby Christian in the springtime of your life, and you wind up as an elder or the aged in the wintertime of your life. In other words, the older you get physically, the more you ought to know about God because you have been walking with Him longer. You do not learn about God by just going to seminary someplace. You do not learn about God by just going through the... You learn about God by walking with Him every day of your life.

➤ The last part of the season is your ministry. My ministry has a season to it. I started out young. I came through the springtime, the summertime years of my life, and now I am coming out of summer and moving into fall. There will be a time in my life that Jesus does not come that I will enter into the wintertime.

Every one of these four things have to bear fruit together. Your life is nothing more than bearing fruit for God by giving your life to God. Your family is raising them up that they help you bear the fruit that God wants you to bear. Your Bible is the process of the seasons of learning more about it so that when you get to the older part of the... That is why in the Bible no man in the Old Testament could ever do anything until he was 30 years old. They understood the concept of seasons. We might probably say from that that you really do not enter into the summertime of your life till you are 30, from the Bible standpoint. In fact, I am sure you could probably go through the Bible and put this whole thing together and you could probably get the breakdown of these four seasons in the years by the examples in the Bible. I am sure you could.

But the Bible says that you and I are to be like a tree planted by the river of waters. The river of waters is the Holy Spirit of God. You and I as a tree get our roots down and get the water and the deeper the roots, the better the water and you get that water and it makes the tree grow. That is a picture of your life and my life when it walks with God and then it says this, "Bring forth his fruit in his season." There is a season to your fruit bearing. There is a season to my fruit bearing. You have got to see it. This is why the devil is after young people.

We were driving back from Joplin last night and I was thinking of what I was going to say today and we came by John Knox Village. I got thinking about this and I mentioned this to you before. I do not know where I did. I remember saying something to somebody about it or someplace. But I thought to myself, I always think about John Knox Village every time I drive by. You know what? You know that Independence and Lee's Summit and Raytown and Kansas City are the drug meth capitals of the world. You know that? And yet in the middle of all that there has never been one meth bust in John Knox Village. Have you ever noticed how old people are like that? Senior citizens type. They do not ever get hung up on drugs. Have you ever noticed if you ever walk through John Knox Village or walk through down the hallways down those rooms down there and see those old dear people or any old folks? You go down there on a Saturday night, man, that thing is just as quiet as you can be. You walk out of my neighborhood on Saturday night while the cops were down the street the other night, a big old fight going on down there. I mean four or five cop cars. I mean guys out in the street knocking each other down. It is a great place.

I had to laugh this week. I do not know if you saw it in the Star or not. Kansas City Star, I always read the Kansas City Star. I do two things and this is another sign to get in order. You start looking at the obituary to see who died. I want to see if my name is in there. If I die I do not want to miss it. But anyway, and I thought to myself here was this article in here. Kansas City, one of the warmest places with people and friends in all the United States. Big article right above it. Man shoots his friend as he is talked to him on the street corner. I thought to myself, man, if that is not an oxymoron, I do not know what is. I do not know what an oxymoron is. But anyway, if

that is not a contradiction in terms, that is it. Kansas City, the warmest, friendliest town in America. Right above it, man shoots his friend on the street corner in the middle of the city. Over an argument. Oh man, that is us. That is us.

But there is a time to your fruit bearing. Apple trees do not bear apples in February. Pears do not grow on trees in January. You see, the reason why you do not have, the old folks are not tempted with the sins that young folks are, and they do not get into the music, they do not get into the drugs, they do not get into all of that stuff that goes on, even though they are lost and on their way to hell in many cases. You know why that is? Because they offer no value to the devil now. The devil knows something that most of us do not understand today, that there is a twilight, a winter time of your life, and when you hit that point, you are not going to do anything for God or the devil. So the devil does not care about you anymore. He is going to focus on where the youth is, where the young men and the young ladies are, because that is where the potential is, and he is going to work doubly hard at canceling out your fruit bearing season. Let us go back to the beginning. You know how that happens? You quit walking with God, you start walking with the world. You start taking their counsel, you start hanging out with them, and pretty soon you are just scornful like they are. It is infallible. It is infallible.

Of course, it goes on there and it says, "His leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." We call that the Midas touch. King Midas was a man, that everything he touched turned to gold. A child of God that does what God wants him to do, that walks with God, that understands the things I am talking about this morning. There will be nothing in his life that he does not touch that God will not get the honor and glory for, and that gold translates into the gold of the judgment seat of Christ. You see, that is the practical relationship of a walk with God out of the book of 2 John 1.

Now, let us look at it from the doctrinal side for Israel. "Blessed is the man." The man here is Israel. The man here from a practical experience is you and me, but the man here is Israel, verse 1, doctrinally. "Blessed is the man," Israel, "that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly." Israel had a problem with that all down through the Old Testament. They always took somebody else's counsel. They always forsook what God told them, and they always did their own thing. That is why they got messed up with Baal worship and everything else and wound up putting their kid through the fire of Molech and doing all those stupid things back there, and that is really why God got them, because look what happened when they quit walking with God as a nation and they began to get the counsel of the ungodly. You know what they wound up being? They wound up putting my Savior on the cross and making fun of Him, laughing at Him, and now they are sitting right in the seat of the scornful. The very people that God called out to be His people because they ceased to walk with God, began to walk with the counsel of the ungodly and hang out with the sinners, wind up putting their Savior, their Messiah, my Savior, on the cross of Calvary and then making fun of Him while He is on there. Somebody said, "That is a terrible thing." What are you talking about? God's people do that all the time today in the practical side. See? Two applications to this. John sees both.

Let us go on here. "But his delight is in the law of the Lord." Self-explanatory, if you are looking at it from the nation of Israel, that would be the Old Testament law that God gave them and they

were to meditate it day and night. In fact, if you would go over to Jerusalem today and go down to the Wailing Wall, you know what you would see? You would see a bunch of old guys with little funny hats, with beards, black suits, they would be up there doing this. Now, you may look like at first glance they are banging their head against the Wailing Wall, but that is not what they are doing. They are doing what they are supposed to do. They are meditating in that book day and night. That is why when, in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, when Christ shows up, a commercial fisherman, Peter, knew more about the Old Testament than any Bible scholar in the world today. You know why? Because as an Old Testament, poor, abstaining Jew, he was taught and trained to meditate in the Scriptures day and night. Day and night. You say, "Well, how do they miss Christ?" Because even in action, you get the wrong attitude of heart. Just knowing the Bible does not solve your problem. It is doing what the Bible says that solves your problem. You can have the academics of knowing the Bible. That is what Israel has got today. They have got all the head knowledge. They missed it in here.

Then it goes on and it says this, "And he shall be like a tree planted by the river of waters." Hey, when it comes to the nation of Israel, there is only one tree that is planted by the river of waters anywhere in your Bible, and it is the Tree of Life in Ezekiel 40-48. The water comes out of the Millennial Temple and comes down through the King's Highway and goes down into the Dead Sea. The Dead Sea comes alive. The desert blooms as the rose, as the Bible says, and out it goes. Israel is that tree that is planted at that time, and that time is the Millennial reign of Christ. You see how it works both ways? It is exactly how it works.

So when you look at 2 John and you see that the first six verses have to do with our walk with God, I want you to see this thing. I want you to see how it fits from a practical application, you and me, and I want you to see how it applies to a doctrinal application to the Nation of Israel. Because John is the most unique writer in all the Bible, and when he writes, he writes from both perspectives because there are two plans in the Bible. One is the Nation of Israel and the other one is the Body of Christ, and I just gave you a place in the Old Testament that shows you how both plans work out. That is all the Bible is.

The Elder is John, and I think that is very instructive because John was not a pastor. John was an Elder. That is a great thought because we already looked at the intimate relationship that John had with Jesus. We already saw how that he laid his head on the very breast of the Lord Jesus Christ and heard the very heartbeat of God. We have already accounted for the fact that he is probably the greatest man in the Bible that foreshadows what you and I should be, and he is a man who figures out the Bible the way that you and I should figure it out in both concepts, Israel and the Church, but yet he is not a pastor. He is an Elder.

I think that is very instructive because through my years in the ministry I have met lots of people, talked to lots of people, bumped into lots of people that thought the ministry was just the pastor's job. The winning people to Christ was my job. The really knowing the Bible was the pastor's job. See that mindset comes because you do not understand that maybe not all of you are called to pastor, but if you are saved you have been called to minister. There are four seasons to your life. One of these days when you get home to the judgment seat of Christ, God is going to check the fruit if you are saved. He is going to check the fruit. He is going to check that thing out and he is

going to see what kind of fruit you bore. I think it is very instructive here that this aspect of walking with God, the man that God chose to do it was not even a pastor. He is just a common ordinary person like you who through the process of spiritual growth started out with a season in his life when he knew nothing about the Bible and wound up in his life where he is an elder. We know that the Bible says as an elder is a man or a woman who has an overseer in the church. Women are elders too. They help oversee the congregation and the flock with the pastor. They are not ordained as a pastor, but their responsibility is the same as the pastor. Ministry. Helping oversee the ministry, taking the weight off the pastor's shoulders in different areas of ministries and working together as a team. Last Thursday night, maybe now you boys understand why I said to you the things that I said in our little meeting. I am sure you did. That is my point, guys. That is my point. You see, the plan for you is to come through that process, but I have got to start with you somewhere. Well, whenever you start, you now know what I expect. For the rest of you, do not worry about that. I just gave him a little pep talk. We walked around the room, holding hands, saying, "Bowers and Gee, girls for Jesus, soldiers, everyone."

Then it says in verse 1, "The elder unto the elect lady." Now, this is where we have some fun here. This is where the fun starts. All scholarship says that this lady here is the church. Of course, they do not know what to do with the book of 2 John. The NIV is even funnier. The NIV says this elect lady is a particular lady who John really liked who he was writing to. I like that. Anything but what you have got, you see. Now, I hate to break all the bubbles here, but the church is called a dove in the Bible. The church is called "my undefiled one." The church is called a bride. The church is called a virgin. The church is called a chaste virgin, but the church is never called a lady. Never called elect, never. And she is never called a lady.

The definitive passage for the elect lady here would be Matthew 24:21-22. You will find the word "elect" 13 times in the Bible. Every time you find it, it will always be the nation of Israel. But the definitive verse is Matthew 24:21-22. It says there, talking about the tribulation period and the nation of Israel, nothing about the church.

*Matthew 24:21-22*

*For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.*

*And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.*

The elect is Israel. So this elect lady here has nothing to do with the church. It certainly is not some lady that John met along the way someplace. That is ridiculous. Along with this, you want to look at Isaiah 27:13, Isaiah 65:9, Isaiah 45:4. And I already gave you Matthew 24:21-22. Then also look at Matthew 24:31, I believe is something you would want to look at too. I said the word "elect" is never used for the church anywhere in the Bible. Of course, the elect here is the nation of Israel and her children down here are the same children that Peter was talking to in Acts 3:38-39 when he talked about the promise to the second coming of Christ was to Israel and her children. Same people, same crowd.

In fact, here is where, this is a good thing to learn too. This is why I could not do both books together. Now, let us take the position that the NIV and all scholarship is right. Let us say that this elect lady is the church. Let us just take that position. Let me show you how subtle the devil is. Let us take the position that this elect lady is the church. Now, once you make the elect lady the church, and then she, the elect lady, has got children, those children now have to be you and I. Then you have the great doctrine that you and I are sons of the church. See how subtle that thing is? That heresy was first taught by a guy named Polycarp all the way back in 165 AD where the Bible says in the book of Revelation 2 that the church at Ephesus left their first love, the Word of God. It is where good, godly men began to deviate from the Word of God and come up with all these cockeyed things that had nothing to do with the Bible. But down the line when the Roman Catholic Church wanted to establish their doctrine for you being a son of the church, that is where they went. So here we find it. Here we find it in 2005 in your new NIV, which is the Roman Catholic Bible anyhow, that you and I and all the teaching of scholarship that you and I, the elect lady is the church and we are her children so you and I are sons of the church. See how subtle it is? Now that is the difference between knowing your Bible and not knowing your Bible. That is the difference between understanding Bible doctrine. So we see this thing and how it lays out and it becomes a very interesting thing.

Look at verse 6 and here is another great concept. "And this is the love that we walk after His commandment, that as ye have heard from the beginning ye should walk in it." Now from a doctrinal standpoint here with the nation of Israel it shows a great truth. It shows the great truth that the nation of Israel starts in Genesis in God's mind and then began to develop down through its four seasons right there. Because in Genesis 1-10 you have the formulation of the nation of Israel. In Genesis 11-15 you have the birth of the nation of Israel with Abraham. You will find that in Genesis 14:13 a name shows up the first time in your Bible. It is the word "Hebrew." That is Abraham. That is where Israel gets its birth. Nationally, Genesis 16-17, the calling out of Israel, they go to a land that God promised them and in Genesis 18-50 you find the structuring of the nation of Israel through the 12 sons of Jacob that become the 12 tribes. So it shows you from that verse right there that the nation of Israel, God's plan, or one of God's plans was in God's mind all the way from the beginning.

Now that is a great thought if you are a Bible student because that shows you that there is a process to what God does and you are going to find out that God, when you learn your Bible to the place that you need to, you are going to find out that God has a very definite two plans in His Bible. The nation of Israel and the body of Christ, each for different reasons and you are going to find that they are both in God's mind and in the Old Testament long before they were ever called Jews. Long before they ever became an established nation. Long before they ever got Jerusalem. In God's mind, He was formulating, giving birth, calling out, and structuring the nation of Israel and the commandments that go with it as 1 John 1:6 says, "from the beginning." From the beginning all the way back to Genesis.

## VI. Watching for Error

Well then we come into the next section. Let us look at that for a few moments here and we will be done. Let us look at the next section. Let us read this section. This would be 2 John 1:7-13. This is the one I told you that how the thing was broken down here. Now watch this one. This is good. I told you now the theme of this one, the first one, the theme of the first six verses was to walk. Now we have got a good definition of that. The theme of the second half is to watch. Let us go on.

### *2 John 1:7-13*

*For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.*

*Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.*

*Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.*

*If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:*

*For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.*

*Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full.*

*The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen.*

Alright, let us look at some things in here. The first thing I want you to notice is up there in verse 7. The Bible says, "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." I told you last time we studied this back there in 1 John. He told you and I to try the spirits. To try the spirits to find out if they are of God or not. We talked about that. Here is a great example of how you try the spirits. If a man or a woman, a church, church teachings, deny that Jesus Christ is come into the flesh, the Bible says they are the spirit of antichrist. What does that mean? That means denying the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. I can take nine religions right now as we speak here that deny that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. You do not even have to think twice about them.

The "try the spirits" is simply this and I told you this last week. When you try the spirits you simply see what somebody says they believe, then you go to the scriptures and find what the Bible says about what they, and when it does not line up you drop kick them through the goalposts of life. You just try the spirits. The Spirit of God is living inside you. The Spirit of God wrote that book in front of you and when you take the Holy Spirit of God that is in you and look at the Word of God and put it together you always get the answer that God wants you to have. I do not have to think twice about a man that says, "Well, I do not think Jesus Christ was really God. I think that he was just a good teacher and a good man." See you later. See you later. Do not even have to think about it twice.

You cannot miss the doctrinal application here in verse 7 to the nation of Israel because their right in them deal is a reference to the Antichrist. Now there are two types of Antichrist. There is a practical Antichrist that you meet every day of your life and there is a doctrinal Antichrist who we hope you never meet. The practical Antichrist are people that you bump up against all day at work who are against everything that God does. They are Antichrist. They are against Christ. But then there is the Antichrist doctrinally that is going to show up and he is specifically against Christ and he is going to mislead and misguide the nation of Israel and the whole world as you know from our past studies. So you see it all right in place here.

Now before we jump into this verse let me deal with another issue here and this is a practical thing. Let me look at 2 John 1:10-11 because this is something I get asked about all the time. So let me just set the record straight for you.

*2 John 1:10-11*

*If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:*

*For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.*

Now from that I have been asked once in my lifetime and asked a hundred times. From that comes the teaching that people are afraid that when a Jehovah Witness comes to your house that you do not want to let him into your house because if you let him into your house you have violated some principle. Now I do not really care whether you let him into your house or you do not. A Jehovah Witness as Mormons are famous for going around and knocking on people's doors and they want to come in and talk to you. There are Christians who believe that if you allow them into your house you have violated some principle here and that is not true. There is a difference here and the difference is where it says "receive them into your house." Now there is a difference between letting them come into your house because you are going to wax their tail with the Bible than allowing them to come in and you receive them into your house.

When you come to my house and all of you will get there at some point or the other, you can come over anytime you want, I do not care, but when you get to my house you will find the thing that I love about us and our ministry and that is that we are just one big family. When Woody comes over he heads for two things, the Twinkies and the black cherry pop. He knows where they are at. He does not even have the courtesy to ask me anymore where they are at. When he first started coming over he said, "Hey where are the Twinkies?" Now it is, "Get out of my way I am getting to the Twinkies." I like that. I have had some of you come to my house before and open the refrigerator and see what is in there to eat. I like that. Marion comes over and my kids were there and down through there and they are eating supper. Marion just sits down and eats supper. It is just the way that it is. In other words my house is your house. When you come to my house whatever you need, whatever you want spiritually and physically if it is possible you can have it. I mean that is the way it is. You see that is what I call, that is what the Bible calls receiving you into my house. Mine is yours.

If you are a Jehovah Witness and you come to my house and it is a hot July day and you want a drink of water you are not getting one. Why? You say that does not sound very Christian. He is not a Christian. He says, "Why can't I have a drink of water?" I am going to say because if you do not trust Jesus Christ, Jehovah God, as your own personal Savior, you are going to go to a burning hell and you are not going to get any water anyhow. So if you are not going to trust Him, start practicing. See? Now some of you have a problem with that but that is because you are not as biblical as I am. You see?

I remember one time, I mean there are all kinds of ways to deal with Jehovah. I remember one time I was out there back in Ohio. I was out there doing something and I saw two guys coming down the thing there and I knew in a moment they were Jehovah Witnesses. You know, you can tell them. Mormons always ride bikes and they have little name tags. Jehovah Witnesses just look buzz haircuts and they are all dressed very nice, very clean. Hey, you know what? I wish I could get God's kids to dress like that but you cannot. Anyway, devil's kids will dress nice but God's kids will not but that is okay. That is another message. I may preach that before the end of the day is over but anyway. So I watched them coming down the thing on there and they come up to my door and I walked out and I said hi and he said, "Well how are you?" He says, "We were just in your neighborhood." I said, "I know." I said, "You are Jehovah Witnesses and there is a big guy and there is a little guy." They always sent him out in two because Matthew 10, He sent him out in two. He says, "How do you know we are Jehovah Witnesses?" I said, "Well I am a Jehovah Witness." The little guy looked at the big guy and he said, "Well we, you know, we know all the Jehovah Witnesses around here. We do not know you." I said, "When did you become a Jehovah Witness?" I said, "Oh about six years ago when I asked Jesus Christ, Jehovah God, to come into my heart and save me and I asked Jehovah God Jesus Christ to save me from a literal burning hell and I said so Jesus Christ, Jehovah God come into my heart and save me from that little burning hell. Acts 1 says you were to be my witnesses so I am a Jehovah Witness." The little guy looked at the big guy and he says, "Well that is not the kind we are." I said, "That is the only kind there is. You guys must be phonies." Okay then let them have it. Let them have it. And I will bring them in the house. You want water? Sorry. You want to use the bathroom? Go learn to tap dance. I am not going to help you.

In fact we had our discipleship meeting. Remember that guys that Saturday morning and Jehovah Witnesses came to the door and they said, "Hi what are you doing?" I said, "Oh we are having a Bible study." He said, "Oh we like to study the Bible. Is there a Bible material?" He said, "Yeah we got these things." I said, "I got 20 some people in here and I said and they got family members. I said can you get me 30?" Oh his eyes lit up. Ran down to his head mentor down there and said, "Oh boy we got a real fool up here. There is a guy that has got 15, 20 people up here and he wants to study our material. He needs to eat some. Give me some. They want it for their families. They want it there. We are going to win this whole thing. We are going to pick up 60 Jehovah Witnesses out of this thing. Give them to me." Ran back up to the house. Gave them down there to me and I said, "Thanks a lot. Brother I appreciate that." Walked in there. You were there. I said, "Hey any of you do not want these to learn some stuff? Take them." Rest on one. Right in the trash. That is 60 somebody else will not get. See how that works? Thank you very much. That is how it works. So when it talks about not receiving him into your house it does not

mean you cannot let him come in. It just means that you do not bid him Godspeed. You do not help them in their ministry of damnation of destroying people no matter who they are. I know I have been picking on Jehovah Witnesses here but you know what? I am sorry. It just came to my mind. I have more stories about Jehovah Witnesses. I have a dog named Rutherford. That is why. You started Jehovah Witnesses. But anyway.

Alright let us go on down. Look at verse 8. Verse 8 is the key. Now here is the key. Verse 8 is the key. It says, "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward." That is a great verse. You know in the Old Testament in the book of Ezekiel 33:7, it says something like this:

*Ezekiel 33:7*

*So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.*

In the Old Testament what they did is they put a watchman on the wall and the watchman always looked for the enemies that were trying to sneak in to destroy the nation of Israel. In the book of Isaiah 21:5-8 it says this:

*Isaiah 21:5-8*

*Prepare the table, watch in the watchtower, eat, drink: arise, ye princes, and anoint the shield.*

*For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth.*

*And he saw a chariot with a couple of horsemen, a chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels; and he hearkened diligently with much heed:*

*And he cried, A lion: My lord, I stand continually on the watchtower in the daytime, and I am set in my ward whole nights:*

Well it does not take a ton of bricks to fall in my head. 1 Peter 5:7-8 says:

*1 Peter 5:7-8*

*Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*

*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*

Here is somebody back in Isaiah standing on the wall watching for the city and saying, "Here comes a lion." You know what my job is? Stand in this open this book and tell every one of you tomorrow morning when you go to work, "Here comes the lion." See? That is my job. That is your job with your children. If you do not believe that, Hebrews 13:7 says:

*Hebrews 13:7*

*Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.*

That is your parents of your children. That is you and the church. If you remember here and submit yourself, why? Why? "For they watch for your souls." That is my job. As you grow up and you disciple somebody and you work with people, that is your job. When you get a whole church of people that are watching out for everybody else, not too many people get lost in the cracks. My job is to stand up here and say and look out, "There is a lion coming. Look out." That is my job. Your job to your children is to say, "Son, daughter, look out, there is a lion out there that wants to devour you." That is your job. You and I are called to be a watchman. We watch for bad doctrine. We watch for bad teaching because it is that the Bible says, "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward."

God wants you to receive a full reward at the judgment seat of Christ. God wants the nation of Israel to receive a full reward in the millennial reign of Christ. If you come out of your Bible and when we start to get into the doctrinal stuff we are going to lay all this out. You are going to find that there are five crowns in the Bible that you and I get as a New Testament Christian. You get those crowns through ministry. You get those crowns through learning the Bible. You get those crowns and at the judgment seat of Christ when God rewards you for the ministry. When you have been faithful in these ministries you get the crowns. Somebody says, "Well what is the big deal about the crown?" Well let me tell you what the big deal is. The big deal is there is going to come a day when you are going to walk in there and everybody is going to give God the glory for what He did and you are going to take all those crowns that you did for the Lord Jesus Christ and you are going to throw Him at your feet. You are going to lay them down in His feet and you are going to say, "God you gave me these crowns but I could not have done it without you and your love for me to save me and gave me heaven." You know what all glory be to God here take them back for what you gave to me. It is not going to be a great day when you walk in there with nothing to throw down. Maybe you will throw your shotgun down. Think you want it? "God I do not have a crown but here is my fishing pole." "God I do not have a crown but here is my certificate for my PhD that I got." "Well here I do not have a crown Lord I do not have any crowns but hey I will tell you what here is my bonus check for the big job that I worked my life for." "Look to yourselves. Do not lose those things that you have wrought that you might get a full reward." Simple as that.

## VII. Idols and Full Reward

You know the last, and I am done now, but I am just going to, well we are in great shape I am going to preach another hour. No I am done now but I want to show you how this book gets set up. Come to the last chapter of the book of 1 John. Come to the last chapter I want to show you how this thing all ties itself together and then we are going to go to lunch. 1 John 5:20. Now watch this, this is how it sets you up for the next book. Doctrinally and practically and I have tried my best to show you how this thing goes both ways. There are a lot of similarities between the nation of Israel and the body of Christ, a lot of things that fit, a lot of things that do not fit. I have showed you how you work it today but look at 1 John 5:20.

*1 John 5:20*

*And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.*

Now I told you the key to 1 John is knowing God and there you see it again. When you begin to know God and you learn Him the way John did through that intimate relationship then God gives you knowledge. Knowledge expands to wisdom and then wisdom expands to understanding. That is the book of Proverbs. You and I as a child of God can know God, we can know the truth and we can have understanding. I told you before knowledge is facts. Wisdom is just facts applied. An unsaved man can have knowledge and an unsaved man can have wisdom but an unsaved man or an unsaved woman cannot have understanding. Understanding is looking at any given situation and seeing the facts, understanding how the facts apply but not being able to see how God figures into it. That is understanding.

When a disaster befalls America or a disaster falls a family I hear it all the time. A little baby dies and everybody says, "Well why did God let that happen?" You see the facts are the baby died. The wisdom is we all hurt for the family but we lack understanding. We do not see why God does those things sometimes. When a great disaster falls America or someplace else around the world we have the facts. It happened. We have the wisdom. A lot of people died but we lack the understanding of why God is doing around the world and why He does things that way sometimes. I am sure after God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah back in the book of Genesis the newspaper just reeked with, "What happened? Why?" I am sure there was a lot of people running around saying, "Why did God do that? Why did God do that? When did God do that?" Well when you read the Bible you get understanding, you know why God did it. Not a thing gets figured out if you just read the Bible.

Then he says the rest of 1 John 5:20, "And we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." The book of Ephesians is a book that shows you and I, and we studied it when we came through it, that you and I are in Christ and because we are in Christ we have the understanding of truth and the true God in eternal life is in us. Then 1 John 5:21, here it comes.

*1 John 5:21*

*Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.*

You know that was the biggest problem Israel had. The biggest problem Israel had all down through the Bible in the Old Testament was simply one thing, putting other things before God. You can just find it over and over again while Moses is up on Mount Sinai getting the 10 commandments they are down there building a golden calf. I mean it just seems that every turn the corner they just got to have something to replace God with. If you were going to ask me the one question, "What was the number one thing that was Israel's downfall?" I could say unequivocally it was the idols they put in their heart and the idols they put in front of God. By the same token you want to ask me, "What is the number one problem you and I have in our life as Christians?" It is the idols we put in there before God. I do not know what else to tell you. I put myself in the same boat. I mean I am telling you, you look at this thing of receiving your

hope. What are the most unbelievable statements? "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." The magnitude of that statement in the reality of you and I as a saved man and woman at the judgment seat of Christ not receiving a full reward or losing those things that God had for you.

I talked to a man one time, this has been years ago, he was a nice guy, I really liked him but he could never turn the corner when it came to the world. He always had to have one foot in the world and try to have one foot in God and of course how can two walk together except they be agreed? They cannot. When you try to walk down the middle of highway you are going to get hit from both sides, it is as simple as that. You know what I talked to this old boy and I asked him one time I said, "You know what, what about the judgment seat of Christ? Are not you even remotely concerned that Christ died for you and He died for you for a reason? He saved you. He did not save you so you could play around all the things you do. He did not save you so you could just go out do whatever you want to do, whatever you want to do." I mean there is nothing wrong with doing those things, but you have got to understand that God saved you for a purpose and you have got to get that purpose first. You know what he said to me? I said, "What about the judgment seat of Christ?" And you know what he said to me, honest to God, you know what he said to me? He said, "You know what Bob, here is how I have got it figured. I am saved and I know I am saved and I may lose all my rewards at the judgment seat of Christ but when I get there I am going to know I am saved and going to heaven."

I could not believe that and maybe some of you have got the same idea I do not know but let me put it in perspective for you. If you were off on a trip someplace and you were right there, your family was home and everybody was there and everybody was just, you know, stayed home and you were out doing some play and you came back and you found out while you were gone a great catastrophe befell your neighborhood and you came back to your block and it was gone. You came to your house it was in rubble. You saw the charred bodies of your family, your wife, your kids, your dog and every piece of life that you ever had destroyed and scattered. When your loved ones were gone, was there anybody here that would do a dance and a jig and get absolutely happy and go out and enjoy life and celebrate that you survived and they did not? I do not think so. What makes you think at the judgment seat of Christ when you fully realize and understand what He paid that you are going to be tap dancing because of the fact that you got through when you did absolutely nothing for Him and lost every reward you had? I am telling you you would walk around in a daze. You would pick up pictures of your wife that are burnt on the edges. You would sift through the rubble for something that reminded you of your child. You would find a dog collar and you would clutch onto it and you would put him in a little bag. All you have got left in life. You would take those pieces of your life that are wrecked and ruined because of you were not there and they died and you would walk down in a daze clutching what was left of what you called precious and you are going to tell me at the judgment seat of Christ when you get the glorified mind from the glorified book and you understand the most precious man that ever walked this planet that loved you, that died for you, that shed His blood on the cross for you and agonized for you and He gave everything for you and just asked you to give back to Him, you are going to tap dance and jump up and down and do high five and with everybody do your end zone little ding and spike the ball because you made it in heaven with no rewards? I do not think so. I do not think so.

How did you miss it? How did you not get a full reward? I will tell you how, idols in your life. I am not saying there is anything wrong with doing those things but everything needs to be done in moderation. I am saying that you can live your life and you can have fun but I am telling you something there is a goal if you are saved. If you are not saved, have at it. But if you are saved and you are a child of God then there is a purpose, there is a motive, there is something that God wants you to do. That is why He told the nation of Israel all the way back there in Exodus 20:3:

*Exodus 20:3*

*Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

And they continually put them in. We think about those gods today and we are so far removed because we look back there and they are making golden calves. It is not conceivable that we would take all the gold we have and make some molten image and bow down to it. No, no, no, but we will bow down to the other things in life. Let me tell you something, an idol in your life is whatever it is that keeps you from being here on Sunday morning, keeps you from being in that book, keeps you from growing with God, keeps you from fulfilling God's plan for your life. That is why, ladies and gentlemen, and maybe some of you do not like it this morning and you think I am being too rough. Let me tell you something, as rough as you think I am, you wait till you stand before Him at the judgment seat of Christ. You know what I am? Do not get mad at me. Do not get upset with me, please. I am standing on the wall and I am telling you there is a lion coming.

You were laying in your bed in the middle of night and your house was on fire and I was walking my dog and I saw your house burning and I knew you were in there and I kicked down the front door and I ran up and I shook you awake and the fire and the flames and things are starting to fall and we have got about 10 seconds to get out. Would you say to me, "Bob, why did not you ring the bell? Do not you know I was in the best sleep I have ever had?" Yeah, and it is about to get better and longer if you do not get out of this house. We would pull our stuff together, you would throw whatever you had or whatever you did not have and we would run down those steps and we would leave that burning house and you would look at me and you would say, "Oh, I love you, you saved my wife, you saved my kids, you saved my family. Dog is still in there, would you go back and get him?" You saved everything. Oh, I am telling you folks, I am standing on the wall and on the wall I can see things that you cannot see and I am telling you there is a lion coming and if he does not come for you this afternoon he is going to come for you in the morning and if he does not get there in the morning you are going to come sometime tomorrow afternoon. That lion has one purpose and one goal. It is to destroy and take from you your family, your wife, your husband, your marriage, your relationship with God. It is to get you to quit walking with God and start walking after the counsel of the ungodly and standing with the sinners and then pretty soon where some of her out this morning they are sitting with the scornful. I am telling you God has a plan for you and I am standing on the wall and I am telling you, I am telling you there is no reason for you as a child of God not to receive a full reward except one thing, whatever you put in front of your relationship with God and that there will be your idol.

First John, 2 John, wait till next week we get to 3 John. Now this is why I could not do them together, incredible material, incredible book. Let me leave you with this. I am telling you God saved you for a purpose. Two plans in the Bible, one of the nation of Israel and the other one the body of Christ. Forget Israel right now, you are part of the body of Christ and God has a plan for your life. Everything you are struggling with, every bad attitude you have got, every disappointment in your life, every failure you have had, everything that has come into your life is simply come in to stop you from growing and many times we caused our own problem to come in but regardless to say we it stopped us from what God wanted us to do and that is my point. I am standing on the wall this morning and I am telling you there is a lion coming. There is a lion coming. I see him. I see a chariot and three riders. There is a lion coming. Sound the alarm, man the wall, get back in the book, there is a lion coming. That is my job. Get mad at me if you want. I would rather have you mad at me here. I will tell you what, I will tell you why. No and I am done. Read it again Hebrews 13:17. I did not read it all last time.

*Hebrews 13:17*

*Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.*

I am going to give an account for it and very frankly folks, I love you with all my heart, I do. Doing the real career, my house is your house. I will spend time with you, whatever your marriage is, wherever your life is, whatever you are at, I will do whatever it takes. You can move in if you have to, I do not care. But I am going to tell you right up front, I would rather have you mad at me today for what I just said than stand before Him this afternoon and have Him mad at me for what I did not say. That is where it is at. Every head bowed, every eye closed.