

I. Introduction to Bible Study and Foundational Concepts

We are in a study of how to break down the Bible. Our church, a couple of months ago, began to take on the task of coming through each book of the Bible verse by verse and breaking it down. Many of the people in our church really want to get an understanding of the Bible, how to use it for their own personal lives, and then for whatever God has for them to do.

What we have been doing is focusing on the simplicity of the Word of God. You are told all the time how hard it is to learn the Bible. Well, I am here to tell you the Bible is not a hard book to understand. It may be a hard book to believe sometimes, but it certainly isn't a hard book to understand.

What I have been doing is showing you that the Bible that God gave you—when I am talking about a Bible that God gave you, I am talking about a King James 1611 Authorized Version—that Bible has been put together in such a way by the Holy Spirit of God that it contains within itself everything that you and I need to learn the Bible. I told you how simple it is by the basic words themselves in the Bible. When you take the words in the Bible and just let them tell you what the context is, instead of you having to figure it out and trying to work it out, it's a lot easier putting the Bible together.

We have basically been coming through, showing you how to get a context, because the most important thing about your Bible that helps you understand what you're dealing with and where you're at, obviously, is getting a context. It's absolutely key.

I have been showing you, we started with the words of contrast, and I showed you how God teaches you by things that are different: light versus darkness, Heaven versus Hell, right versus wrong, up versus down. I showed you the aspect of contrast. Then we entered into the concept of the words by association—things that always identify themselves with the subject wherever you find them in the Bible. So we went through a lot of those. In fact, we're going to finish that up today, and then we're going to move into the third one, which is what we call "similar to"—things that are similar.

II. Four Major Doctrinal Events

I told you, if you remember, that there are four major events in your Bible you have to figure out. Basically, the Bible is that simple. Now, I know there are a lot of stories in the Bible, a lot of characters in the Bible. There's a theme of the Bible. But basically, your Bible is broken down around four main events doctrinally. When you find and can be able to determine what those four major events are when you find them in the Bible, then the Bible kind of goes together just like your hand going into a glove, and it all fits for you.

We talked about that the event, one of the events in the Bible, is the rapture of the church. You and I right now are living in what we call the Church Age. The Church Age is about to end, and

it's about to end because the Lord is coming back to take out His church. All the Bible prophecies point to that. Everything around you in history points to that. Everything that you see today confirms what the Bible says, that the Lord is coming back to catch away His bride. We call that the rapture of the church, even though the word "rapture" is not found in the Bible. That's the term that was coined around the end of the last century, around 1900, 1800, somewhere in there.

Then we have the Tribulation Period. We know that the Tribulation Period is a period of time that takes place right after the rapture. We know that that runs for seven years. It's a period of time when God—and if you know anything about Bible prophecy at all, it's probably about the Tribulation. Every movie that comes out is about, like, *The Omen* or *The Exorcist* and all of that. It's all about the satanic stuff that goes on during this period of time. It's a time period of seven years where basically the devil has control of this earth. We as Christians are taken off, and God puts the nation of Israel through a time called the Great Tribulation.

At the end of that seven years, we have what is commonly referred to as the Second Coming of Christ. I told you that the Second Coming of Christ is the premier event in your Bible. Everything in your Bible will move and point toward that day. We've talked about that. It's interesting.

I was talking to somebody this week, and it's interesting how the world follows with the Bible, even though they don't believe it. If you've ever been in the news business, where printing newspapers or doing newspapers—not delivering them, but putting them together—they have different kinds. Have you ever noticed on the front page when something hits that it gets bold type about that big on the front page? In the news world, they have different sets of type, different height of type for different events. You know what the biggest set of type is on a newspaper, in every newspaper, whether it's *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *The Kansas City Star*? You know what the biggest, boldest type is called? It's called "Second Coming type" because they know that that is the event. Now, they may not believe the Bible. They know I'm not kidding about God, but they know the major—they know more than most of God's people know, and they're all dying to go into Hell. They know that the most major event is the Second Coming of Christ. So if you'd walk into *The Kansas City Star*, you walk into *The New York Times*, *The Baltimore Press*, you'd walk into any newspaper and you'd say, "What is the biggest, boldest type you have, and what do you call it?" They say, "Oh, that's called Second Coming type." Not that anybody's going to put it on the newspaper when it comes. There probably won't be any newspapers left. But my point is that they're looking at—everybody knows that is the major event.

The last event would be the Millennium itself. After the Lord comes back—and this is just to kind of familiarize yourself with all of this material, because I know we get new people coming all the time. We get people saved all the time, and they come in, and I don't want to just jump right in and leave you in the dust. So I always take a little time to bring everybody up to speed. After the Second Coming, which is the premier event of all history, we have the Millennium. The Millennium is a word that means "a mill" from the word "millennium," "mill." It means 1,000. It is a time when Christ comes back at the Second Coming, that He brings the long-awaited peace on Earth, goodwill toward men that everybody's looking for. He doesn't do it through the United

Nations. He doesn't do it through the Peace Corps. He doesn't do it through all of the human endeavors. He does it by coming back, wiping out every nation on this planet that is against Him, and then setting up His rule in Jerusalem for 1,000 years. He does it by putting the Jew back in the land of Palestine that is there back in Genesis 11 and 12. He rules with a rod of iron for 1,000 years before eternity starts.

What we have been doing, I told you that the whole Bible is built around those four concepts or four events. When you come through the Old Testament, doctrinally, 75 to 80% of your Old Testament has not been fulfilled yet. It's future. It's prophecy. The prophecies will be one of these three. We're going to take the rapture out because the rapture is not in the Old Testament. That's a New Testament event. So really, when you come into the Old Testament, you just got three you've got to figure out if you're in the Tribulation, just talking about the Tribulation, the Second Coming, or the Millennium.

So far, I have given you all the key words. We came through the—we came through the Second Coming of Christ. We came through the Tribulation. We looked at all of those different words, and you want to be putting them together. Last time we got together, we took in Matthew 24, which I told you was the definitive chapter. I showed you all these words. Your job is to make a little reference of these words. Put them on a card, like Marion had some that he did that he had all those things on a card, on the back of our little bookmark that we give you, or some of them are listed. We don't have time to get them all on, but we put as many of them in there as we could. We wanted to show you that it's the key words that open and lay out the Bible.

III. The Millennium and Its Key Indicators

Starting out this morning, we're going to look at our third event, and then I'm going to bring you through a few more things. Then we're going to move into the "similar to" concept, if we have time this morning. The third major event we're going to deal with is the Millennium.

I said Jeremiah 31:31-34. This is as good a place to start as any. There are many, many passages just like this, but this will give you an idea how it goes. In Jeremiah 31:31-34, we are talking about the Millennial reign of Christ. Now watch this:

Jeremiah 31:31-34

31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD:

33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

You're going to find a lot of passages like that in the Old Testament, and there are some key words, some key phrases, some key things you always want to look at.

- New Covenant
- After Those Days
- Restore or Restored
- Gather or Regather
- Nations Healed or Praising God
- Selah
- Flourishing Trees/Fruit

So far, we have come through all four events now. We have seen the Second Coming, we have seen the Millennium, we have seen the Tribulation, and now, excuse me, we just have seen the Millennium. So we've come through all four of them.

IV. The Two Days: Day of the Lord vs. Day of Christ

Let me show you something else. When we were talking about the Second Coming of Christ, I told you that the theme of the Bible and the main feature of the Bible was the Second Coming. That's so true. You're going to find that that's called, we studied it, "the day of the Lord," "that day," and we talked about it, I showed you numerous examples.

The truth of the matter is there are two days in your Bible, two days in your Bible, and you've got to get these two days straight. All your Bible separates itself around these two days. The first day we've already looked at, the Day of the Lord, and we know that the Day of the Lord is the Second Coming of Christ. Ah, but then you're going to find another day in your Bible, and that day is found in Philippians 1:6, it's found in 1 Corinthians 1:8, it's found in 1 Corinthians 5:5, and that day is called the Day of Jesus Christ or the Day of Christ.

That Day of Jesus Christ or Day of Christ has been changed in all the new Bibles back to the Day of the Lord, therefore destroying any way of cross-referring it and destroying the teaching. But what you've got here is this: you've got two days in your Bible.

I told you when we started, and I've talked about it Thursday night when we studied The Da Vinci Code, I told you that in your Bible there are two landmarks, and you follow the Bible through history with these two landmarks. The first landmark's the nation of Israel. The second landmark is the body of Christ, the church, and those are the two main characters throughout the Bible that you're going to follow where God is at and where history goes. If you want to find God in the

Old Testament and what He's doing, find the nation of Israel, they're His people. If you want to find out what Christ is doing in the New Testament down through history, find His body, the church, the body of Christ, that's where He'll be.

So you've got two landmarks in the Bible, the nation of Israel and the church, so therefore you have two days in the Bible. You have the day that God comes for the nation of Israel, called the Day of the Lord. Then you have the day that Jesus Christ comes back for His church, which is the rapture. That's why in the New Testament you'll find it the Day of Christ. In the Old Testament you'll find the Day of the Lord. Somebody says, "Well, they're the same thing." No, they're not, they're not the same thing. When you let the Bible explain them for you and you understand that there are two identities in your Bible, the nation of Israel and the church. The nation of Israel is to God what the church is to Christ. When you understand that great concept, you realize that there's a day that God comes for His people, the nation of Israel, and there's a day God comes for the church, His bride, you and me. So they're separated in the Bible by two different days, the Day of the Lord and the Day of Jesus Christ. God has a day that He gets Israel back. Christ has a day that He gets His bride.

It has nothing to do with The Da Vinci Code. I told you this Thursday night, I showed you how The Da Vinci Code is such a parody on truth that it's true that Christ does have a wife, but it wasn't Mary Magdalene or anybody else in history. Christ's true wife is the church, the body of Christ. I showed you that from the book of Revelation. I showed you that from 2 Corinthians 11. I showed you how that He does have a wife, but that wife is not a human being in a sense of a not a mortal, but in a sense of the church, the body of Christ. I ran you to Revelation 19 and Revelation 21 and laid that all out for you and showed you how that thing works.

So we've got two days that you want to, under the concept of association, two days that you want to follow. When you read the Day of Jesus Christ in the New Testament, you know that's the rapture. When you read the Day of the Lord in the Old Testament, you know that's the Second Coming.

V. Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth: Virgin (Singular) vs. Virgins (Plural)

Now I want to show you two more words that by association really help you put it together. These are the last two words that we're going to deal with in association. This is a classic example. I say this for last because it illustrates so potently what I want you to see.

Your Bible says in 2 Timothy 2:15, it tells you and I that we are to:

2 Timothy 2:15

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

That Bible has divisions in it that you have to get right. What I'm doing by laying out and showing you the scriptures and these key words that unlock the scriptures, I'm showing you how

to divide it out. I'm showing you how to divide out first of all what's in the Old Testament versus what's in the New Testament. I'm showing you how to divide out what is the Day of the Lord versus the Day of Christ. I'm showing you how to divide out what is the Millennium versus the Second Coming versus the Tribulation versus the Rapture. That's really what the Bible is. The Bible is nothing more than dividing it up and getting the divisions in the right place. If you let the Bible do its own work and show you what it's all about, it will divide itself up. Where man gets into problems is when man rejects the truth of the Bible and he begins to divide it up himself.

Obviously, when you look at your Bible and you just open it up, the natural division is the Old Testament and the New Testament. Within those two, there are other divisions that you have to get, and it's the words that I'm showing you that help you understand it.

Now I'm going to show you a passage of scripture. Turn over to Matthew 25. This is a classic example. I've told you before that within the church we have teachings in the church that are wrong. You have men who get up and for whatever reason they teach the Bible wrongly. Some of them do it on purpose, some of them do it out of ignorance. It really doesn't matter. The bottom line is that is what leads to confusion with the church. You know if you're hanging around here any length of time that we only use one thing: the Bible. You'll never see me running to another commentary for some guy's idea on it. I mean, I let the Bible speak for itself. I told you the Bible is a living book. It discerns the thoughts and intents of your heart. It's the only book in the world that when you begin to read it, it begins to read you. It's a living book. It is an inspired, infallible book given to us by God that God intended for us to use to cover all the issues of life, and I believe that. So when we teach the Bible, when I teach the Bible, that's the approach that I take.

We have within Christianity a very bad and sad teaching, and that is the teaching that you can lose your salvation. There are men that are standing in their pulpit today telling their people that once you get saved, if you commit some sin—and everybody has a different sin for it—but if you commit some sin, that God will take back your salvation from you. Let me just say emphatically, based on the Word of God, that's not true. Once you're saved, you're God's child, and once you're God's child, you're on your way to Heaven whether you like it or not. There ain't nothing you're going to do about it if you have truly been saved.

Now somebody, the argument is, "Well, what if somebody just, you know, the 'what if.' What if somebody gets—what if somebody gets saved then goes out and murdered somebody? What if somebody gets saved and goes out and does some terrible thing? What if somebody just goes out and, you know, they get saved and then they go out and say, 'Well, you know, now that I'm saved, I can do whatever I want to do, and I'm saved and going to Heaven?'" You see, they always look at it that way.

Let me explain that before we get here, because you need to learn everything about the Bible, and this is a good practical thing to look at. Let me just say this to you: you know how you know you got saved when you got saved. Now, this is the clear—now, I don't know if you're saved or not. I believe you're all saved, most of you probably that I know. But you know how I know you know you're saved? Now, I know I'm saved. Now, I know the standard answer. The standard answer is where you go to the Bible and it says if you did this, this, this, you're saved, and you

trust the promise. I'm not talking about that. You know how I know I'm saved? You know that you know how I know the day I purportedly got saved that I really got saved and it wasn't just something that—you know why? Because now I hate sin. I don't want to sin. I still do sin, but when I do, I absolutely abhor it. Nothing ruins my day more than doing something that I know displeases God. Now, see, that didn't bother me before. I didn't care. Man, when I was a young 21-year-old guy, 20, 19-year-old, 20-year-old in the army, man, if the—if the President of the United States would have tripped in front of me, I wouldn't bother to pick him up. I didn't care. I was my own guy, my own thing. I didn't care about anything or anybody. I had my where I was going, what I wanted to do, and nothing else made any difference. You know what? That all changed the day I got saved.

Now, I know you can go to the Bible and you can read 1 John 5:11-13. It says:

1 John 5:11-13

11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

I go there all the time myself. I know you can go to John 3:3. It says you're a sinner. Oh, by the way, Marion, where you at? Do you have any of those cards with you? Not today, you're going to have some. How many you make? Make a bunch of them? 30. Oh, Marion did a great thing. Marion did a—he took a card no bigger than that and he wrote out on it all the verses and to show you step by step how to win somebody to Christ. If you're a new Christian here and you've been around or maybe you've never won anybody to Christ and you're a little nervous about it. He's going to make up the card, you're going to print them off. What are they, 100 dollars apiece, Marion? 200 dollars apiece? Okay, and make the check out to Marion and Bob, the retirement fund, would you do that for me? No, but you can have one of these, put it in your Bible, practice it, look at it, get familiar. But it is a ready reference. You could glue it in the back of your Bible, you could just put it in there for a bookmark, whatever you want to do. But if you want to learn, these are the verses.

I know you could go down through those verses. The Bible says, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." And I can go down there and say, if you do this, this, this, you're saved, and you trust the promise. I'm not talking about that. You know how I know I'm saved? You know that you know how I know the day I purportedly got saved that I really got saved and it wasn't just something that—you know why? Because now I hate sin. I don't want to sin. I still do sin, but when I do, I absolutely abhor it. Nothing ruins my day more than doing something that I know displeases God. Now, see, that didn't bother me before. I didn't care. Man, when I was a young 21-year-old guy, 20, 19-year-old, 20-year-old in the army, man, if the—if the President of the United States would have tripped in front of me, I wouldn't bother to pick him up. I didn't care. I was my own guy, my own thing. I didn't care about anything or anybody. I had my where

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So the idea is, what if somebody just gets saved and then just laughs at God and goes out and does their own thing? Well, I tell you this: they get saved, you can't get saved, really saved, and then and then continue to do wrong and just walk around like, "Well, I'm okay, you guys, this problem." You can't do that. Salvation is something that changes you on the inside, and you don't want to do wrong, and when you do wrong, you can't wait to do right. See, and it's a thing where, you know, so when somebody says, "Well, what if, what if, you know, what if so and so goes out

here and and and just gets saved and then goes out and just keeps on living or says, 'Well, I can do whatever I want?'" I would say if that was a real condition and somebody did that, I'd say they really weren't saved to begin with. I wouldn't look at it as, "Well, they're saved and lost it." I would say that they never really were genuine the moment they asked God to save them. If you come to God to get saved with any other reason than, "God, I'm lost and dying and going to Hell, I'm going to split Hell wide open," if you come to God trying to make a deal, you're not going to get saved. Ain't no dealing with God. When you get saved, it's a guilty, rotten, filthy sinner on his knees before God with no chance, no hope, no nothing, and pleading for God to save you, and then applying His blood to your sin, and He'll do it. But when He does it, you ain't the same person you was when you hit the deck. You're different. So that equation don't even come into it.

Somebody says, "Well, what about so and so?" You know, I don't know. I worry about a lot of people's salvation sometimes. You know, I see people that, I mean, I really believe that you have to change. It has to be sin. You have to—you'll have to look at sin like God sees it. You can't whitewash it. You got to deal with it. Of course, you know, you got the people that say, "Well, what happens if somebody gets saved and goes out and gets drunk?" Well, then he's—if he's really truly saved, he made a mistake, went out and got drunk. He should get on his knees and ask God, and then he needs to come to the place where he hates drinking as God hates it. I mean, I don't know what else to tell you.

Here's the deal, guys: once you get saved, you have to begin to grow. When you get saved, you get up off your knees. At that particular point, you are a new creature in Christ Jesus, but you don't understand how it all works yet, and the devil is going to get on your back right now to stop your spiritual growth. That's why it's so important when you get saved, get into a church, get disciplined, let somebody work with you, let me help you learn the baby steps of Christianity. Hey, the most crucial, dangerous time in your life, I'd say in your whole life, would be the first six months after you're saved. That six months will either make you or break you, and in 99% of God's people, it breaks them. You know why? Because there's nobody there to help them. There's nobody there.

Hey, your little baby's down there in that nursery. When they turn one or two and start to toddle, you just let them go up by themselves? If the ice cream man comes down the street two blocks away with dinging his little bell and your little girl, little boy, who's now three or four, says, "I'd like some ice cream, Daddy," you just say, "Here, here's a buck, go down there and get it. You come right back." No, boy, they don't know what's out there. You walk them down, you bring them back, you watch everything they do till they get to the place when they're what, 10, 12, 15, 16? Then you really watch everything they do. No, no, you shouldn't have to if you've done it right. At that point, it kind of takes care of itself. But you see, but that's the way Christians are, and the job of the church here is to help you in that, that you recognize, because you have to grow to the place that you see sin for what it is.

I'm telling you right now, you will—I don't know what your problem is in life. We all got them. Some of us deal with them better than others. But you know what the bottom line is this: you will never get out of whatever you're in in your life that keeps you back from really getting through the sound barrier with God. I'm going to tell you, you will never get past whatever it is until you

see it for what it is and hate it as much as God does. You just won't, because until you do, you always cut yourself some slack, and as long as you and I keep cutting ourselves slack, that that you don't never happen. That's human nature. That's human nature. It's true of me and it's true of everybody in this room today. Hey, you know what? The beginning of solving a problem in any person's life starts with a person who has the problem and then goes from there. That's why I'm saying when you get saved, you have to begin that process to learn what's right, what's wrong. I'm not saying you're going to be perfect just like that. I'm not saying you're going to get out of everything in the first week after you're saved, but you begin to develop a new appetite. You begin to develop a new attitude. You begin to develop a new way of looking at things, and it brings you to the point where you don't want to sin. And when you do sin, because the Bible says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," and we make Him a liar. But we know that when we do sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, that we can get our daily sins taken care of.

But you know what? There's nothing you can do. There is nothing you can do once you are truly saved that God will take back the salvation. I had a guy say to me one time, "Well, you know what? You do something wrong and do something unworthy of God's salvation, and God will take it back." Well, that doesn't make sense to me, because if that's the case and I do something unworthy of God's salvation, I could have never got it in the first place. Where was there a time in my life when I was worthy of God's salvation? I'll tell you something else: there ain't any time after you're saved you're worthy of His salvation. You know what David said in Psalms 51 when he—when he sinned against God with the wife of Uriah the Hittite, when he's getting right with God, he says, "Lord, restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." He knew it wasn't his salvation. It's in mind. It's a gift God gave me. I can't earn it before, I can't earn it afterwards. I couldn't do anything to keep it before. You think I lose my car keys five times a day, I'm going to keep my salvation? See, that's how stupid it becomes, and that's a terrible teaching today, and I want everybody to understand here where this church stands on it, because you're going to run into a lot of people today that are confused on that issue. Maybe you can help straighten them out.

But that's the issue, and you know where the issue comes down? It comes down because men, preachers, don't know how to rightly divide the word of truth, and they don't use the words in the Bible, so they come up with these cock-eyed concepts of losing your salvation and all the things that go along with it. Let me show you what I'm talking about here.

Now, man, here it is. If you meet with somebody or meet somebody or hear somebody going to preach about you losing your salvation, I'll tell you something else while I'm on this subject. I'll tell you something else: ask them what it takes to lose it. I have never had anybody tell me what it takes for you to lose your salvation. Everybody's got a different opinion. You know what the bottom line is? One guy told me one time, "Well, if you commit adultery, that's—that's the—that was that you lose your salvation." Somebody else said, "Well, if you murder somebody, that'll send you to Hell." Somebody else said, "Well, if you just walk away and and leave God, depart from God, that'll—that'll send you to Hell. God'll take back from you." Hey, let me ask you a question: you think there's any difference—now the consequences may be different, but as far as on a level of sin to sin, to God, to God, man to man—you think there's any difference between

speeding 80 miles an hour in a 35 than murdering somebody? All unrighteousness is sin. There's not any big sins or little sins. You don't tell little lies or big lies. You tell lies. But you see how we do it? Oh, we like to do it. "Well, I just told a little lie." "Well, how little is little?" "Well, just a little white lie." Oh, I say, "Okay, just a little lie." God sees a liar. I mean, it's just that all sin is sin. It doesn't make any difference how we try to cover it up.

The bottom truth of the matter is, hey, if you can lose your salvation, if you can—if it's possible for you to lose your salvation, I got some terrible news for you: you're going to lose it. I mean, you'll go through life with your eyes closed and your hands clutched so you don't see something you shouldn't see. You'll put duct tape on your mouth so you don't say something you don't say, and you'll not look at anything and you don't have any bad thoughts, or you'll walk through life just like this: 10 years, 15 years, 30 years, 40 years, 50 years, and now you're 75 years old, they're taking you to the hospital, and you got duct tape on your eyes and you got a hand so you won't touch anything bad, and you're not—and you're just singing songs all the time so you don't get any impure thoughts because you don't want to lose it. And I'm telling you something, right before you die, when a doctor takes off that thing to look into your pupils, you're not quite dead yet, you're going to see something you shouldn't see or you're going to think something you shouldn't think, and the devil is going to come in the back door and get you. Who do you think you are? There's not a man or a woman in that Bible, the greatest, wisest, holiest man that ever lived, the devil found the key to their back door and got him. Only one man he couldn't get, and who that was? That was my Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. You know why He came and died for me? Because He was the only man the devil couldn't get, because I needed to get my salvation through Him, because I couldn't do it myself. If it was left to me, I'd be in Hell screaming for water right now, burning like a torch. But you know what God did? He was merciful and given me that salvation. He won't take it back. Now, I'm not saying there are consequences to your sin. Certainly there is. But not—not—not once you're saved. Once you're God's child, it doesn't matter whether you're going to Heaven or not. It's a matter whether you're an obedient child or a disobedient child. That's all.

But this thing comes down to some real bad teaching. Matthew 25. Here's the source of it. Here's what happened, and the reason why they get this way is because they don't know what you know. They don't have what you've got. Now I'm going to read it to you. Here it is:

Matthew 25:1-10

1 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

3 They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

9 But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

Now you see the problem. This is the passage used to show you can lose your salvation. You got 10 Christians. Five were wise, five were foolish, but they're Christians. They all got oil. Oil is the type of the Holy Spirit of God. Your Bible. But through the process of time, five lose their oil, lost their salvation. Five kept it. And when the Lord comes, the five that got it go, and the five that don't stay. Now, I promise you right now, as we're speaking, there's probably 100, 50,000 churches in this country that are using that thing this morning or sometime in the course of this week to tell their people, "See, you can lose your salvation." That is the best text if you ever want to go to it anywhere in the Bible, if you don't know your Bible and you want to teach damnable heresy, that's the place to go. That passage got a problem. Somebody got left behind when Jesus came. Somebody had the oil, lost the oil, and when Christ came, it was, "Sorry, we're going, you're staying." You see how that problem is? That terrifies some of God's people. I bet there are some of God's people that go home after hearing something like that, they just—I mean, they're just afraid of everything they do. They think God's going to take it away. I'm not saying you shouldn't fear God, but I'm telling you this, the bottom line is you don't have to fear Him for that. I'm going to tell you, there's some things you better fear Him for, but losing your salvation ain't one of them.

Now let me show you how this thing works. Here's your dilemma: somebody who had the oil lost the oil, gets left behind. Now, I don't know in your Bible, but you're going to find that—come over to 2 Corinthians 11. I want to show you two words here, and this is a classic example of what I'm talking about. I don't know if that's why I saved this for last. I don't know of anything else, anything else in this world that lays this thing out more than this passage, and not only shows you a heresy that's taught, but shows you how the heresy gets believed by somebody rejecting the basic words in your Bible.

2 Corinthians 11:1-2

1 Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me.

2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

Now, I don't know if you can see the difference or not at a glance, but let me help you. In Matthew 25, it was "virgins" plural. In 2 Corinthians 11, it was "virgin" singular. Oh yes, you can mark it down in big bold red Second Coming type.

➤ **Virgin (singular) vs. Virgins (plural)**

See, I'm not telling you you got to go down here and read every book of the Bible and memorize it. I'm not telling you you got to break down every book of the Bible. I'm not telling you that if you just remember these 25 or so words and get them for what they mean, you'll have it. You'll have it. You'll have it. It's just that simple, and it's just that easy. The Bible is not a hard book. Man likes to make it hard.

You see what he said down here? He says, "I'm jealous over you with a godly jealousy, for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." The devil wants to take that chastity, that purity, and destroy the church. That's what he wants to do.

If I was coming down through there and just give you the other words that are in this passage, and they're all things we've talked about now, so you should have picked it up. First thing, if I'm reading Matthew 25:1, it's telling me that this thing is a reference to the kingdom of heaven. I know it's not dealing with the church. The kingdom of the church is not the kingdom of heaven. That's the kingdom of Israel. Kingdom of the church, the kingdom to the church, the kingdom of God. So I know right off the bat. Then it says down here in verse 2 that five of them were wise and five were foolish. Hey, I already told you the whole theme of the Old Testament is a wise man, the foolish man, and the wise man, the foolish man of the book of Proverbs, the book of Psalms. I gave you all that information several weeks back. All we talked about it on Thursday night. All that material shows you that the Old Testament is built around a man who finds God in the nation of Israel and a man who does not. A man who goes after the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, a man who goes after Baal and Ashtaroth and all the other gods. One's a wise man, one's a foolish man. If that wasn't enough, it comes down here and it says in verse 10: "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut." Know these people are going to the marriage, but they're not marrying Him. You and I are marrying Him as the bride of Christ in a spiritual sense, and it brings you back to the two days. So those things right there are the main weight of what we call association in your Bible. Association in your Bible will be words that always will, wherever you find them, will always give you the context by defining the context by association, and I've given you the main ones. Now, the ones that I've given you, you will find that anywhere from 100 percent to 90 percent of the time, most of them 100 percent. There are some as you go down the list that, and I didn't even give you those because I don't want to confuse the issue. I'm giving you the main one. All you need, if you never got the rest of them, you have enough right now if you'll take it and learn it and apply it and let me help you with it where you'll put that Bible together the way that God wants you to have it.

VI. Similitude: Learning from Life's Circumstances

All right, that's association. Let's talk about for a few minutes, similitude. Now I got to say to you, this is probably one of the greatest things that God ever taught me. It probably revolutionized my life more than any other single thing in the Bible about learning the Bible. I mean, association and contrast were all paramount, but never was there anything that allowed me to learn from everything in life.

Let me tell you something, and maybe you don't understand this right now. When you get saved and you begin to grow in time, you're going to find a great truth that God wants to teach you about Himself and everything that's out there. God's school is never out. There isn't a circumstance in life that comes by happenstance. I don't care what problems you deal with. I don't care what problems you struggle with. I don't care what comes in life, what befalls you. Once you really grasp the principles of the Word of God, then there is nothing that comes into your life that you do not learn from it and grow through it, or at least God wants you to. Problems in life, circumstances in life, will either help you run to God or run from God. It's the problems that we have to get into life that God says, "This, I'll either make you stronger or will reveal your true character and you'll become weaker." I don't care what it is. I don't care who you are. I don't care how much you know about the Bible or maybe you just got saved yesterday. The problems that you find in life are there for your growth. God is the author of everything in your life. He allows those things to come in.

When I—I used to read the book of Job, and I used to study Job's life, and I used to think, "Wow, how come God let Job go through all of that? Why did God let the devil do that to Job?" And I'd read it back there where Job lost everything he had. He lost his family, he lost his finances, he lost his business, he lost his servants. He lost everything that he had. And then he gets a terminal disease that is so painful that all he can do—his whole body has boils from head to foot, crown of his head to the sole of his foot. He can't even walk, they're on the soles of his feet. All he can do is get in a—sit on the ground and take a piece of broken pottery. He has nothing left. He has no house. There's no air-conditioned bedroom to go to. His house was gone. You know what he has? He sits on an ash heap. You know what the ash heap was? Everything that he once had.

Now, none of us ever get to that place in our lives. Oh, we go through some tough things in life. We lose some things. We, you know, but I don't know of anybody that goes through that. I mean, after he lost all of his family and lost every monetary deal, and he's—he then he—a doctor report comes back and he says, "Oh, by the way, you got a very terminal disease that is going to agonize you and affect you the rest of your life." What do I got? I don't know what it is, but you're going to have boils break out all over you, and it's going to look like little volcanoes, and he's scraping the pus from the very boils all over his body. Now, don't you know he was a sight? Hey, you know what? I looked at that and I'd say to myself, "God, why did you let the devil do that?"

And then one day God just kind of turned the light on. I'm reading over there in Job chapter 1 and chapter 2, and the Bible says:

Job 1:6-7

6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them.

7 And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

They're talking back and forth. The Lord said, "Devil, how you doing?" He said, "I'm doing pretty good. How you doing?" He says, "Well, I'm doing all right." He says, "Well," he says, "uh," they're talking back and forth. The devil—God says, "Where you been, devil?" He said, "Oh, I've been walking up and down the Earth." You know what? The devil did what God said, not the devil. You know what God—see, I always took for granted that the devil said, "Oh, by the way, I'm going to bust Job up for you. What do you think of that?" I just took for granted that's the way the story went. When I read the story, it didn't go that way. They're talking back and forth. Devil never brought up Job. Devil had nothing in his mind that he wanted to do with Job. It was God that said, "Well, while you were down there, did you consider my servant Job?" God brought his name up. Now, why did God do that? Because God knew that Job was going to learn some things through the affliction that he went through. And I'm telling you, there'll be some times in life, ladies and gentlemen, where God before the throne and the devil, who's the accuser of the brethren, God will bring your name up or my name up.

I looked at that thing many, many times, and I—I studied it many, many times. I came through that thing and and looked at it from every angle, you know, and I thought to myself, "Wow." And then I—it just struck me one day: Job was a better man after he went through what he went through than he was before he went in. And he was a pretty good man before he went in. But you know what trouble does? You know what bad times do in our lives? Bottom line, put it—put aside now all your psychology and all your, you know, you know, all the good things happen to bad people and the purpose-driven life and all that junk. Just put it aside. You know what? God lets bad things come into your life, my life. You know what He lets you think? He wants to see what you're made of. You know, this is a war. You know, we're in combat. You know, we're likened to an army. You know, Jesus Christ is the captain of my salvation. You know, I'm told to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. You realize that we're in a rear guard action on the last side of—on the back end of planet Earth, back here in Kansas City, in the last moment, the last second before the Lord comes back. You know, we're the sacrificial lamb. That's what we are. We're going to pay the price. I mean, it ain't like we're living in the Philadelphia age where you just—where people got saved at the drop of a hat. I mean, back then, I mean, you could preach one place, 500 people get saved. Try it today. This world hates God. I mean, on one hand, it's the worst time in the world to be a Christian because you're going to get clobbered one side or the other. On the other hand, it's the greatest time, greatest time.

I told you before that we're in the military. The worst duty you can get—I mean, there's some bad things you can get. You know what the worst thing you get? The worst thing that you—that every soldier hates to hear it, man, is when the commanding officer comes down and he says, "We're pulling out, and Lieutenant, you've got the rear guard action." You know what a rear guard action is? It sacrifices itself. It's sacrificed. So if you're in a—if you're in a company, you leave a squad. If you're in a battalion, you leave a company. If you're in a division, you leave a battalion. And you know what their job is? Their job is to stay put and hold and buy some time so everybody else can get out. They're sacrifice. They're not going to get any help. It's every man for himself. They're disciplined, and they've got to stand in place and fight to the last man, to the last bullet, and then they fix bayonets. They pick up rocks. And what they do, the idea is simple: I'll sacrifice the battalion to save the division. I'll sacrifice the division to save the corps. I'll

sacrifice the—the—the battalion to—or the company to get the battalion out. I'll sacrifice a squad to get the company out. It's simple mathematics. A hundred, 200 guys stay and die. 500 guys get away to fight another day. It's simple. But it's the worst job you can ever get because you're under no illusion that you're going to get any help. You're on your own. And you know what gets you through something like that? When you get through, it's the camaraderie that you built with your own troops, that every man takes the position, "Hey, you know what? I ain't dying here today." And everybody pulls together. Everybody does what they got to do, and then you have a chance.

You know what we are? This church, you know what it is? I'll tell you what it is: it's a rear guard action. Don't get into your illusion we're going to build a church of 25,000. We're a rear guard action. The rapture is right down there. The devil is ready to pounce. This whole world's going to blow up with terrorism, and this whole thing's going to crumble like a broken house of cards. You know what we are? We are the rear guard action that holds the line till the Christ comes back. We are the last ones are going to put out the truth. Hold the line. Fix bayonet. We run out of ammo, we're going to fix bayonet. We run out of bayonet, we're going to throw rocks. And then when we—when we—we're going to kick him to death, and we're going to bite him to death, and then we lose our teeth, we'll gum him to death. But that's our job. We are a rear—the body of Christ today is a rear guard action, and the average Christian wants no part of that. You know why? Because they're conscientious objectors. They're not in this battle. They're not soldiers. They haven't been trained the way they need to be trained. They're taking their position that they just take it, and their Christianity is all soft and fluffy and warm and cuddly and just nice. You know, when we want to have the right feeling, the touchy-touchy and the holy-holy and the Kumbaya and all of that stuff. That's not it. It is a battle. It is a war, and there's no discharge from this war. And yes, there'll be casualties along the way. But you know what? That's this true war.

The bottom line is we do the job we've been told to do. We take the rear guard action. We dig in and we hold. They may overwhelm us, but we make them pay for every inch they take. We hold the line. That's our job. That's what we're to do. That's why the Jesus Christ is the captain of our salvation. That's why you have to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. That's why the devil allows you to go through those things to toughen you up. Toughen you up. You got to get a hardness about you. You got to understand that good things aren't always going to happen. You got to learn God wants to see how you react when your world comes apart. He wants to see what happens when you're sitting around eating your chow and somebody just tosses a grenade in the foxhole. He wants to see who moves the quickest, the fastest, and who knows to do what. He wants to see what happens when we think everything's going along so nice, brother, and the alarms go off and a little down there, boy, and they're coming across the wire. He wants to see what happens when we just slumber and sleep or just having the best little night sleep and all of a sudden you're woken up by flares going off in the middle of night and screaming bugles and yelling people coming out of the fence line, and what are you going to do? That's what He wants to see. That's what He wants to know. He wants to know what is God's people made of today on these last days before Christ comes back. You know what it comes down to? It comes down to you.

You know what we're doing? What we're doing, we're learning how to use the weapon, because a soldier, whether it's in God's army or Uncle Sam's army, is no good without knowing how to use the weapon. If you don't know how to use it, you are worthless. That's why you have to learn it. As you learn it, God allows things to come into your life. God allows bad things to come in. He allows things to come in that that that seemingly would hurt you, and He wants to see how you respond to it. He wants you to give you something to take what you've learned and process it by something you go through. And God's people, we react to that violently. We don't want that. We don't want any bad things in our life. We don't want anybody to endanger our comfort zone. We don't want anybody unplugging our air conditioner. We don't want anybody taken from our life the security that we have. Hey, you'll never accomplish the job. That's why God allows it to come in. That's why He gave you a Bible. That's why He gave you everything that you need.

The next way that God teaches you, He teaches you by similitude. I've learned more about my job as a child of God and what God has called me to do. I've learned more by looking around in life through the eyes of similitude and seeing what God is doing all around me and putting it in perspective of my own life. Now, I can't speak for you. I really can't. I—I can't speak for you. I can't even speak for my wife. I can't speak for my family. I can only speak for me. But I know this: I know where I'm at today, and I know where the Lord's coming is, and I know how close those things is, and I'm not any delusion that I am a rear guard action. I am not any delusion of it whatsoever. And I know whether we can sing, "It all will be worth it all when we see Christ," and all of those things, and that is true. But right now, we're not in the sweet by and by. We're down here in the nasty, nasty, and that's where the rubber's got to meet the road. That's where we got to train up some men and some women who make their faces like flint, that will just stand like a couple weeks ago out of Ezekiel, a man that'll stand in the gap, a woman that'll stand in the gap.

I ask God every day when I pray for this church, "God, don't make it a big church. Don't make it a rich church. Just make it a church of men and women that'll take our little part of the world and stand in that gap and pay the rear guard action. If that's what you call us to do, let us take the rebuke, let us take the ridicule, let us take the—let us take everything that comes our way and just make our faces like flint that it just bounces off like BBs off a brick wall, and just give me some men and some women in these last days, one shot deal, that will stand in that gap and say, 'Come on, we're going to hold the line,' and then hold the line." It comes about by learning the weapon. It comes about by you and me learning that weapon. That's what it's all about. It's about you being able to go in that Bible anytime, anyplace, anywhere, and break down those passages. It's about you being able to sit down with somebody and straighten out their bad doctrine. It's about you having the confidence in the Word of God. Hey, you can want to do all you want to do with God, and you can be everything you want to be with God until you get the self-confidence that you can do it. That's why I try to put everything into your life that builds that self-confidence. I try to give you everything you need, and I always bring it back to one source: the Word of God.

Hey, if you don't learn the weapon, you ain't going anywhere, brother. When I was back in AIT and basic training, we'd get to sleep about 11 o'clock at night. They'd wake you up in the middle of the night, boy, and I mean, they turn the lights on and down there, and you had M14s then,

and they'd make you take that M14 apart and strip that thing apart, and by the time drill sergeant walked the length into the bay, the other end of the bay, you better have all the parts laid out. He'd walk up and down, look at all the parts, make sure you had it all together. He'd walk down to the other end of the bay, turn that light out, pitch black, and he'd say, "Put it back together." And then you'd all hear was [sound of gun assembly], and he'd finally get them back together. You know why? Because if you're out there in the middle of the night and that weapon fails, you better know how to do it blindfolded, how to take that thing apart and fix it. And let me tell you something, in this old nighttime in the Church Age, you better know how to take that weapon apart blindfolded. This isn't a game we're playing. Maybe some churches are playing it. I take the judgment seat of Christ real serious, pal, and I'm telling you, you have to learn the weapon. You have to learn how to take it apart, how to put it back together, how to break it down doctrinally, inspirationally, historically, how to take those words and where you fit them in at, and then you stand tall and you hold that line in the gap, and nothing, nothing, nothing will get by you on your watch. That's our job. We won't build the biggest church, have no desire. We may stay in this little building the rest of our lives, oh, Jesus comes, okay with me. I don't care. That's not what it's about. It's about men and women getting the commitment, seeing who they are in Christ, knowing what the job is.

I was telling somebody the other day, the real test, the real test, the real test, now that we passed the first book in the Bible of Genesis, you know what the real test is going to be? It's going to be Exodus, because now you see, you've had three or four months here, and the excitement's gone. You know what the kind—you know what I deal with a program like this, and I fully understand that probably, probably out of 70 people, probably if I am lucky at the end of the day, I'll probably have 10 men and women that finish that thing totally and really get anything out of it. I'm just being realistic with you. But you know what a thing like this does? It begins to show you what your biggest problem is, because you see, you can go through life and you—we kid ourselves. We think we're so in tune with everything. We think that, "Oh, I am so disciplined. Oh yes, I can do." We—yeah, we're disciplined in what we want to be disciplined in. Nothing like a scheduled, structured Bible program to show you what you really love.

You see, I failed to give you one part of the whole concept here, and I purposely haven't done it. Hesitate to do it now, but I'll go ahead and do it because you'll forget it by next week, and I can use it again later anyhow. All this stuff I'm giving you to learn that weapon, put it together, learn your Bible. I told you the greatest thing ever God ever taught me was similitude. I told you about contrast and association, all those keywords. You know what? You can take all those things, all of those things that you can put them into your life and put them in your world and do all you want to do with them. You know what? Most of God's people will still never learn the Bible. You know why? Don't ever think—don't ever get your head on crooked about this. Keep it on straight. The key to learning Bible is not association. It's not contrast. It's not—it's not repetition. Is it the keywords I'm giving you? Hey, you know what? You know what will make you learn the Bible? The only thing will make you learn the Bible is loving that Bible more than anything else on planet Earth. See, all I'm doing is giving you the ammunition. You have to conjure up the loving, the desire in your heart that you love that book more than anything else. That's how you learn it. That's how you learn it.

You know what? And I'm telling you, you can—we play games in our mind. We think we love God, but we really don't. We think we love the Bible, but we really don't. We think we love the things, but we really don't. We love it in our own mind and this Laodicean mindset. We—we—nothing like keeping you structured in your feet to the fire on that book that you have to choose between doing this and doing this. That's where it's at. The ability—let me tell you something, if you can't look at the ball game and the book and say, "I only got three hours this week. I got a choice: either the book or the ball game." If you have to think about that choice, you'll never make it. When you're out there in the world and you've got to make the choice between this and this, self-discipline starts with you and me doing what's right, not alibiing our way out of anything, taking the responsibility for the job that God has given us and taking—making that stand and holding it exactly where God wants us to hold it. That's our job. Make no bones about it. I don't care if you all don't come back. I don't care if through the course of this whole thing you all get scared and run, leave. I don't care what you all do. If I don't care if my wife doesn't, I don't care if my kids don't. I'm telling you this, by the grace of God, if I have to stand in the gap by myself, that's what I will do, because for me, there ain't any other way around it. And I'm telling you that's the attitude you got to have when every man and woman says, "It's—you know what?" Boy, the army got one—one phrase right in about 40 years that I really agree with and appreciate. They started about eight or nine, five or six, seven, eight, nine years ago. You know what it is? Is that little phrase called "the army of one." That's what we are. We'll never be an army for God together till you first become an army of one by yourself. You have to understand what the stakes are. You have to separate out the things of this old world, things that will live, from what your duty is, because Ecclesiastes says, "There is no discharge from this war." We're in it up to our eyeballs, and we are the rear guard action that's going to pay the price, and we need to pay it happily, excitedly, but with everything we got.

I told you a couple weeks ago when we were coming through that thing in Proverbs on Mother's Day about the virtuous woman who considered a field and buys it. That's what we need to do. Our field is Kansas City. Our field is right here. The field is where you work. The field is your family. The field is what you're doing right now, and getting sidetracked and everything else in this world and losing sight of that field and what we need to do. Here's the worst thing that ever happens when a soldier loses his edge: somebody's going to get killed. When he starts to take for granted he can just be bought through the jungle, make noise on the trails, let his canteen half full, slosh around, just walk where he wants to walk, laugh, joke, talk about it, you're going to get zapped. You're going to walk right into an ambush. You're going to cut you a new one, boy, and you're going to bleed all over the place. You can't afford to do it. You can never lose your edge. That's the Bible. That's the weapon. That's your edge. So take this stuff. You do what you got to do with it. But the real test will be when it all comes down on your shoulders, when God dumps everything on you, when your world's coming apart, where you wind up standing, because that book's the only thing that'll keep you. It's the only—it'll keep you. And boy, when they start coming over the wire faster than you can do them, and you've got no air cover, you got no air support, you got no artillery, you got no mortars, you got no food, you got no water, you got no bullets, and you get on the radio and a guy says, "You stand in position and you hold that line." That's what separates the men from the boys. That's what separates the men from the boys. And you know what? I just got the field order: hold the line. There ain't no—there ain't no

replacements coming. There ain't no reinforcements coming. We're on our own. God gave us the book. You got the Holy Spirit of God inside you. It's all we need. That's where it's at. That's why you got to learn it, kids. That's why you got to learn it. I'll hold the line with you, not make it easy on you. You got to hold the line with it. You got to hold—if you can't take a little rebuke from me, brother, when the devil comes down on you with both feet or the world kicks you with both feet, you'll never survive. That's what it takes.

Every head bow, every eye closed. Now I'm going to pray here.