

## I. The Church's Mission and Bearing Reproach

I took you back to Isaiah 9 and we laid that out. Then the next week, I showed you how God had a plan for the Earth. We were back to Isaiah 45 and looked at that. Last week, we focused on the plan that God has for you and for me. We looked at John 14 as a base text and many other passages also.

As a church, for you and for me, there should be no misunderstanding of what our mission is as the body of Christ. I told you that a lot of God's people are confused today because they do not know what their job is. That should not be the case in your life and my life because it is very clear what we have to do and what our mission is as a church, and what we ought to be moving forward to.

Everything that we do, everything that I do for you, everything that we do one-on-one, or you do in discipleship, or wherever we are in your spiritual growth process, is to that end. We saw in the book of Acts that we are to bear the Name of Christ. We saw also in the book of Hebrews that along with bearing the Name of Christ, we need to understand that we have to bear His reproach. You do not bear the Name without bearing the shame.

That is hard for some of God's people because they want a Christianity without a reproach. They want a dignified Christianity. They want something that is acceptable in society. When it comes to God and the Word of God and the ministry, it has never been, nor will it ever be, accepted by the mainstream of society. If you are going to bear the Name of Christ, I am telling you right up front, you are always going to be an outcast. You will be an outcast with your own family. You will be an outcast with people at work. You will be an outcast with people in general, and they will look at you as someone much like they looked at Christ.

From the day that His foot started His public ministry as He walked through the dusty roads of Judea, Jerusalem, and Samaria, the Lord Jesus Christ paid the price for Who He was. Many people believed on Him; many more did not. For you and me to think that we will get through this life called Christianity with bearing the Name without bearing the shame is utterly ridiculous.

## II. Finishing God's Work and Accountability

We now know that we are called from John 14:12. The job of you and me is to finish what God started. We focused on that last week. I told you how when you understand the fact that Christ came down for 33 years, He walked this Earth and He not only presented Himself to the nation of Israel, but He laid down for you and for me a great model. He laid down for you and me a great understanding of how to do things. In every example of everything that He did, there lies a great truth of how you and I are to pick up the work after He went back to Heaven. That was His plan for you and for me.

Now we know that there is no room for excuse. Coming last Sunday or this Sunday is either the best thing you ever did or the worst thing you ever did. You will not now be able to plead ignorance at the Judgment Seat of Christ because now you will not be able to say, "Well, I did not know, I did not understand what my job was." Not that you could anyhow, but now you have absolutely no basis for which you can cry ignorance.

God saved you for one purpose. God saved me for one purpose. God allowed this church to come into existence to believe the Bible. He orchestrated the events to bring us together. Even though we were scattered all over the place, God brought us together for a purpose. That purpose as a body of individual believers is for us collectively, as we work through as individuals, to finish the work that Christ started and realize that we are just a spoke in a gigantic wheel. We are living in a little period of time that God has parenthesized off in eternity, and for a short period of time—60, 70, 80, 90 years—you and I have a job to do. Our reward at the Judgment Seat of Christ is how well we are focused on that task.

Today, I want to help you even further with understanding how we get this mission accomplished. You know that in the Old Testament, He had the nation of Israel. In the New Testament, He had the church, you and me. You also know, as I said last week, that this church will only be as strong as its weakest link. It will only be as strong as the weakest person here because in Christianity, we do not have the option to leave the weak behind. We have an option to help them grow and get as strong as everybody else. That is what the job of the church is for.

I also told you last week that everything God has given you—your Bible, the Holy Spirit of God Who resides inside you, your job, your vocation, your wife or your husband, your children, this church—is all to that end: that you and I might take all of the resources that God has given us, allocate them in the right perspective, in the right fashion, and understand that you and I have to take everything that we have in the time that God has given us to accomplish that end, that task, which is to do our part to finish what He started.

### III. The Seven Inward Changes at Salvation

I want to talk to you today about something that goes right along with this. It is the natural next step from what we talked about last week because last week I told you your job. Last week, I defined for you the task that you and I have to accomplish. Now this week, I want to show you how that happens. I want to talk to you about what changed in your life the day you got saved.

We have a program here for people that just get saved, or maybe people that have been saved a long time but really do not have a grasp of the Word of God and want to get grounded. It is where we start. We call it our discipleship program. If you have been through discipleship or you are being discipled, you know by now that lesson one is a lesson that in a very basic form talks about what happened to you the day you got saved. That lesson is a lesson that begins in a very basic way what we are going to talk about today and over the next couple of weeks. That lesson does not go into the detail that we are going to because it is not designed to. It is designed to give you a basic concept that as you add the basic concepts of all of the lessons to your life, then you have a foundation that on Sunday morning and Thursday night that we are able to build on.

I want to talk to you about what took place in your life the day you got saved. A number of things happened to you. In fact, if you want to count them up, there are seven of them. We know that seven in the Bible is the number of God's perfection. We know that the Bible says that the man of God needs to be thoroughly furnished, perfected unto all good works. You need to be perfected, perfect unto all good works. That perfecting does not mean sinless perfection. That perfecting means that through this process that I am going to talk to you about, God perfects you. He perfects you for one reason: for the work in the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, that we together can accomplish the mission that God has for us.

I want to focus on that this morning and I want to talk to you about the seven things that changed about you. Obviously, we are not going to get into all of them today because the introductions of this and the things you have to understand on the base level are just as important as the seven things you need to understand.

Let us go to the Lord this morning and ask God's blessing on us as we go to His Word.

*Father, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. We thank You for those that are here today. We pray, Father, that You would take the Word of God now and by Your Spirit that You would speak to our hearts, that You would give us the wisdom, the insight, the understanding to be able to apply what we hear today. Lord, so much of what we hear today, we are so unconditioned to not listening that we lose so much. There is so much in our lives that take the place of what God is saying because things are so busy and so loud and so moving that the still small voice of God many times gets overwhelmed with all that we have. So I pray, Father, today, Holy Spirit of God, that You would just carve out an hour's time this morning that we could forget everything, that we forget about the cell phone calls, we forget about our plans this afternoon, we forget about all the things and we just focus for a short time to really work at listening to what God has to say to us today. Lord, I pray that You will give me the ability to speak clearly, to lay out Your thoughts and Your concepts clearly, and to break them down in a way that every child of God can leave today understanding a little better where they are at with You. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' Name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.*

The first thing I want to talk about these seven things that are going to change about you: they are inward. They are things that change inside you. The second thing I want you to know is that they are immediate. These things happen the instant you get saved. I have to clarify that by saying this: they may be immediate, but they are not always apparent the moment you get saved. These things, the moment you got saved, are changed in your life, but you do not recognize it yet. As you go through the biblical process of spiritual growth, and you exercise your spiritual senses, and you grow, and as the Bible says in 2 Peter 1:5, as you add to your faith, these things begin to show themselves.

#### IV. Observing Spiritual Growth and God's Principles

I must tell you that I am always on the lookout for men and women that could take responsibility in ministry. I am always on the lookout from day one when somebody gets saved. I start to watch them and start to keep my own personal overview of where you are at, who you are discipling or

who is discipling you. I watch very carefully. What I look for is these things. I look for these things in your life because these are the surefire things. I cannot read people's hearts. I do not have the ability to read your mind. But I do not really need to because the Bible has laid out some definite principles. If you just stick with those definite principles, it pretty much tells you where you are at and where people are at.

For instance, you know what one principle is? You are going to hear more about this in the next couple of weeks. It is in 1 Corinthians 8:3. I think 1 Corinthians 8:3 is one of the greatest verses in the Bible, yet it is so simple. You know what it simply says?

1 Corinthians 8:3 But if any man love God, the same is known of him.

That is a great verse. That is one of the greatest verses for me in my life in dealing with people in the ministry. Because you know what it says? It says, "If you love God, it shows." Without even saying it, the opposite is true, because if you do not love God, it shows. One of the great principles is that true love always identifies itself with the object in question. That is why I do not listen to what people say. People tell me all the time how much they love God. I do not listen to what they say. I watch what they do because true love, biblical love, will always identify itself with the object. You say you love God and you live another lifestyle, you are fooling nobody but yourself.

That is what the Bible does. It does not allow me to read hearts. It does not allow me to read minds. But character or human nature is defined in the Bible. That Bible is so absolute that not only has God fixed the orbit of the planets and the revolving of the sun and the orbit of the universe, galaxies and the stars in their place, not only has He fixed that in an absolute way, He has fixed the old nature and the new nature of man the same way, that it runs by that Book. So if you know the principles and you do not go by the principles, it shows. It is just that easy. It is just that simple.

These things are immediate, but they are not always apparent. As you grow in your faith, this is what I look for. I will tell you something else. These seven things are what I preach to because I know that your spiritual relationship with God rises and falls on these seven things. So I always target these seven things. Maybe not every time all seven, but I will focus on these seven in everything that I do. In the back of my mind, this is what I am going for because I know that this is the bottom line of where you are at with God.

When I see these things changing in your life, when I see these things, I see them long before you do, because you never see your own spiritual growth. I went back to Ohio last week, and my mom still lives in the old neighborhood. I always drive by and walk around the neighborhood. I am always amazed in your mind how 40 years ago, you just have that freeze frame of how it was. I go back to my, I remember our old house. I remember the way it was. Then I looked at it, and I was taken back because it looks so much smaller now. I do not think houses shrink with age, but my mind was freeze-framed. I was a little guy back then, and I looked at it, and I remembered as a little guy looks at it. I thought our house was big. Now our house is really small. I look at it now, and I am thinking, "How did a family of four live in that house?" Things change, but we do not think they change. It is the same way with your spiritual growth. You do

not see your spiritual growth, but other people do. That is the way it is supposed to be, but that is the way it works.

So I will see these things in you long before you see them. When I see them, then I know you are on the right track. Then my job is to cultivate them. My job is to help you with them. My job is never to do, as long as you want to do what is right. Even if you do not want to do what is right, my job is to never hurt you. My job is always to leave the door open that you have an avenue at any point in your life that you want to get serious with God, that you can get serious with Him. The job of this church is never to have the doors closed. The job of this church is always to have them open. That is what we have to do.

These are the things that I look for. These are things that I preach to you. You hear me use terms like, "Make every opinion that you have God's opinion." You hear me use the term, and I have used it many times, "God consciousness," being aware of God. You have heard me use the term "Christ-like." You have heard me talk about being more like Christ every day of your life. You have heard me talk about coming to the place where in your life you see things as God sees them. All of these things happen when these seven things come to fruition in your life, that you really begin to operate on these. These seven things really change internally in you.

## V. Effective Sermon Structures: Inner Man, Outer Man, End of Man

In my Bible, not this Bible, in my regular Bible, I have in the front of my Bible what I call my instant sermons. Over the years, I have put together, I probably have 75 or 80 of them. There are times when the Bible says that we preach the Word, "be instant, in season, out of season," you have to always have a message ready to go. Over the years, I have heard many, many sermons and went through many, many things. Many times, just something somebody says in a sermon, you can take that little concept and build a whole sermon on it. Over the years, I have amassed about 75 or 80 of them, I guess, and I have them in the front of my Bible. I call them mission sermons. It is what I would preach if I ever preached at a place like the mission, like some of you guys do. I use, I call them my devotional. If I ever have to give a devotion, and I have used them many, many times over the years, in our softball league or our basketball league when I used to have one, or volleyball, when you have to do the devotion, this is what I draw off of.

Yet at the same time, they are never long in duration, but you can make them into a two-hour sermon. I look for things that are short, compact, and powerful, much like myself. I look for sermons that in two or three points, you can just waste everybody to the ground and get out of there and they remember it the rest of their lives. I like to look for things that when you only have one shot at people, like on the mission or like you have in your devotions, in volleyball or softball, I like to look for short things that impact them that, though I never see them again, they never came back to church, they will remember what those points were and they will never forget them because that gives God's Holy Spirit the chance to really do something.

I try to, I have a whole list of these and I could preach them as devotions. I could preach them as sermons. If I went into any church or any group of Christians, I could take any one of these and

take the points and there is not a lot of flowery stuff with them. They are very exact. They are very purposeful. They are very powerful. They are very short and they are very, they leave an impact.

One of them goes like this, and all of these I am going to give you are fitting into where I am going with this. In a broad sense, I have a little three-point outline there that I use of what the Bible changes about man. If I was doing a devotion or I was down at the mission, or someplace that I wanted to make a short, powerful impact, I would take something like this and I would say in a general sense, "Now the Bible, gentlemen," I am going to pretend you are at the mission now, "the Bible changes three things about you." Obviously, the Bible changes many, many things about you, but you want to make a short impact. So you are lumping a lot of things together and you say the Bible in a general sense changes three things about every man and every woman.

1. The first thing the Bible changes is the inner man.
2. The second thing the Bible changes is the outer man.

Then you take those two things and you develop them. The inner man is the day you got saved and what changed in your life. Once the inner man has changed, you drunks have the chance to change the outer man. Oh, I am speaking to the mission, sorry. Then you have the ability to change the outer man. So you go from the inner man gets changed to the outer man gets changed.

3. Then you give them the third point: The Bible changes the inner man. It changes the outer man. And then the Bible changes the end of man. You are going to hell, you are going to Heaven.

I promise you every bum in that place will remember inner man, outer man, end of man. You could sit up there and read 60,000 verses and lay out every type in the world, and he will forget it five minutes after he is wolfing down his cheeseburger. But he will remember the inner man, the outer man, and the end of man. You know why? Because it is concentrated. It leaves him with a three-point outline that the Holy Spirit of God will prick him with the rest of his life. I dare simply say that when he is shot in the street, or the drug deal gone bad, and he is laying there and he is ready to die, the thing that will go through his mind is the inner man, the outer man, the end of man. Those things are powerful. I say that to you because the truth of the matter is these seven things we are going to talk about in detail, they change the inner man, they change the outer man, they change the end of man.

## VI. Three Types of Christians

I have another one that I deal with if I am dealing with Christians. I would not preach this at the mission, but I would preach this in a devotion. I would preach this to a church. If somebody asked me to get up and just give a 15-minute devotion to somebody and a group of people in a church, I use this. This is another one. This one deals with once a person gets saved. You realize that once, now I am going to change gears, you are no longer mission bums. You are in a little church now and somebody asked me to give you a 15-minute devotion. I am going to cut it down to 30 seconds.

When I get up there, I would say, "Okay, now folks, here is what it is. I do not know if you know this or not, but every person that gets saved, I have been in churches, around churches for 40 years, probably longer than that. Every church I have been in, any group of people I have been, I have got people fall into three categories. It is unbelievable. If you are here this morning and you are a Christian, except you baby Christians, I do not put you into one of these three yet, but you are going to grow into one of these three. Right now you are just kind of figuring it all out. You are not really in one, but you are going to grow into one of these in time."

Every child of God in this building this morning, outside of you young Christians, you are in one of these three categories. You are in one of these three categories based on what you have done with the inner man, the outer man, and the end of man. But I am telling you, there are three types of Christians. Except for the new Christians, but I am going to tell you, you are going to grow into one of these three types.

4. First of all, you have those Christians that make things happen.
5. Then you have the second group of Christians who just watch what is happening.
6. Then you have the third group of Christians that have no idea what is happening.

That is churches. I have met Christians that are very present someplace, their presence demands that the Holy Spirit of God do something. I am not kidding you. I have known Christians that when they go to work, they are known for what they believe. Some people like them, some people hate them, but they know what they stand for. You cannot sit down and have a lunch without somebody either antagonizing you or asking you a question because your very presence demands that the Holy Spirit of God ruffle things up. I like that. That is the part when your life comes to the place that wherever you go, you disrupt the flow. You are where you need to be.

You ever noticed that was a characteristic of Jesus? Everywhere He went, either people loved Him or hated Him. A lot of people just loved to hate Him. Wherever He went, it got disruptive. It was very obvious when He walked in a room that the room was divided and sometimes it was Him against them, but it was divided. Sometimes it will be you against them, but it is known because of the fact that you make things happen because your very walk with God demands that God stir things up. I like that. You are thoroughly furnished as the Bible says, and you are a very principled person. You operate your life by principle.

Proverbs 14:7 says that though wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom. With all thy getting, get understanding. When you and I went to school, we had a principal. I remember my grade school principal. I remember my junior high principal. I remember my high school principal. They are all dead now, but a principal's job was then as it is today, that he makes sure that the teaching quality is at its highest level and everything is cohesive, conducive to your learning growth process in the public school. That is his job. In other words, he is the man who is responsible for you to get the principles of learning. Therefore, he is called the principal because it is the principles of the Word of God that make you someone who, when you walk into a room, everybody knows there is a difference in you than the average person.

It may not be a good deal for you. You may have people in your family that, and I talked about this last week, this is why when you get saved, people think now that you are better and they will

say this all the time, "Well, you just think you are better than I am now." No, I am not better. I am just saved, but they see a difference. Here is what will happen. The devil will take that and he will either beat you down with it or God will take it and He will raise you up with it. I will tell you what, it is a situation where as you grow and you come through the things of life, you realize that there are Christians that just make things happen because God cannot stand still when they are in a room and He is going to use them. That is what the Bible says in Galatians 3:24, that the Bible was our schoolmaster. You know what a schoolmaster is? It is the principal that brought us to Christ. So a man or a woman who really is that first type of Christian and things happen, it is because they are living by those principles and they are very present, their presence demands that the Holy Spirit of God take action.

Then you have those Christians that just watch what is happening. I call them ticket-taking Christians. I go out to KCI airport a couple of weeks ago flying home to Ohio and every time I go through the ticket thing, I think of some of God's people because a lot of God's people are just like the ticket takers out there. They are shell takers, they take the tickets, but they never take the trip themselves. Some of you, bless your hearts, you talk about God, you tell others about God, but you just never take any experience and the trip of really getting plugged into yourself. You talk about it, but only from an external application. You have never really swung a sword for God and drawn blood. I do not know what else to tell you. You are not principled in life. You are good people. You love the Lord, but you just never pick up that Book and do any damage with it. When you go to work, you are just one of the boys. When you go to the office, you are just one of the gals. They will say off-color jokes in front of you and never even blush because they do not know that you are different.

From the day I got saved, I had people tell dirty jokes in my presence and then they would look at me and apologize to me for saying it. You know what I would say about saying, "You can apologize to me, it did not offend me. You have to get on your knees and ask God to forgive you. Why are you asking me to forgive you? I am just like you. I am a dirty rotten sinner that used to laugh at those jokes until God changed me." Some of God's people, they just tell the joke, they tell the stories and you know what you do so they do not find out you are a Christian? You laugh. Sure you do. You want to ruffle feathers? Be in a little group around a water cooler and somebody tells something really filthy and dirty and you be the one that does not laugh. You will be stuck out like a sore thumb. I am not kidding you.

So you have those Christians that just watch what is happening. Good people, love the Lord, but for whatever reason, they never buy into the fact that God has a job for you to do and that job is to bear the Name and bear the shame. They are not going to do it. They are going to get home to Heaven the best way they can and they will come to church every Sunday, but they are just never going to pick up this Book and they are not going to stick anybody with it. When they walk out of here the rest of the week, they do not cuss, they do not do all the things, but you know what? Their life just by example, people just think they are just one of them.

Then you have the third group, and that is Christians who do not have a clue what is happening. I am telling you, they never grow past the day they got saved. There are so many people, they have so many problems in their life, so many people in their marriages, so many problems with their

kids, and they just cannot, they are just like they are drowning in a sea of problems. All of their life, now I know that when everybody gets saved, you have to work through your problem. I am not talking about that. I have already told you I am putting all the young Christians in one little pile, but I am telling you, you are not in this mix yet, but you will grow into one of these three. My job is to help you get to the first one. My job is for us as a little church, as small as we are, to tear up as much real estate as we can. It is just one of those things. But God's people today are so dysfunctional, they are so emotional, they are so out of balance, they are so unprincipled, they cannot even get their own personal lives on a two-track lane, let alone trying to step out and do something for God. But I am telling you, all churches fall into those three. That is another little sermon that I put out. It is very powerful. The rest of your life, you will remember those three types of Christians. You remember those who make things happen, those who watch what is happening, and those who do not know what is happening. I say that again, because these seven things will make you or break you when it comes to this.

## VII. Christian Character and the Four Personal P's

The child of God whose life is totally given to God and matures in these seven areas that we are going to look at here, there is something different about him. We can call this Christian character. I have told you before, nobody is born with character. I mean, godly character. Godly character has to be instituted the day you got saved. Then you learn because somebody gets a hold of you that teaches you the Bible, takes a personal interest. I have told you before, you cannot build a church in mass, you have to build a church one person at a time. You have to build them one family at a time. A pastor has to have the ability or the willingness to take one person at a time, give him his undivided attention and then work with that person through whatever problems they have, building a relationship and helping them through. I would much rather be your friend than be your pastor. Because a pastor has such a colloquic concept to it of such distancing. Most men want to be your pastors, but as their pastor, they do not want to be your friend. I want to be your friend first and then I will worry about being a pastor. I can get more done with you when we are on the same level than I can with you down here and me up here and you thinking I am somebody, a guy up here, never has any struggles or problems myself. No, we are all in this together, but I am telling you this, when you get plugged in and you get matured in these areas, something different changes in your life.

What changes in your life? My next little sermon is called the Four Personal P's. These are things that take place outwardly. When you mature in the areas that we are going to talk about, four personal things change about you that everybody sees. This is what happens when you become principled. This is what happens when you make Sunday morning, Thursday night discipleship, the books of the Bible that you take home, that you listen, you follow through with it and you begin to principle your life based on what the Word of God says. You bring your dysfunctional life in line with the functional principles of the Word of God. These things are all obvious when you begin to mature in these areas inward that we are going to talk about. These four things change outwardly and everybody sees them. This is what I see.

The first thing that changes about you and you start to get, and notice I am giving you all the end result for you to get to the thing. I will tell you why I do that. Because when I read a book, I always read the last chapter first. When I read a video, I always run it to the end and watch the end and go back and watch the rest of it. That way if it does not turn out good, I do not waste two hours. I found that learning, when I lay out what the end result is first and you get a good concept of that, then when we go back and we put it together, you will have a better understanding because you know where we are going to wind up. That is just the way I learn. You are going to have to be victims of my learning disabilities, I guess, I do not know.

When you mature in these areas, four personal things change about you.

### *1.) Your Purpose Changes.*

I do not know if you know it or not. I told you before that God gave you everything in life to help you accomplish that plan. That plan of finishing what He started is our purpose. You need to know that. You know what He says in Romans 8:28?

Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

You know what that verse says? It says what I just told you. Everything God has given you, He has given you that you might fulfill the purpose. The purpose is to understand that you breathe God's air and walk on His Earth as a child of God for one reason: to finish what He started. Anything other than that, when you walk out that door now, is willful disobedience. Remember Job 9:4, "He that hardeneth himself against him shall not prosper." Great verse. I am thinking about putting that on my back bumper backwards, or my back bumper rightwards on my front bumper backwards, so people in the rearview mirror will see it and people coming up behind me will see it, that if you harden your heart against the Lord, you are not going to prosper. You know why that needs to be taught? Because God's people think they can.

You know what is wrong with purpose? When you want to get this thing down to the lowest common denominator, I will tell you what is wrong with every one of us one way or the other. I am going to tell you, this is so simple and so basic yet it is so profound. For this one, I want you to turn over to Romans 12. Familiar verse, but I want you to see it.

Romans 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

There it is again. You have something to prove as a child of God. You and I have something to prove. How many times have we seen somebody do something and somebody would say, "Well, what is he trying to prove?" The child of God, you and I have something to prove. What we have to prove is what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God in our life. Who do we prove that to? We prove that to the world. How do we prove that to the world? By being a living sacrifice.

This is where it comes down to. This is where it comes down to and here lies the root problem for you and for me, and everybody in this room. When you want to, I am telling you right now, some of you will in your life serve God and do a great service for God. Some of you in your life will do a great disservice for God. Whatever the case may be, the reason for it, you are about to get. I will tell you why. It is not going to be great and theological. It is not going to be something that is going to astound you, but it is the basic common level reason why some of you will never do what God wants you to do.

When you come down through this thing and you look at this verse here in Romans 12, He says this: He says you are to be a living sacrifice. When Christ died on the cross, He did not become a living sacrifice. He became a dead sacrifice. He died. His part of the plan was twofold for you and for me: come to Earth, give us a model, and then die on the cross that you and I could be in Christ, that we had the ability then to carry on because if He would not have died on the cross and shed His blood, it was all academic. Nothing would have been able for us to do because He had not died. We would have still been in our sins. So His first coming for you and for me was two points. One, He had to come and give us a model. So He lived for 33 years and giving us a total complete identity of what our life should be. Any problem you are going to face, any circumstance you are going to be up against, the answer is found in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in a 33-year journey of the sinless Son of God facing on all points tempted like you and I are, yet without sin. That is my model. When I am up against the world, the flesh and the devil, that is where I run. Nine times a day, I will ask myself, faced with decisions, circumstances, "What would Jesus do?" And I will go back and find out what He did. That is my model. That is what He gave me.

Then He died on the cross. He became my dead sacrifice, my Passover Lamb. He became the way for me to get my sins saved because His plan for me was to get saved and not to die for Him necessarily, but to become a living sacrifice just as He became my dead sacrifice. You know what the key is? Here is the issue. It says, "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, which is your reasonable service." Here it comes. You thought I pitched good last night? Here it comes. You will not hit this one. This will go by you like a 125-power fastball. This one will go right across the plate. This will not be inside, outside, high or low. It is going to hit you right in the gut.

God thinks your suffering for Him is reasonable. God thinks your denying yourself and focusing on the mission is reasonable compared to His Son's death and sacrifice on Calvary's cross. Your problem is you think it is unreasonable for you. He hanged there naked. They laughed at Him. They mocked Him. They spit on Him. They shamed Him. God says because of that, it is only reasonable that you take it too. You know what you say? This is why some of you will never serve God. I will tell you right now, we are not getting to the message. I will tell you right now what the problem is. Some of God's people think it is unreasonable for you to give your life over to God. Why? You have your own plan. You have your own ideas. You have your own mission. It does not include the sinless Son of God sacrificing it for you. That is our basic problem. We think giving our life for Him, taking the 50, 60 years, our job, our resources, our finances, and using it for finishing the job in our small part is just too unreasonable. Not when you compare

my Savior's death on the cross. God says what you and I call unreasonable, He says it is only reasonable.

I am telling you, my dear friend, what is missing in God's people's lives is purpose. We are living our lives for ourselves. We think that happiness is out there getting what we want. God's people, the Lord is coming back and the reality of the purpose. I will tell you what, you may go out and buy a book called *The Purpose Driven Life*, but you will not get the same purpose that I just gave you in it. The purpose that drives me is that He died on the cross. He shed His blood. He hung there in shame, laughed at, mocked at, spit on. Then you and I think we just can go through life having a great time ignoring it. Oh God, dear people, this church has a mission. This church has a purpose, but it is only as strong as its weakest link. We have a bunch of people in Christianity today with no purpose, no purpose, no direction, no understanding, no reasoning, no comprehension. We have filled our lives with so many trinkets, so many shiny things. We have all that we want that God's mission just never comes into mind. Well, I am here to tell you it never left His mind and what you and I call unreasonable, He called reasonable and their lives are a problem. That is our problem. That is it. End of message.

The devil's job is either to get you so surrounded by your problems that you cannot get out of if you want, or so decorated with the things of this world that you lose the mission and you lose the plan and you walk out. You hear me preach today, you chalk it up just a madman. You chalk it up as just somebody who, whatever, and you walk out there, you put your hands in your pocket and you look out there at all the beautiful world that God made and you look at all the plans you have, all the things you want to do, all the things you have and you look over there at the cross of Calvary and you look at some young Christian or some out there struggling with nothing trying to do the work. You put your hands in your pocket and you lean back and you just look at that thing and you say, "Oh yeah, sorry God. Life like that with all I got. No, I am just not reasonable."

## *2.) Your Passion Changes.*

You know what is wrong with 95% of God's people's marriages today? I do not even include the unsaved world, but you know what is wrong with God's people's marriages today? No passion in it. When we talk about passion, you think of sex. I am not talking about sex. I am talking about passion. Purpose leads to passion and passion is the determination. Passion is the doggedness. Passion is the self-discipline. Passion is the principle in yourself. Passion is what leads to the great strengths of our character that we just never lose sight of what God's mission is.

What happens in marriages? You lose sight of your marriage. Your marriage becomes old stuff. It does. Your marriage, once it was sparkly and fun, and you dated and there was an excitement there, and then after you get married for a while, the excitement goes. There are a number of reasons for that. We talked about it in our marriage class that the three needs that each person has, spiritual, physical, and emotional, but passion is in the emotional. That is why marriages come to the place where after a while they do not mean anything anymore because they either never had it or they have lost the passion.

My wife and I were driving down the road a couple weeks ago. We like to go for a little ride sometimes on Sunday afternoon, go and get some little ice cream, or she gets a little ice cream, the big ice cream. We pulled up in a stoplight and it was dusk. It looked like a big guy driving the car. All of a sudden, two images emerged from the one, and the woman leaned over and kissed the guy on the mouth. Hard. Then the light changed and they went back to being one. They were sitting really close together. They drove off. My wife looks over at me and says, "Honey, do you remember when we used to do that?" Now, what do you do, guys? You are in a jam. I did the only thing, one of those Nehemiah prayers. I looked over and said, "Well, honey, I have not moved."

You know what is wrong with marriages? I do not want to put you on the spot, but you two kids have to guard against this: do not lose that passion you have. You are good kids. I love you both. You are very passionate about what you do. I love you to death. Do not lose that passion. I look at young couples that come in and boy, you see some that have the passion. They understand together. They have a plan. They put together a plan when they get married. "This is what we are going to do for God." I told you about, if you look for a spouse, you are going to get married. You look for somebody that says, "Hey, Bozo, I have to face God. You are going to be my partner in this. Do not screw it up." And her look at him or him look at her and say, "Hey, look, sweetie, I love you to death. But if you are not going to get into this thing, you are going to mess me up." Pick your partner on that basis. Let the passion have a plan. Put it together.

You know what the greatest verse in the Bible is on passion in a man's life? It is in the life of Job. It is in Job 13:15. You know what it says?

Job 13:15 Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.

Job in the midst of his trouble, Job going through what none of us can go through. Job in the midst of losing everything he had. I do not know of a man who had more of a right to be depressed, despondent and on Prozac. I do not know of a man that needed a therapist, a psychiatrist and a psychologist any more than he did. Yet Job had no church. He had no pastor. He had no Bible. He had no Christian friends. He had no Christian TV. He had no Christian radio. He did not have the 700 Club. He did not have the PLT Club or the BLT or whatever it is. He did not have any of those things. All he had was God. You know what he said? For me, it is the greatest verse on passion in a man's life. He said, "I am going to paraphrase it. He said, 'You know what? With all I am going through, where all I am at, and how bad I hurt and where I am at. I do not care if He kills me, I am still going to trust Him.'" That is passion.

Just like marriages lack passion, and that is why they do not work, let me tell you something. You are going to be married to Jesus Christ someday. You are espoused to Him right now. The problem with your relationship with Him and that marriage spiritually is the same problem you have got in your physical. There is no passion between you and Christ. No passion. You read the Bible when it is convenient. There is no burning desire all day long in your life that you saw something in the Word of God, or you heard me say something, or you heard something, and you just cannot wait to get home to dig it out of the Bible. It is one of those things where that is the

problem. There is no passion. Purpose, when you have purpose, it leads to passion. Passion leads to all of those characteristics in our life that get us through.

I have to say this, because I am going to use it here. John, this thing you gave me on David, Heart of God, great stuff. I see John every once in a while does me a little theological thing and you bring it to me to check it in. I learned so, I learned, you taught me two things today that I, and I read that passage a thousand times, and I missed it. You gave me two things out of that thing. I read it the other day that just put the whole thing, and I had to talk about it this morning. Because if you want passion, sometime go to 2 Samuel 23 and you find the story about David's mighty men of valor. Now there is some passion. He wrote a little thing on why David had a heart after God, and I am sure he would make you a copy and it is worth reading. It has some great stuff in it. Hope you do not mind me saying that. You may have to give out 100 copies of it, but it is great stuff. It really, really ministered to me, and it made the point of what I am trying to get across to you about passion.

When you read this thing, the first thing that I never saw, I never saw, those first three guys are not even Jews. They are proselytes. That fits the type perfectly that they are a picture of you and me getting into the body of Christ. They did tremendous acts of strength. They had tremendous physical power. One guy killed 900 men by himself. We look at that and we think, "Oh, somebody just got two zeros in there and made a scribal error." No, I am telling you right now, one guy killed 900 men. How do I know that? Because that is what that Book does. You take that same concept and apply it into your life spiritually, and you will defeat any enemy that comes up against you.

You know what the difference was between David's mighty men of valor and everybody else? You make this point so well, I am going to read it. Do I have your permission to read it, do I? Do I have to sign a waiver or anything? It was one word. You did not get the word, but you got the point. Passion. I want to read what John wrote here. This is great stuff. He says, "First, let us look at the mighty men of David. David's three mighty men were all proselyte Jews, Gentiles turned Jews." Oh, that, I had never seen that. Then he goes on and he says this, "Thus David's mighty men were changed men. They left their nationality and embraced God's chosen nationality. Thus, David's mighty men were men that were unnatural men. They left their nationality and embraced God's chosen nationality. David's mighty men were natural men living unnatural lives." Oh, what a point. He says this, "It was not that David's mighty men were any mightier than any natural man." Oh, I love this. "It was David's ability to pass on understanding of God's will in a way that allowed these mighty men to live unnatural lives." That is it. David transferred his passion for Jerusalem, the city of God that was always under attack by somebody. David translated his passion to the men. Not everybody got it, but the men that got it became mighty men of valor. Oh, you have to see that. God has a job for us and your temple will be under attack every day. But if God, typified by David, can get into your life the same passion that God has, the same passion that David had to his men, you will rise above every obstacle and circumstance in your life. That is what I am talking about. Passion, passion, passion.

*3.) Your Perspective Changes.*

Once you get saved, your value system changes. Matthew 6:21 is a great verse. It says this:

Matthew 6:21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Along with this, your passion is your treasure. It is as simple as that. You find men and women who have passion for all kinds of things. Some of them have passion for sports more than the Word of God. Some men and women have a passion for music more than the Word of God. Some for golf, some for fishing, some for hunting. In fact, there are any number of events, the list is endless. Some women have a passion for sewing more than they do the Word of God. Some women have more of a passion for whatever other, whatever women do more than the Word of God. But whatever your treasure is, wherever your heart is, wherever you think about the most, that is your passion. It is real simple. It is not hard. You do not have to scratch your head and say, "I wonder what my passion is." Let me tell you, you can answer in a minute. What is the number one thing you think about all day long? That is your passion.

The greatest chapter in the Bible on passion is Psalm 119:1-176. Because in that great chapter, you find God's treasure chest. You know what he says in there, David says, "I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil." That was his passion. He says, "I rejoice in thy riches far above gold, yea above fine gold." You know why? His passion was the Word of God. When your passion becomes the Word of God, and your passion, and your purpose, and your perspective become the Word of God, you are going to get the right value system in your life. When you get into these seven things that we are obviously not going to get into this morning, but we will get into next week, and these things start to really kick in in your life. This is what I preach to, these seven things. A lot of you young Christians, you are going to find yourself in these next couple of messages. A lot of things are going to work out for you because they are going to become clear for you. But you are going to find yourself in some of these messages, or these things, because these seven things are the things that changed about you in a heartbeat that you got saved, but you have to grow them. You have to cultivate them. You have to nurture them. Then they grow up inside you, and then outwardly, these four things automatically take place.

Perspective. Value system. You know what the difference is between the Philadelphian church and the Laodicean church? Their values. One loved the Word of God, one loved the things of the world. It is the difference between my generation and the present generation. My generation had a great work ethic. The generation that is around today, nobody wants to work. There are exceptions to that. I do not paint everybody with a broad brush, but in a general sense, that is true. You look at the way young people dress today. You look at their attitudes about things. You look at where their values are. I am not saying that in my generation there were not bad people that had bad values. Certainly there were. But as time goes on and things do not change, the values change, and they lessen. The generation today that were the bad kids today make the bad kids of my day look like saints. There was drug abuse in my school. When I went to grade school, junior high school, there were some kids that took drugs, but they were the absolute outcast of the school. Everybody knew who they were. Everybody marked them. They looked weird. They acted weird. Everybody knew they were weird. Now the weird is taking over the norm. Now if you are a normal person, you are the weird person. See where I am coming from?

Values have changed. You have to understand as you grow in these things what is really important, the mission, the job that God has for you. That is what the real issues are in life.

I know, but I look, now this is going to sound stupid, but allow me to be stupid. Here are just a couple of little things that I am talking about. Please do not take this in any inference to anybody one way or the other because it is not meant in that sense. It is just an overall thing. This is some of the stuff that I look for. I have noticed at times that some of you went places that were legitimate places like vacations, took a little time off here and there. One lady in particular in mind, and I am not going to bring up who she is, but she is a very busy lady. She travels a lot. Does a lot of things. She came into Bible study one night about two minutes after seven. She was in a rush, in a flush, in a hurry. She came into Bible study. Afterwards she came up and she apologized for being late for Bible study. She said, "You know what? I just drove straightway over here from St. Louis. I just did not want to miss Bible study." That may not mean much to you. To the average person, it may not mean much, but I am going to tell you something. That is somebody who is beginning to develop the right value system. That may be a stupid, silly little thing, but it means something to me as a pastor. Because right now that may be in a basic form.

I have known people that went on vacation and I am not against vacation. You deserve some time away. I am not saying you should not, but I have known people that have cut their vacation or worked their vacation that they would not miss any Sundays or they would not miss any time that they had to. I know it is going to happen and I am not fighting it one way or the other. I know that even the ones that are not here on Sunday, because you have vacations, would like to be here on Sunday. I am not making that inference at all. I am saying watching somebody work the value system the right way. I am not saying it could always happen. Most of you people in here are as faithful to the Word of God and love God as I know how any people in the world. If you go on vacation and it takes over a Sunday, because you are in Mexico or Bermuda or Bahama or Poland or wherever you are at, obviously, obviously. What I am saying is that it is not about anybody in particular. It is about an attitude of a value system. But you know what? I do not want to be away when the Word of God is being taught. I have had people come to me and say, "You know what? I got my job changed so I can be there on Sunday morning because I do not want to miss Sunday." It is just as easy to not go through the hassle of working maybe Saturday night so you can get Sunday night off. But I am telling you, it is those kind of things that set the right value system. It may be non-sequential to you. They may be something that you just think, "Well, what is the big deal about that?" It is a big deal to God because God is looking at how you are structuring your values.

I will tell you something else I like and I see this. These things just happen. I mean, they do not just happen. But I do not orchestrate them. I just get up and preach the Bible and it happens because that is what God does. It is the issue of baptism. I have people all the time that we only have baptism twice a year. I have people that you get saved, you need to be baptized. Most people do not have a problem with that. If you have been saved, there are a number of you that need to get baptized. It is because every New Testament believer in the book of Acts and throughout Paul's writing was baptized after they got saved. If we had a baptismal service, a

baptismal here in this place, we would baptize every time there is a Sunday morning, we would baptize. We would just do it. But we do not. So we have to do it the way we have to do it.

People come up to me and here is the kicker. There are people that come to this church that were baptized by the wrong churches. By that I am saying, and not a New Testament local church. In other words, there are a lot of churches out there. I do not know if you know this or not. There are a lot of churches out there that they may appear to be New Testament local churches, but they are not. By being not, they do not have the authority under the New Testament to baptize. Now you may like that or not like that, but that is just the fact you have to take it up with God. That is the way it is. Now I do not ever say much about it because I like God to bring it up. But I like it. I look at it because it is a value tester to me when somebody will come up and they will say out of their own, on their own, without me saying a word about baptism and say, "You know what, Bob, we need to get baptized. We were not baptized scripturally." You know what that tells me? That tells me somebody is paying attention. That tells me that God is doing. It tells me that your perspective is changing. That is what it tells me. You look for those little things of somebody changing their purpose, changing their passion, changing their perspective.

#### *4.) Your Patience Changes.*

The last thing that changes or will change that I see changing is our patience. Oh, wow. I hate that. I have to tell you this. I have been in the Book now 35 years and I can honestly say this. I do not know everything about the Bible. There is a lot I do not know, but I do know this. The longer, the longer, the longer I walk with God, the less in a hurry I get. I am just telling you, most of us are not very patient people and our whole society, the way we are brought up, everything around us, the land around us lends to that and demands that we do not be patient. I really believe that that is one of the major sources why many of God's people make so many bad decisions. I think that when young couples get married, they are not patient enough sometimes to get married. I believe that when people make decisions about things in life, they are not patient enough. I just think that it is a real problem.

In 1 Thessalonians 5, when Paul was writing it out and he came down through there, he gave us a list of things that are great things. He says, starting in verse 16:

1 Thessalonians 5:16-22 Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

That is a great verse. But it takes patience to prove all things because some things do not prove out as fast as we would like it to. That is where the issue comes in. How patient are we willing to prove something out? Because time proves all things. Sometimes time does not go as fast as we wanted to. We get in a jam, we want God to fix it right now. We do not see it took us 10 years to get in the jam to begin with. You do not take 10 years cultivating a lifestyle and get out of it in 10 minutes. You just do not. But most people do not have the patience to do what it needs to do to get out of it. So that is where the breakdown comes. That is what happens. That is where we are all at. You are going to find this when you deal with people, you are going to find it if you are going to find a wife or a husband, it is certainly true in learning the Bible and it is certainly true

in learning the ministry. You have to learn patience. But it is the process of learning patience that is tough. That is hard. Because nobody just picks up patience in the morning and goes out being a patient. You just do not.

He says in James 1:19: Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

You know why? Because you prove everything. It has to, you have to have patience in that. The ministry and dealing with people, you have to be very, very patient. The only way you get patience is by going through some really tough times in your life. I will tell you what, the tough times in life is what forces us to trust God. Otherwise, we would not just trust God on our own. It is a terrible way that God has to do it. But that is us left to ourselves when everything is good. We are just simply not going to do what is right with God. We are not. So God has to bring the events and the trials in our lives that force us to Him. That is why I tell you problems with problems in your life, you either run from or run to God. It will either make you or break you. But that is the bottom line. Patience is not an easy thing to learn.

## VIII. The Perfect Work of Patience

I will show you James 1, and I love this, learning to wait on God.

James 1:2-4 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

See, you have to go through the tough times to get the patience. There is a method in this that you have got to see today, because none of us like to go through tough times. None of us relish the things that we have to go through to get patient. But I am telling you, if you are ever going to be successful in the ministry and dealing with people, you are going to have to learn to wait on God. I have a little thing that I follow all of my life. You know what it is? "Lack of planning on your part does not necessitate an emergency on my part." Because people will run you ragged. You have got to understand that going through what you are going through is by God's design, if you have signed your name on a dotted line that I want to serve, and I am going to be, and I am going to bear the Name and bear the shame, then what you are beginning to go through, whatever it may be in your life, whether you are a family, whatever, it is going to come down to the place where God now has got you into basic ministry 101, which is learning patience.

But I want you to see something. He said there that "knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." Look at here, comes verse 4. You always hear verse 3, but you never heard verse 4 because nobody knows what verse 4 means. They do not know what to do with it. "But let patience have her perfect work." See that thing? He says be patient and being patient. You know why? Because there is a perfect work that comes out of your trials and tribulations when you get patient. Patience has a perfect work. So what you go through is some kind of perfecting for you in your ability to wait on God. I am telling you, time spent waiting on God is never time spent wasted.

I love bumper stickers and t-shirts. I think bumper stickers and t-shirts are always the thermometer where America is at. I was in Ohio, I was in the airport in Cleveland, and I saw a t-shirt that said, "Drink apple juice. OJ will kill you." I thought that. I saw another one that said, "Time is never wasted when you are spending your time being wasted." I thought to myself, that is the world. That is how the world looks at it. But I am telling you from God's standpoint, time spent waiting on God is never time spent wasted. It has a perfect work.

Now let me show you what that perfect work is.

Romans 5:1-5 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

You do not want to miss this because God is going to put you through to get you ready. He put me through it. His Son went through it. This is part of the living sacrifice process. This is part of getting to the place in your life where you begin to bear the Name, but then you have to bear the shame. Most Christians want to bear the Name, but they do not want to bear the shame. They two go together. One of the greatest verses in the Bible talked about the fact that "I may know him, the power of his resurrection." Everybody likes that. But then it says "the fellowship of his sufferings." See, do not bear the Name without bearing the shame.

Patience comes through tribulation and patience has a perfect work. He says in James 1:4, "But let patience have her perfect work that ye may be perfect and entire wanting nothing." Let us see this perfect work. Romans 5:1. Oh, great verse. This ought to be on your top 10 list. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Wow, what a great verse. "By whom also we have access by faith unto this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also." Ah, here it comes. Why? Why are we going to glory in tribulation? Why should what you are going through right now, should you be praising God for? Well, one, it will help get you in the right perspective because you understand that what you are going through has a perfect work. Even though it hurts, you know, even though it is hard to deal with, underneath that, as my old mom used to say, "Behind every gray cloud is a silver lining." Behind every problem you go through, there is a perfect work. You have to see it. When you get the purpose, you get the passion, you get the perspective, then you see that what you are going through right now is for a perfect work in your life. Let us see what it is.

"By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope and the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us."

You know what Psalm 27:14 says? Psalms 27:14 Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

God through the very trials and tribulations that we go through has a perfect work. That perfect work strengthens our heart because going through it, we get experience. Experience leads to hope. When I use the word, when they use the word hope in the Bible, it is not in a sense of "I hope I am saved, I hope." It is the fact that the Word of God is your only hope. You are not putting your hope in anything else. It is your hope. It is not "I hope it works." It is. It is my only hope. If you were drowning out there and somebody threw you a life preserver and it was floating towards you, you would not say, "I hope that holds me up." You would say, "That is my only hope." When it comes to the Bible, I do not say, "I hope the Bible is right. Boy, I hope I am right at what I believe." I say, "That Book is my only hope." You know how I got there? Experience. Seeing God do His perfect work because going through what you go through when you learn purpose, when you learn passion, when you learn perspective, when you learn patience, you get experience. Experience is what you in the ministry. Experience is what leads to you knowing there is no other hope than the Word of God. Some of you know that intellectually right now, but you do not have that practically. You could not take me in the Word of God and lay it out. You believe it in your heart and your head, but you could not find it with your fingers. But in time you will, in time you will.

Letting God be God. When you get experience and you get hope, you get understanding of how God works. You know now God's fingerprints, God's footsteps. You do not worry nearly as much about things because you have spent in a thousand of those circumstances and you can trace the footsteps of God. The footsteps of God will always follow the same path in any given situation, ladies and gentlemen. He never has more than one path. It will always be the same. The fingerprints of God will always be up the same spot at the same time. They never change. In time you learn that whatever given situation you are in, you learn to see that it is okay because God has a perfect work through this. If we just learn to let God be God, God will strengthen our hearts because we will understand and completely have a grasp on the fact that God knows what He is doing.

For me personally, what is done in my life, and it will do it in your life as you put these things together. The first thing it does, and you have heard me say these before, the first thing it does, then I am done.

*1.) It teaches you to understand and realize what your limitations are.*

We all have limitations. There are some things that I will not do because they are beyond my limitations. As a child of God, one of the first things they learn as they go through this process is what you do well and what you do not do well. That does not mean you do not work on the things you do not do well to get to the point, but trying to do something well before you know what to do with it is not good. You have got to understand what you believe before you try to get somebody else to believe what you believe. Many times you have to believe what they believe more and understand what they believe as much as you do what you believe. But you have to

know your limitations. You have to know you only have so much to give and you have to make sure you use that wisely.