

I. SEC: Laying a Foundation in God's Word

We have been really working these last three years on laying a good foundation in the Bible. That is what we want to do. We want to teach men and women to truly have a working knowledge of the Scripture. So we have been investing a lot of time from the very beginning of our church. We started out laying some of the basic foundation, and then we moved up. Now we have entered in on Sunday morning to study what I call the seven series in the Bible, God's systematic theology, how He lays out His own Scriptures.

We have been coming through a number of studies, all based around the number seven, the number seven in the Bible being the number of God, perfection, and completion. I have told you before how there are seven mysteries in the Bible, which we already studied. There are seven baptisms in the Bible; we are studying those. There are seven judgments, seven resurrections. Everything in the Bible is done by seven because God is a perfect God. When He does something, He does it completely, and it is perfect. So He follows that pattern, and you find that pattern all through the Bible: seven years of tribulation, all the sacrifices in the Old Testament are multiples of seven. It all fits down that line. That is one of the ways that God gets your attention to show you how to study His Word the way He wants you to study it.

You have heard me say before, and I have said it many times before, that when you think about going on a trip, say you want to go to St. Louis, you have two ways you can go to St. Louis. You can get on I-70 right here down the road a little bit, and two hours, two and a half hours, three hours, you will be there. Or you can get on I-70, head west, and go through Denver, you can go through LA, you can go out there, and then get on a boat and go through China and go through that way and come back around through Europe and come on that side. Two ways you can get there. One of them is the quickest way; the other one is a long, exaggerated way.

There are two ways to learn the Bible: God's way and man's way. Man's way will always hang you up, always take you longer, and it always costs you more than you thought it was going to cost you. God's way is the best way of doing anything in life. I think that probably every person who is saved this morning, who has been saved for five or ten years, would agree with me on this one thing: we all would have been better off in our lives if we would have listened to God sooner than later, amen? We all have been there. The bottom line is you have your way or you have God's way. Our way is always tougher, it is always harder, it is always longer, it is always more expensive. And you have God's way, which is always quicker, always cleaner, always shorter, and the best. When it comes to the Bible, that is what we follow. We just follow the Bible.

II. SEC: The Seven Baptisms and the True Baptism

I told you, and we have been coming through here, and we have been studying the seven baptisms. Adjacent to that, you know that we started our Bible study where you can learn the Bible book by book, and you all got your little teams, and you are all working through that. All

this is going together to help you get a handle on the Word of God. When we started coming through the seven baptisms, I told you how these systematic studies really begin to lay out the Bible for you. Now you ought to be able to see that so clearly. These seven baptisms have broken down Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. It has broken down all of the book of Acts. Today we are going to break down the rest of the Bible for you with the next baptism. We have got two left, two left.

This one today is going to put the crowning concept on the baptism because the one we are going to study today is the true baptism. We are going to study what the real baptism is today in the Bible. Remember, I told you that there was one true baptism, but when you study the Bible, you find there are seven, and the other six all point to the true one. So we are going to finish this one up. We have one baptism left, and I have saved that for the last. You do not want to miss next week. Next week is going to be God's sense of humor week because you are going to find one of the most amazing things about God and the Word of God that you are ever going to discover in your life.

All next week, I want you to think about God having a sense of humor. Most churches are so lethargic, and they are so traditional and so formal, and they never laugh. They never have any fun because they think that this is a holy place. If you raise your voice a little loud, God goes like that. The bottom line is if you are saved and you know it, say amen. If you are saved and you know it, say amen. It is one of those things where if you do not enjoy your salvation, you are going to wind up enduring your salvation. One of the things you have got to realize about God is He has got a sense of humor. You do not believe that? Look in the mirror. All next week I want you to focus on, I am going to show you next week, the greatest mind, in the greatest being that ever existed, how God has a sense of humor and how He fixes things for those who think they are smarter than He is. We have saved not the best baptism for laughs, but we have certainly saved the one that is the most enjoyable to look at. I am going to show you how God fixes men and women who come to God thinking they are smarter than God. This is the last baptism, but if I do not shut up, I am going to start preaching that one today instead of the one I have to preach here. So let us move on here.

III. SEC: Understanding Baptism and Biblical Timelines

We have seen and learned much about baptism in our study. We have laid out a lot of different things. We saw first of all that the real baptism talked about in the Bible has nothing to do with water. We understand now that when we baptize as a Baptist church, that is a picture of something else. We know that baptizing anybody in water does not save you; it just gets you wet. But we now understand from our past studies what it does represent. We understand that now. We understand that the real true baptism that we are going to talk about today, that all the others point to, has nothing to do with water.

Then we also learned that Israel has their own baptism that deals with them as a nation. Then we saw last week that the church, the part that you and I are part of in God's program, the church has a baptism, and we saw that. Then we learned a great lesson about baptism in itself, and that is

that baptism will always manifest something no matter where you find it. Baptism always manifests something.

I want you to turn to the book of Ephesians 4 first, and that is where we are going to go here in just a second, and then we will go to 1 Corinthians 12. Today we are going to look at the real true baptism in the Bible, and I am going to break it down and explain it to you. It does not do you any good to come to church or go to Bible study if somebody talks in terms that you do not understand and then pats you on the rump, sends you on the way home, and you do not figure out what the guy said. So we are going to take our time this morning. I am always very keenly aware of the fact that I want to break all of these things down so everybody in this room, you may have never been in church in your life before, but I want you to get something and understand what I am talking about. So we take the time; we work on it in that kind of format because you have come to learn. I have not come to impress you; I have not come to put on some kind of presentation for you. I am no better than you are. I look at our church, even though I may be the pastor, I do not look at myself any better than you. I am just a beggar telling other beggars where to get the bread of life that we can sustain ourselves in this journey, and that is where we are at. So today we are going to look at the one baptism that all other baptisms point to.

Let us get it into perspective here. Let us set a timeline from where we have come. Timelines are very important in the Bible, and many of you that I am working with on a weekly basis, you know that long chart I have given some of you? I gave it to everybody when we started the church. Remember it unfolded and it goes on and on and on? Well, that is a timeline. There are certain books that you buy on the Bible that will give you a timeline of the Bible. I think timelines are absolutely crucial. Timelines are important because it puts everything into perspective for you. It helps you understand what you are looking at. Remember I talked to you about that the most important thing about the Bible is getting it in the right context? Timelines are crucial in getting the right context. Absolutely. By the way, if anybody wants one of those charts that you do not have one, I will get you one done up, or I will let you borrow mine. You can make a copy and bring mine back. A timeline is absolutely crucial.

The Bible says in 2 Timothy 2:15, a very familiar verse, that we are to study to show ourselves approved and we are to rightly divide the word of truth. Getting the timeline in the right perspective and all that material together is absolutely crucial in figuring all of this stuff out. So now I want to pull all the materials so far we have been together and show you how this thing works.

We started with Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Remember first of all, we talked about a number of different baptisms.

1. We talked about the baptism of Moses in 1 Corinthians 10.
2. We talked about the baptism of Jesus' death in Matthew 20.
3. We talked about John's baptism in Matthew 3.
4. We talked about Israel's baptism under the ministry of Peter in Acts 2.
5. Last week we were in Acts 10, and we saw how the Gentile baptisms once the church comes in.

What we have learned is that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John and the book of Acts bring you through a transition coming from the Old Testament to the New Testament, from the Jew to the Gentile, from the nation of Israel to the body of Christ, what we commonly call the church. We know that now. Most people when they look at their Bibles, the New Testament, they look at that and they see all these books laid out one after the other. Most people do not understand for the most part how that correlation goes together.

Now we know that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all fit the same time period. It is not Matthew and then some more events took place that were written in Mark and then some more in Luke. No, no. They all deal with the same time period. That time period is the first coming of Christ from His birth up to His death and resurrection. You are going to find that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and I have told you this before, present the Lord Jesus Christ four ways:

- Matthew portrays Him as the King of the Jews. So you find a genealogy in Matthew 1 going back to the kingly line.
- Mark portrays Him as a servant. So you will find no genealogy in Mark because a servant does not have a genealogy. He is a bond slave.
- Luke portrays Him as the Son of Man. So we find His lineage in Luke going back through His bloodline through Mary, not Joseph.
- John portrays Him as the Son of God. So we find His lineage line going back to God.

John 1:1-2

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God.

It runs Him right back to His eternal destiny as the Son of God. So when you understand that, you begin to see that those four books all deal with the same area. The timeline, very important, the timeline here is for sake of argument, 0 AD, 1 AD, up to 33 AD. The first 33 years in the new millennium back then. It goes from, of course, the calendar is a little screwed up now, but for sake of argument, it starts in 0 AD up to 33 AD. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John cover for us the first 33 years of Christ showing up when He shows up in what is commonly called the New Testament time.

Remember last week I told you how the church, I defined for you how there are four hard points in your Bible, how the church comes into being. It does not just happen with a snap of His fingers. There are four distinctive things, and we laid them out last week, that bring you through that show you that the church is a transition. This timeline is very important today for where we are going. I am kind of putting all the material together, and I am doing it so even if you have never heard anything that I have said so far, you are going to walk out of here with a better understanding of how your Bible lays out, and we will go on from there.

I told you last week how the church goes through a transition in coming in. We saw it in Matthew 10, then we saw it in Matthew 28, then we saw it in Acts 1 and 2, and then we finally see it revealed through Paul. We talked about that. So Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the timeline is 0 AD up to 33 AD. Then we have the book of Acts. The book of Acts runs from about

33 AD. It picks up right after the crucifixion and the resurrection, runs all the way up to about 63 AD, 30 years in the book of Acts. When you look at that book and you just kind of open it up, you do not really see that. That is why you have got to get a timeline. This is how you understand. This is what these seven baptisms, the seven mysteries, are about.

We saw Acts 1 through Acts 7 last week. That talks about the fact that God is dealing with the nation of Israel. He is giving them another chance. They reject in Acts 7. It goes to Acts 8, where the Samaritans have Jews and Gentiles get saved. Acts 9, we see that Paul gets saved, who is going to be the apostle of Gentiles. Last week we studied Acts 10, and we saw our fourth baptism, which was a Gentile baptism that was different from Israel's baptism. What do we have here? We are transitioning from the Old Testament to the New Testament.

When you open up your New Testament and you start thumbing through it, you are going to find a lot of books in there. You are going to find a book called Romans, 1st and 2nd Corinthians, a book called Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1st and 2nd Timothy, Philemon, and Titus. Those are all the books that Paul writes. The problem is we do not have a timeline for those books. So when we start looking at those books in our New Testament, it just kind of all does not fit. Let me break it down for you.

We saw the transition coming through here. We saw the transition from Matthew right up through the book of Acts. We find that transition comes through; it starts out with the Old Testament, it winds up in the New Testament. It starts out with a Jew, it winds up with a Gentile. It starts out with a literal testament nation of Israel and the kingdom of heaven, and it winds up with the spiritual body of the church called the kingdom of God. It starts out with Peter being the main focus point, winds up with Paul being the main focus point. You know why? Because it is coming from the Old Testament to the New Testament.

When you understand that and you realize that, you will find that as we come through the book of Acts, Paul gets saved in Acts 9. We talked about it last week. He disappeared for 12 or 13 years while God gets him all ready to go on what God wants him to do. He shows back up around Acts 11. From Acts 11, where they are first called Christians in Antioch, to the end of the book of Acts, you are going to find that all they are doing is Paul taking the gospel to the ends of the earth through three missionary journeys. You are going to find that Romans, 1st and 2nd Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1st and 2nd Thessalonians, 1st and 2nd Timothy, Philemon, and Titus are all written on your timeline between Acts 18 and Acts 28. The first book that Paul writes is Ephesians. The last book that he writes is 1st and 2nd Timothy. He introduces the doctrine of the body, the church, in the book of Ephesians, and then right before he is killed, he writes 1st and 2nd Timothy, giving Timothy the charge to take over after he dies. Everything in that timeline that Paul writes fits from Acts 18 to Acts 28.

That is how your New Testament lays out. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John and the book of Acts is a transition into the church age. Paul comes on the scene in Acts 9. He starts his ministry in Acts 11, and from 11 to the rest of the book of Acts, he is writing all the New Testament books in your Bible that Paul writes. You are going to find that these books are laid out in two categories:

6. He writes to churches. That will be 1st Thessalonians, 2nd Thessalonians, 1st Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians. Those are churches.
7. Then you are going to find that he writes to individuals: Titus, Philemon, 1st Timothy, 2nd Timothy.

Those are New Testament Christians. If you want to learn church doctrine, then you study the books written to churches, and you will get a lot of principles for your life, but he is directing them to churches. If you want to find out how to have a personal walk and relationship, an intimate level with God, study the books written to individuals: Titus, Philemon, 1st Timothy, 2nd Timothy. Some of you boys want to preach someday, some of you boys want to be used in the ministry someday, 1st Timothy. You know what that is all about? It is about a man, Paul, taking a young man, Timothy, and teaching him everything Paul knows about the ministry, preparing him, and then sending him out to do the job after Paul goes off the scene. The greatest two books in the Bible on ministry. You want to learn how to be a servant? Titus. You want to learn stewardship? Titus. You want to learn about your rights as a Christian, or lack thereof? Philemon. Those books are personal books written to individual Christians that talk about individual things of holiness and intimacy with Christ in our relationship we need to have. That is how it works.

The Bible is not hard. If I was charging you all \$5,000 a year tuition, I would want to rack that thing up. You would not pay me nothing for what I just told you. I gave you the whole Bible in what, 15 minutes? You are going to want your money back. I am going to drag it out. I am going to make up words, make up terms. I am going to make you think I am smarter than you. That would not be hard in some cases, but I am going to make it sound like, "Oh, I am so great, I am so good, I have all the answers, and you are so stupid, and you need me. You need me, I need your money. Come on, let us get married." That is how it works. If I charged you for what is in that book to give it to you, none of you here could pay for it. You know why? I have never understood charging somebody to teach them the Bible when you got it free. If I did charge you to teach what that book says, you could pour all your riches and get everybody in the world and their money together, and you still would not have enough to pay for what it cost God of His Son on that cross. He said, "Freely receive," which we have, "freely give." I do not know what else to tell you. How do I charge you for something I got free? But when you start to do that, then you start to let that person think that I have something that you do not have. I am smarter than you are. You have got to get to me to get that. That just is not true. Most of you in here are much smarter than I am. Most of you in here will make a much better Bible teacher than I do. Some of you will make a much better pastor than I do. You are younger, you are sharper, you are smarter. Your life is, you have got a good solid marriage, you have got a good solid foundation. You are ready now to take those next steps.

I am not under any illusion. Most pastors want to keep people down because they do not want any competition. I want all the competition I can get. I have got a job to do. I know the help I can get. Most pastors look at churches as some kind of fun type thing that the guy at the top gets all the favors and all the things. I never look at that way. You know what it is? We are in a war. Ever been in a war? You want to be the only one out there? No. We are all in the same foxhole. We are

all covering each other's back. In war, your life depends on your friend, and your friend's life depends on you. Everybody has got to work together. It is not that there is anybody that is better. We are all in the war, and the more people you have that can then use the weapon, the better off you are going to be. We have got a job to do, and it is a tough job, and we are going to lose some people along the way. But the bottom line is this: we have got to band ourselves together and understand the reality. This is not some social club. We have a lot of fun. We do a lot of neat things, but at the bottom line, at the end of the day, we are in a war, and men and women die and go to hell for eternity if we fail. I do not know what else to tell you. We are combat soldiers in a combat zone, and our battle is a terrible battle, but the book of Ecclesiastes says that there is no discharge from this war. That is why in Ephesians 6, when he put out the armor of God, he gave it in the form of a first-century Roman soldier of Paul's day, who was the greatest fighting force on this world. I have two friends that are lieutenant colonels at Fort Leavenworth, and they both teach military strategy at the General's War College of Military History. To this day, when they are studying tactics of attack or deployment or whatever the case, they still study the first-century Roman Empire. Some of their military tactics are unprecedented. Paul knew what he was doing. We are in a warfare. We are in a warfare, and we, as God's people, have lost that concept. We have lost the perspective of that, and of course, we have got to get that perspective back.

If you want to learn how to be a good soldier, you know what he says to Timothy? He said to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. He said Jesus Christ is the captain of your salvation. He puts it into a military mindset and a military theme. Why? Because we are in the army, and that is all there is to it. The reason why you cannot get a good choir in most churches is singing a good "Onward Christian Soldiers," too many conscientious objectors in the choir. That is where we are at today. I thought many, when I grew up, and I feel sorry for most of you because you never saw this thing the way it really needs to be. We are so far shot. But I still remember when they trained young men for the ministry like they trained them down at Fort Benning or Fort Bragg, where there was some discipline to it that you had to, it meant something. Not anymore, because Christianity has lost its perspective, and therefore it has lost the fight. We are not in a fight. We are, but we have lost that concept.

So if you want to learn that, you learn how these books lay out. From Acts 18 to Acts 28, he writes all of the books that Paul writes in your Bible. That puts it into a timeline. We have Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Then we have the book of Acts, and then during Acts 18 to Acts 28, all the other books that Paul writes. At the end of Acts 28, you are going to find that church history begins, and everything now is complete in your Bible as far as the history of the church and the beginning of church history.

Within Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, we studied our first two baptisms. We studied the baptism of John in Matthew 3. We know what that is now. Then we studied the baptism of Jesus' death in Matthew 20. We know what that is. When we got into the book of Acts, we studied two more baptisms: Peter's baptism to Israel after the crucifixion in Acts 2. Then last week, we studied Cornelius' baptism in Acts 10. You are going to find by the time you get through and you are going to find by the time you get up to the end of Acts, really it is Acts 20. In Acts 20, you have one of the greatest sermons in all of the Bible. In Acts 20, Paul says goodbye to the elders at

Ephesus. He gives them a six-point service how that they are to carry on. What a sermon. It is a great sermon for any church, for any pastor. Six points in Acts 20 that he gives the elders at Ephesus before he leaves, goes to Jerusalem, and then he is put in a husk out, and he died. Rome killed him sometime later. But he gives, when he says his farewell address to the elders at Ephesus, he gives them a six-point message that says, "This is what you are to do after I am gone." He might as well be saying it to us because that church was carrying on after Paul's demise. You can take those same six points and put them right into our church today. So what we have got here is a transition as we come through this thing.

IV. SEC: The Mystery of the Church and the Dispensation of the Gospel

It is during this time period from Acts 18 on, well into the church age, that the true baptism gets laid out and revealed. This is why I took the time to show you this thing. The first thing you want to remember about the church and the true baptism is that it is a mystery. The church concept of the New Testament was a mystery to God. In fact, it is one of the seven mysteries that we studied last time. It is a mystery that God never revealed to anybody. Nobody in the Old Testament knew it. The devil did not know about it. The angels did not know about it. Nobody in the Old Testament knew anything about it. You will find shades of it in the Old Testament because God, now that we have the New Testament, we can look back and we can see God doing things. But at the time, nobody knew it. It is called the mystery of godliness. It is called the mystery of God. The church concept was something that God revealed after the nation of Israel made its final rejection in Acts 7. That is why you see this progression coming through.

Paul calls this in 1 Corinthians 9:17, the dispensation of the gospel. I told you before when we studied to think about the Bible what a dispensation is. A dispensation is different periods of time down through the Bible where God does things differently. The easiest was the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament is one dispensation; the New Testament is another dispensation. Take the Old Testament; it breaks down into two more dispensations: before the law, that would be Adam to Moses, that is one dispensation; during the law, Moses to John the Baptist, that is another dispensation. That is how it worked out. The church was called a dispensation, a period of time from Acts 12, say, up to the rapture of the church. It is called the dispensation of the gospel, and Paul was the one that was chosen to lay that out.

We got a glimpse of it in Matthew 20:21-22 with the baptism of Jesus' death. Remember that? How He told you that the mother came and said to Jesus, "Let my son sit on one right hand, on the other hand." Jesus said, "You know not what ye ask." He said, "Can they be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" We saw that as death. That was the baptism of His death. Then we learned spiritually how that when you got saved, God took His death on the cross and applied it to your sins. Then we went to Romans 6, where I showed you that Romans 6, where it talks about being buried in likeness of His death and raised in the likeness of His resurrection. That has nothing to do with water. That has to do with now that you are a saved person, you have been baptized into Jesus' death; His death has been applied to your sins. Now you are dead to the things of this world. From Romans 6 to the end of Romans, Romans 16, every chapter talks

about why now as a Christian, the world does not have to affect me. It does not have to affect me because I am dead, but my life is hidden in Christ. I am a dead man. Remember the reason I told you how that you go to a funeral someplace, and there is a man in a casket, and you can make all the fun of him in the world. You can talk how ugly he was. You can talk all the bad things about him. That man in the casket has no response. You know why? He is dead. As the child of God, you need to allow this world to say whatever it says about you, think whatever it says about you, and not affect you as far as ministry. You know why? You are dead to this world, but you are alive to Christ. See how easy that is? We saw a glimpse of it there. Romans 6 was the other part. Romans 6 shows us and deals with this great doctrine that I am alive to God, but I am dead to the things of this world.

With all that introduction, the message will be very short. Three or four hours. Ephesians 4, here we go. Before we read that, let us pray. Father, we thank and praise You for the Lord Jesus. We ask You, Father, to give us clarity of thought today. Help us to look at all the things that we have to look at today. We love You so much. We are so thankful that You have given us this church and the people in it. And the Word of God, thank You, Father, for what a great mix it is of men and women who just want to love You, serve You, raise their families right, have better marriage relationships, raise their kids, and do what is right in these last days. Thank You, Father, for all that You do. In Jesus' name, for His sake, we ask You, amen.

V. SEC: Ephesians 4: The Unity of the Spirit and the One Baptism

Here is what it says.

Ephesians 4:1-13

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?)

He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

That is 13 verses. You know what those 13 verses talk about? That is where Paul reveals the body mystery. He does it through the whole book of Ephesians. You have got to remember now, the book of Ephesians is one of the first books that he writes. He writes it around 57 A.D. It is probably the first book that he writes. We cannot be sure. We do not know for sure. But given the way things lay themselves out, I would be a very safe guess to say that the first book that Paul writes is the book of Ephesians.

What does he do in the book of Ephesians? He talks about the mystery of the church, and he tells you what that mystery is. He defines it out in no uncertain terms. Then he tells you what the goal of the church should be or the work of the church should be. He talks in this chapter right here that he lays the whole concept out. He tells you that it was a mystery, and then it did not come into effect. Christ went down. That is when He died and came out, and He went back to heaven, and the Bible says He gave gifts unto men. You know what one of the gifts He gave? The church. He says the church He gave some pastors, some evangelists, some teachers. That is the church. What was their purpose? For the edifying of the body of Christ, for the work of the ministry, for teaching men and women the Bible. That is the church's job. How long do they do that? Till we all come to a full measure, the rapture of the church when Christ comes. You know what the main thing he is getting across here in this passage? He is talking about that the church has to be unified. It has to be unified. How does it get unified? One Spirit, one Lord, one baptism. In other words, he sets down the concept of unity in this book of Ephesians and tells you and I, as he begins to lay out what the church is, that the church has to be one mind, one body, and has to have one Lord and has to have one baptism. That is the true baptism that all the other baptisms point to. We are going to define that baptism here in just a moment. But I wanted you to see first how in the book of Ephesians he talks about unity. He talks about one body, one Lord, one baptism.

This is the baptism that we studied earlier in Romans 6 that is connected with Matthew 20 with the baptism of Jesus' death on the cross. All these point to the true baptism. Every one of these things we have looked at points to the one baptism that the church has that every other concept of baptism in the Bible leads to or shows you something connected with it.

VI. SEC: 1 Corinthians 12: The Body of Christ and Spiritual Baptism

To further define it, he goes even farther. Look over to 1 Corinthians 12. Let me say this first. I told you Ephesians is written around 57 A.D. 1 Corinthians is written around 60 A.D. See, it is after Ephesians. Here is what you are going to find when you start to study Paul's writing to the churches. You are going to find that the first book he probably writes is Ephesians. He breaks down and defines the church in no uncertain terms. Then every other book that he writes to the other churches, 1st and 2nd Corinthians, 1st and 2nd Thessalonians, Colossians, Ephesians, you find him redefining and adding to and laying out on a different angle what he already taught them about the church in the book of Ephesians. In other words, he writes one book to the church at Ephesus telling them the body mystery, and then he takes that same mystery and he brings it around to all the other churches because everybody needs to understand this mystery. That is what you have got.

In the church at Corinth, we know they have got some problems. The church at Corinth had lost the unity. The church at Corinth had gotten themselves into, they are really a whacked out church, and they have got a lot of problems. He begins to deal with those problems in 1 Corinthians 12. They are messed up on spiritual gifts. They have lost their unity. There are contentions among them. They are arguing over things. They are in a real, real, real mess. They are really having some problems. So he writes that in 1 Corinthians 12:13. Here is what he says. Notice the similarities between this and what we just saw in Ephesians, even though this is a couple years later at a different church. Paul keeps hounding the same theme, much like Peter did to the Jews in Acts 1 through Acts 7. Variations on the same theme. That is what we have got with Paul when we deal with the church.

Here is what he said.

1 Corinthians 12:12-13

For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

You know what he just said? He just said what he said in Ephesians, that there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, unity. We are all together. What he does here is he likens the church to a human body. A human body has different members. You have two hands, two arms, two legs, ten fingers, ten toes, two ears, two eyes. The key of this body getting something done. We all have jobs. We all do things for a living. It takes a coordinated body. That is all we are saying. Could you see a Super Bowl game with two teams that were spastic with their coordination?

I have a dog that is like that. My black dog, my lab, is the smartest dog in the world. You can throw something up in the air 20 feet, especially if it is a dog biscuit. That dog will watch that, and she will wait for that thing. When that thing, she nailed it. She has never dropped it. I have never seen her miss a tennis ball. I have had that thing where I have to use a tennis racket. My arm is out, and I will whack that thing. You think that she wants to get back here, and you hit it, and she chases it. Well, she will do that for a while. Then you can see her eyes. She comes up,

she will bring that ball right up there like this. She will put it down, and then she will back up about four feet. She gets like she is playing football. She is like in a stance. I will take that tennis racket, and I will just whack. She is coming out of there like a shot out of a gun. She is three feet away, and she will catch that tennis ball. You hear it pop. I have seen it when we are done, blood coming out of her mouth. She has never dropped anything in her life. When you hit something to her, and she brings it right back up, spits it out, and says, "Hit me again." Dog coordinated. Absolutely coordinated.

Then I have a yellow one that is kind of coordinated, but she is, well, she does not lack some coordination. She makes up in smarts. She figures things out. I put a little, I have this gate down to my basement, and it keeps the dog from one section to the other. I would come down, and the gate would be open. All three dogs are where they are not supposed to be. I did everything in the world, and they kept getting it open. Before that, I have a passageway in the back, and I set boxes up to keep them out there. Somebody was getting through that. So I got me one of these little security cameras. I want to know what is going on here, man. I put that security camera on and put it on my VCR, running for eight hours. Because I knew it was happening after I went to bed. I know that they do not stay up very late, because they get their little dummies done, and they all hit in there, and they all sleep. Because in the morning, you come down, it is like the angel, they are on their back sleeping, and they are dead, man. So I set that camera up, went to bed. Next morning, I came down, boy, you should see what I caught on that tape. I got the black one and the brown one sitting there, out of the way, letting the blonde one do all the work. That little gal thinks it through. I have seen the ball run under the television thing, and the other two dogs, they just, out of sight, out of mind, they are over here doing something else, not her. She will sit down, and she will think that problem through. When the other dog is off doing something else, she will angle around, try to get out. I have even seen her get on her belly and stretch her hands under there to try to get it. She is smart. I watched that tape, the gate is closed. The other two were, honestly, the other two were sitting over there on their haunches, just like we are saying, "Come on, get us in here." That blonde one goes up, and she butts that gate with her nose, and it does not quite work. She backs up a little bit, nails it again, hits that latch, and that gate opens. She takes her nose, puts it in that thing, pushes it open, and you have got to see it. All three of them running in. I thought, I had to send this in. I would make a million dollars with this tape, that nobody would believe it is true.

Then I have the brown one. He is totally uncoordinated. You want a definition of spastic, uncoordinated, it is Buddy. It is Buddy. It is like having three kids, and one of them is really uncoordinated, and you go get ice cream cones. First kid takes it, he eats his, the second one takes it, and each of them takes his, and Buddy takes his, and goes, puts it in his forehead. That is Buddy. The blonde one plays ball too. What I will do is I will take the ball, and I will hit the ball, I like to fool them. I hit the ball up on this side of the roof of the house, and then it rolls back down. You do not know where it is coming off, and neither do they. They are sitting there waiting for it, and Daisy will beat the black one, the blonde one will beat the black one to the ball. She is determined she is going to get it. I have seen the black one get the ball, Daisy come up, and take that ball right out of her mouth. But it is like, Buddy is like when you have an Easter egg hunt, and you have got two kids that are 12 and 13, and you have got one that is three or

four, and you have got to leave some out in plain sight so they can find them. That is Buddy. I will take the, and he is excited. He is jumping around, we are playing ball. He is jumping around. He does not, he will jump and do a complete 180. He will jump, he is jumping around. He hit a hundred yards to this ball. I do not know what he is doing. He is just jumping around, and the other dogs are chasing the ball, coming, he is just jumping around. He will run, and then he will come up, and he will, he does not know what else to do, and he will jump around some more. I feel sorry for him. So I take the ball, and I say, "Okay, Buddy, here, here." I will throw the ball. The ball will hit him in the face, dropping around, and then Buddy will try to grab it. Uncoordinated.

Your body and my body works well because it is coordinated. If you are not coordinating, you are like Buddy. The best you could be is like Tinker, and somewhere in between would be Daisy. You do not get a lot done, but you can crack any safe you have got in this country. But uncoordinated, and that is what he is saying. The body is like that. He says you have got the hand, and then the body does not know. Let us face it. The worst part of our bodies is probably our feet. You know why that is true? Because you always have them covered up so nobody can see them or smell them. Most women have beautiful feet, but most guys do not. I do not. I do not like to wear sandals because I have ugly feet. I cannot help it, and you have got my feet, so what are you laughing at? But I am telling you, see, but I have never heard my feet say, "I am not carrying you today and walking anywhere because I never get any glory. You hide me under big old cotton white socks. We are suffocating down here. You cram me into some little thing no bigger than that called a shoe, and then you carry, try to get through life without me, pal." You ever lose a toe? Well, obviously you probably did not, but if you would lose a toe, you realize we take a toe for granted, but a toe is a big deal. That is why they call it a big toe. It is a big deal. You lose a toe, you lose your balance. I am not kidding you. You think, "Well, that little toe does not look like much." It balances you out. Lose both big toes. Now you are laughing at that. You are making a fool out of yourself by laughing at me. You know why? In the Bible, when they wanted to humiliate somebody, you know what they did? They cut off his thumbs and his two big toes. I do not hear any laughing now, because they knew that the rest of your life, you are going to have some trouble, man. What are you going to do? I lost both big toes and both thumbs. You cannot hitchhike. You cannot walk anywhere. You are in a mess. But you see, your toes are whatever part of your body that does not get all the glory.

You do not do with your feet what you do with your face. I will tell you what, when my kids lived in my house, Sunday morning was a terrible time. I always just stayed out till the last minute, because they were so busy spraying, doing all this stuff. I would walk through my bedroom, and the girls had their own upstairs. Why they have got to come down and hide in my bedroom, and they have got these cans of, one of the ozone layer is being eaten up. My family is responsible for it. I am not kidding. I walk in there, I come out there, out there walking a dog, fresh air, walk into my bedroom. Many times I thought to myself, "Man, my family prayed as much as they sprayed, they would be a revival in this town, man." But I am telling you, you do not see your hands or your feet leading a revolt because you spend more time on your face than you do any other part of your body. It works together. It never complained.

You know what he is telling the church at Corinth? Your body has segmented. You have got people arguing back and forth because, and he makes the analogy, the hand and the foot and the eye and the ear and the nose, they are all part of a body that has to work together, coordinated to get anything done. Just like my spastic dog gets uncoordinated and the spastic people are uncoordinated, they will never get anything done in life. The body of Christ is spastic. Everybody is arguing about who does what. Who cares who does what? When it is one body, you understand that you are all going to part a life in the judgment seat of Christ anyhow. It does not matter who gets to work with who or who gets to do what or who gets to preach or who gets to say this, who gets to say that. When you are one body, everybody benefits from what everybody else does. You know why the church has lost the blessings of God? They have lost that one single concept right there. That is where it is at.

So he says in 1 Corinthians 12:12, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ." Now here it comes, 1 Corinthians 12:13, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." For the body is not one member, but many. Here it comes, the old thing we just talked about. If the foot shall say, "Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body," it is therefore not of the body. It is, and he comes on down through that, and he uses the example of a human body with its members arguing about who is getting to do what instead of being coordinated for a main goal purpose.

In 1 Corinthians 12:13, you have the one true baptism that all the other baptisms, and if you notice here, this baptism does not know any Jews, it does not know any Gentiles. It says this baptism is, you are not a Jew anymore, you are not a Gentile, you are now a, you are not bond, you are not free, you are now a Christian. This is called the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the real baptism of the Holy Ghost. We talked about how that some people believe that you have got to get saved and then get the baptism of the Holy Ghost. No, no, no. The baptism of the Holy Ghost is the true baptism that puts you into the body of Christ, which is not water. Water is a picture of it. It is a spiritual baptism that the moment you trust Christ as your personal Savior, you are immersed in the Spirit of God and have all the Spirit of God that there is. That is what it is. It is just that simple. When you got saved, you got immersed with the Holy Spirit of God. You got everything that God is at that exact moment when you trusted Christ as your personal Savior. That is the one true baptism of Ephesians 4 was talking about. It is the spiritual baptism that puts you into the body of Christ, the church. Nobody in the Old Testament had this baptism. There is no church in the Old Testament in the sense of the New Testament church. This is something that fits into the dispensation of grace that Paul was talking about. There was a mystery that God revealed after Acts 7 from 8 right up through the end, and Paul writes all the books to the churches detailing out about this baptism because this is the church age. This is the church. If you are saved this morning, you got saved because at a time in your life you asked Christ to come into your heart and save you based on your knowledge of your sin debt, and the Holy Spirit of God flooded your soul, and the Holy Spirit of God baptized you, immersed you.

VII. SEC: Colossians 1 & 2: Completeness in Christ and the Spiritual Circumcision

Now look at Colossians 2. Let us go there. We will pull this thing all together here. Colossians 1. We will go there first. Keep in mind, the book of Colossians is written after 1 Corinthians. You see how it works? We had Ephesians where he detailed it out. Then after Ephesians, he writes 1 Corinthians. Then after he writes 1 Corinthians, he writes to the church at Colossae. That would be 62 to 64 A.D. He is defining what he laid out in the first letter detailing out the church. He is defining it further, and he is laying out great concepts to the churches about this mystery of God that now has been revealed. He is showing them how the church, how the nation of Israel was 12 tribes. But the church is not individual. The church is one body. That is the biggest difference. They were 12 distinct tribes who did their own thing, had their own jobs. The body of Christ is not. There are not many members. It is one member, one body, and we all work together. Just as my body is coordinated with what I do, us as the body of Christ need to be coordinated in what we do. It is so simple and so easy to understand.

In Colossians 1, look what he says.

Colossians 1:25-27

Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;

Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

See that thing? That is the church. That mystery was hid from the ages and from the generations. Nobody in the Old Testament knew it. The devil did not know it. Moses did not know it. Abraham did not know it. Joshua did not know it. David did not know it. Nobody knew it. But now is made manifest to His saints. There it is. To whom God would make known what is the riches of His glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. There is Romans 6. There is Matthew 20. There are all the things. There is 1 Corinthians 10. That baptism now for you and for me is understandably now the spiritual baptism. When you get baptized in water or when I baptize you in water, the reason why we do it the way we do it based on what the Bible says is we take you, we put you under the water and bring you up out of the water. It is symbolic of you being immersed with the Spirit of God through the death of Jesus on the cross of Calvary. Romans 6. That is the mystery. That is the mystery.

Now let us look at Colossians 2. I am trying to break this thing down. I am hoping it is making sense to you. If you, bottom line is, forget the Bible. If you have got the dog story, you are doing good today.

Colossians 2:9-15

For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

Let me break this down for you. The first thing I want you to see, Colossians 2:9, is this: "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Everything that God is is in Christ. That is the first thing I want you to see here. He is detailing this out, same thing just another way, but when you put them all together, you get a lot of material here. He says that in Christ is all of the Godhead bodily. What does that mean? It means that Jesus Christ is God. Everything that God is, Christ is. God has nothing more over Christ. Christ has everything that God is. When you look at Christ, you look at God. There are no secrets that God knows that Christ does not know. God does not have a little bit more power than Christ. Christ is God. God is Christ. First concept of the Trinity. God the Father. God the Son. We know that.

The best part is the next verse. Colossians 2:10, "And ye are complete in him." Now why are you and I complete in Him? Go back to Colossians 1:27, "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among you Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." You see, God is in Christ, and He is complete in Christ. So when you get saved, Christ comes in you. Now you are complete in Christ. You have everything that God is too. There are certain people in this world who teach that when you get saved, you did not get all of God there is. Let me tell you something. If you truly got saved and you got the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the way Ephesians 4 says, the one true baptism, the one baptized, or your own one body, all baptized in one body, you got all of God is. You got everything. The Bible says you are now complete in Him. You are complete, absolutely complete in Him, which is the head of all principality. That is the devil and his crowd and power. See, you got it all. Now you say, "Well, I do not feel like I got it all." Hang on. We will get to that in a minute. You got it all.

VIII.SEC: The Question of Possession: How Much of You Does God Have?

I knew a man one time that lived down in Alabama, someplace, I think it was Texas. He lived on his farm for 45 years. Just an old scrub farmer, had lost the farm, almost lost the farm two or

three times. He had on that farm for 40 some years, some geologists came along and found out, drilling down this thing there, they had enough oil, and a guy, one of those Jed Clampett stories, he had like \$800 million worth of oil under his property. For 45 years, he was eating dust and dirt and did not have two nickels to rub together. All the time, he was sitting on \$800 million. Now, why do we as God's people live our lives from paycheck to paycheck, hand to mouth, dust to dust, when if you are saved this morning, you are sitting on \$800 million? That is a great illustration. It is true. If you are saved this morning, you are sitting on \$800 trillion billion, you just do not know it. My job is to help you dig it up. You say, "Are you a pastor?" No, I am in the drilling business. I am showing you how to tap into the resources that are deep, that you got, that you are sitting on, that are right there. I am getting ahead of myself.

Colossians 2:11

In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

We talked about this before, and I do not want to confuse you on this because this is kind of a little doctrinal thing here. But we talked about that the circumcision, the spiritual circumcision that he is talking about here, is the very fact that before you are saved, your body and your soul are stuck together. They are stuck together. Once you get saved, when that baptism of the Holy Spirit takes place, the Bible says that an operation of God made without hands takes place that literally separates your soul from your flesh. Now you are two people; you have an old nature and a new nature. That is all that it is. It is just talking about a spirit and other spiritual part of what happened when you got saved that is covered again in the book of Romans. Do not worry about that now.

Colossians 2:12

Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

Now we know this is not water baptism because this baptism now is the true baptism of Ephesians 4. It is the baptism where we are all baptized into one body in 1 Corinthians 12. So we are now know it is not water. So we are buried with Him in baptism, wherein you are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God raised from the dead.

Colossians 2:13

And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

There it is, see, you were stuck together, He has quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses. Now you are saved. What happens then?

Colossians 2:14

Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

There is the law that was against us, which was contrary to us. He took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross. You know what that verse says? That verse says when Christ died on the cross, the Old Testament passed away. The New Testament came into being. That is what I told you in Hebrews, the death of the testator.

Colossians 2:15

And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

That is the devil and his crowd. You see, the crucifixion of Christ spoiled the devil's plans in a big way because he had designs on running everything. I think that he had going for him, and to make a long story short, that up to the crucifixion, the devil had the keys to death and hell. He could say, "Nobody ever come up from the dead." Nobody did. Christ is the first man, that is why Christ is called the firstborn of the dead. He is the first man to die that did not stay dead. When Christ came out of that tomb that day, the devil came up and said, "You cannot do that." He says, "What do you mean he cannot do it?" He says, "You cannot come out of the dead. I got the keys to death and hell." He just said, "Really?" He said, "Yeah, I got them." "Where are they?" "Well, they are here somewhere. Let me see here." He just said, "You are looking for these? I got them." He had them. He spoiled principalities and powers. That is what he did. Because of that, it says that He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. He walked around town telling everybody, "Hey, look at me. I was dead, and here I am." He was showing everybody, "You laughed at me, you crucified me, you made fun of me. Here I am. Hello, I am back. How this happened?" He showed it triumphantly. He showed everybody. I told you before when they came out of that tomb, they all went down into Jerusalem. The people that were dead walked around town Saturday night. What a time that must have been.

So Colossians 2:12 says that we are buried with Him in baptism. That is the baptism of Ephesians 4, 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 6, Matthew 20. The spiritual baptism. This baptism of the Holy Spirit takes place at the moment you in your heart trust Christ as your own personal Savior. It is based on Christ's death on the cross of Calvary that now He takes His death and applies it to your death. You get the Holy Spirit of God falling on you and immersing you at the time of salvation. Now you are fit to do what God wants you to do. See? Now you are a Christian. You are no longer a Jew. You are no longer a Gentile. You are a Christian. You are part of His body. Just as your physical body is coordinated to do your job at work, now the spiritual body is coordinated to do our job for God. See how it works? It is just that simple.

You say, "Well, it is that simple. How can we have so many problems with God's people?" Now here comes the part. See, this is why. This is why. Once you get saved, you have everything that God wants you to have. You are like that old Texas farmer sitting on the oil well, eating scrub worms and beans for 45 years when he has got \$80 million underneath him. And he never knew it. It was not that somebody came along and said, "Hey, Pop, you know what you are sitting on?" That showed him. When you got saved, you have got all of God is. Christians have been deceived today to a certain degree, and it is a tragedy, but it just goes, the devil always gets into details. The question that most Christians are asking each other and pastors are asking Christians,

it is the wrong question. They are getting up in a pulpit and saying, "Hey, how much of God do you have? And you got the baptism of the Holy Ghost. How much of God do you have today?" Then people are looking inside themselves, and they are struggling, and they are saying, "Somebody, I do not have much of it. Somebody, I got a lot of it." That is not the question. The question is never how much of God do you have? The question is how much of you does God have? That is the question. It is not a question of how much you have of God. The Bible says when you got saved, you are now complete in Him. You have everything that is in Christ. Christ, everything is in God, and you are complete in Him. It is not a question of how much of God do you have. It is the question, how much of you does God have?

Years ago, D.L. Moody was a great preacher, preached great revivals in England and across this country. He preached it in the Midwest someplace, St. Louis, Chicago, I forget where it was. These people had him back every year. God was using him in a mighty way. God was using Moody in a tremendous way. Somebody, they got together, planned the next year out, and the deacons were all getting together and working the thing out, and some of the deacons did not like Moody because of the fact that he did not pull any punches, he put it to you. He got talking about, "Well, let us have Moody next year back to preach again." One of the old deacons said, "Well, why do we have to have Moody back? Has Moody got a corner on the Holy Spirit of God?" One of the other deacons said, "No, I know, no, that is not true, brother. But I do believe that the Holy Spirit of God has got the corner on Moody." That is what it is. How much does God have of you today? That is the question.

IX. SEC: Exercising Faith and Grace: Spiritual Growth

So let me show you how this works. It is real easy, real easy. When you got saved, you have got this true baptism. All the other baptisms in the Bible point to this. Now we should be, we have got, well, we have got the whole book of Acts done for you. We have got the whole New Testament done for you. The only thing we have not done is put in 1 Peter and those books. We can do that at some point. But you know now how it breaks down. We have got Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. We have got this transition going through the book of Acts. It comes to Acts 8, Jews reject. We studied all that. We move on now. We see the church age starting and all of Paul's writings. Now when he writes, he writes Ephesians first, and then he details out to all the other churches about this body mystery. He is telling them, "Hey, look, now in the New Testament, the moment you got saved, you have everything that God is living inside you."

Psalm 19:1-2

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

What a day it must have been. Job talked about it. Job talked about what a day it must have been on creation morning when God slung those planets and those galaxies out there. What a day it must have been when God was forming the planet, forming the universe, and just speaking into existence. The Bible says, "By the word of the Lord, will the heavens be made." That is some power. But you know what? You have got that same power inside you. The only thing that will

keep you from doing everything that God wants you to do is you yourself. The devil will not do it. Your friends will not do it. Nobody has the power to stop you other than you. It is you. You are the one who has the power to stop yourself.

Here is how it works. When you got saved, you had everything that God is. But you are like that old Texas farmer. You do not know how to do it. So God hooks you up with somebody who shows you how to drill. First of all, he tells you what you really are, who you really are, and what you have got going for you. Then he shows you how to take... The Bible says that, in fact, we looked at it already in one of these verses here. The Bible says that when you get saved, God gives you faith and grace by a measure. You know what that means? You find it in the Bible, the measure of faith or the measure of grace. You know what that means? That means that before you are saved, you cannot understand God. You read the Bible with blank pages to you. Oh, you may hear something that somebody says, and it may click with you, but as far as you sitting down and reading your Bible, it just does not make any sense to you. You know why?

1 Corinthians 2:14

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

You have to get the Holy Spirit of God to show you. See? That is how it works. So you get somebody that just gets saved, and they are trying to figure this thing out, and so you sit down with them and you say, "Hey, you know what? Here is how it works. When you got saved, God gave you a measure of faith and a measure of grace." What does that mean? It means He gave you just enough knowledge and grace to be able to trust Christ as your own personal Savior. That is all. He gave you grace and faith by a measure. You do not know how to figure out the second coming of Christ yet. You do not understand all the great truths of the rapture. You could not lay out the dispensations of the Bible or the covenants of the Bible. You do not have enough grace. You do not have enough faith for that. But God, as an unsaved man, when I got saved, God gave me a measure, just enough, measured it out, just enough faith and just enough grace that I did not have to worry about all the big things in the Bible. I just had to deal with the most essential thing at that time in my life was my salvation. God gave me enough grace to see it, and He gave me enough faith to believe it. See how that thing works?

Then I got saved. If you would ask me today what the 11 dispensations are in the Bible, I will just give them to you like that. You want to go through the seven covenants just like that. You want to go through anything you want to go through today. If you would have asked me five minutes after I got saved what they were, I would not have a clue. Now how do I get from that point to this point? Was it because of my brilliance? No. Was it because I went to some ecstatic Bible college? No, no, no, no, no. See, here is how it works. It is just this simple. I was like a Texan sitting on a dusty, threshing Texas, and I was eating hand to mouth, scrub brush blowing over the place, old beat down dilapidated shack called life on planet earth. Then they met a man that told me, "Son, you are sitting on a gold mine. Son, there is \$8 billion of crude oil right underneath where you are sitting. Why do not you dig it out?" See? Have you ever been to Bible college? No. I went to mining school. I went to a college to drill. I do not know what they call

them. I had a guy say one time, I had two men in my life, one man said, "You need to go and study with the great men because they will give you the nuggets, golden nuggets of the Bible." Another old boy put his arm around me and says, "Forget that clown. Why dig for the nuggets? When you have got the whole gold mine, you are sitting on, son." Okay. I started to dig.

You know what you do? You take that measure of grace and faith that God has given you. That is where a lot of you are at right now. You take that measure of grace and faith, and then you exercise it. Your faith gets bigger. You know what Jesus said? If you be faithful over the little things, I will make you rule over many. You start out with the little things. Faithful to your wife in teaching her the Bible or talking about the Bible or loving her to your kids. Faithful in the little things. Just coming to church. Just being in the Bible study on Thursday night, doing what you can do. Beginning to dig out. That is why we enacted the Bible study the way that we did because you know what? You have got to do the mining yourself. You have got to drill the hole. You have got to dig it out. You have got to do it. All I do is look at your load. This person got 20 tons. This person got 100 tons. This person got nothing. See? That is all.

As I began to put that stuff together, God began to expand my faith. He began, as the Bible says, "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me." Every verse that we hear and every time it is quoted, I always hear it quoted wrong. They always say, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me." Hey, it is not God coming down. It is not to who that strengthens you. It is, "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me." Get your English grammar straight. It is not God that strengthens you. It is the thing that you do for Him that strengthens you. You know why? Because Hebrews 5 says you exercise your senses.

I watched this Russian years ago. I forget his name. Kolaz zikka cough something. Oh, that is an AK 47. I am not right. Anyway, the Russian guy. Kalashnikov. He made the AK 47. Anyway, forget I said that. I looked, and I watched this guy, and he picked up at this time, he picked up over 600 pounds. When he picked up the weight and held it over his head, this guy had legs like tree stumps. He was, and when he picked that weight up and he got it up there and it pulled it down, the steel bar was banging on the edge, and he held it up, and he had to hold it up for, you know, they have so much time. We have got to do it. I think it is like nine hours or something like that. Anyway, and he held that up. My favorite part of weightlifting is when you get to throw it down and drop it, and boom, down like that, in a TV camera shake. He won the world record 600 and some pound deadlift. I watched that, and I thought to myself, you know what? That is the way every Christian ought to be. Every Christian ought to be able to deadlift 800,000 pounds of ministry.

But you know what? That old Russian boy did not start out picking up 600 pounds. That old Russian boy started out probably with half his weight, which is probably 600 pounds. I know, and he probably was not that big. He probably had saplings for legs then, now they are tree stumps, but he, when he started out years ago, he probably picked up 100 pounds, and he worked it. Then when he worked it, and he got familiar with that, they slapped on some more weight, and he worked at that. Then one day he came up and he said, "You know what? I am doing 200 pounds, and I am doing that well, but I want to push myself today, put another 100 pounds on, just go from 200 to 300." I will tell you what, he had to strain, distract, but if he never would

have made the jump from 200 to 300, he never would have got to 600. See what I am saying? He had to exercise, and as he exercised and slapped on more weight, he became more proficient, and pretty soon he won the world championship.

Now I am not interested in winning a world championship in this life, but I am interested in what I get at the judgment seat of Christ. It is going to come down to the fact that you are all, I, you, me, every child of God in this world, ought to be a weightlifter for God to the place where you can handle a major portion of the ministry of the work of God based on you starting with that measure of faith that you get and then developing yourself as you exercise it and you get stronger spiritually and you get more discernment, you get more perception, you get more of this. The things that we do in this church from Thursday night to Sunday morning, to the individual things that you do to help you add to that and add to that faith. That is where the Bible says over there in 1 Peter, "add to your faith these things," that talks about virtue, knowledge, brotherly kindness, charity, all the things you are continually adding to your measure of faith and grace that God gave you. In time, when you start out, God just gives you enough measure of faith to believe that for salvation. When you come to the end, 20, 30 years of the child of God, you can face any situation, any circumstance, any problem in life, and you come away as a winner. You know why? Because you are so great? No. Simply because your measure of faith and your measure of grace have grown in proportion as you have grown spiritually with God. You started out as a young Christian; you will wind up as a strong Christian. The way you get there is by adding weight, adding weight.

I push some of you. I will continually push some of you because some of you, as all of us, need to be pushed. You never make a good athlete if somebody, you know why they have coaches that the chief players of any, they are professional players. They really are. They are making millions and millions of dollars. Why do they need a coach out there like Cunningham that gets in their face, cusses at them, screams at them, yells at them, belittles them? "Hey, why do I need this? I am a professional. I am making \$2 million a year. He is making \$100,000 a year. Why is he yelling at me and making me feel this when I do not do it exactly right?" Because you know what? Everybody needs to be pushed. Why do I preach the way I preach sometimes? Why do I say the things I say? Because you need pushed. Nobody needs just to get satisfied and sit. You need to be completely pushed all the time. That you exercise that strength and you exercise that faith and you exercise that grace that God gave you when you got saved.

Right now, if you are saved, you are sitting on \$800 million. You are like that old farmer. You are right on your own property, sitting on that thing, and underneath your feet, you have got all the money, all the wealth that you could ever use. But if you never drill it and tap into it, you are going to go all your life like that farmer. God has got something for you to do. The way you get it done is by exercising, understanding that when you have got the true baptism, which all the other baptisms point to, when you have got that true baptism, you have got all of God that there is, you are now baptized by the Holy Ghost, you are now complete in Him, and you are sitting on a goldmine. My job? Show you where to drill. Show you how to dig. That is all. Now, what is so complicated about that? Man likes to make it hard. I like to make it simple. That is as simple as it is.