

I. No Accidents in Life

There are no accidents in life and what we do. You may get the flu, or a cold, but I don't believe it was preordained of God that you got the cold. I think if you touch somebody or get around somebody that has a cold, you are going to get a cold. That is just the way it works. But I believe when it comes to the things in your life and my life where God really wants to mold and make you, if you are saved, into what He wants you to be, I really believe that there are no accidents.

I heard myself say it last week when I talked about the fact that I do not believe it is an accident that you are in this church. God has something for you. I was thinking of the timing of God providing our building and getting where we are at, and where we are at in the Book of Romans. Romans is truly a key book in our lives if we are ever going to do what God wants us to do. The job of this church is when you get saved or when you come in, no matter where you are at with the Word of God, is to help build a foundation in your life. What we need to do is take you and help you understand why you believe what you believe.

Remember last week I told you that when you do not know what you believe and why you believe it, when tough times come, you are going to panic. That is so true. Our job is not only to help get a foundation in your life on what you believe, but then to continue to build on that foundation as you grow, building on what you already know, and we just add to it.

I was reading in the Old Testament this week, and I was thinking about studying the life of Rehoboam and Jeroboam. I was coming back there in 2 Chronicles 12:14, and I read a verse that I had read many, many times, but I had forgotten about it. As I read it, I thought to myself, "Boy, isn't that so true of where so many of God's people are at?" The Bible says about Rehoboam that he got into sin, and the reason why he got into sin is the Bible says because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord. I think that in a nutshell, that is exactly what this church is really about. When it is all boiled down, this is what my job is, and it is really what your job is: prepare your heart to seek the Lord. That is why you are here today. That is why you come on Thursday night. That is why you get disciplined. That is why you do the things that you do. That is why you come over and sit down with me, and we go through things in the Bible together and help you figure it out, because that is what each of us needs to do: prepare our heart to seek the Lord.

II. Looking Ahead

I listened to Dave Ramsey this week, and I do not know what you know about Dave Ramsey, but I like him. I think he has some of the greatest practical stuff that you are ever going to hear for young couples when they get married financially. We have the big thing going on today with the economy and all, and we talked about it last week, and all of the things and the government bailouts and all that. In the midst of all the flurry, in the midst of all the stuff that is being said, and you cannot get anybody to agree on it, as I was listening to him speak, I thought to myself, in

all of this shouting about, “I do not know what to do, but we need to do something,” here was a very clear, definitive voice on what the real issue was and what the real problem is.

He said something that I thought was very, very appropriate for the times that we live in and our own country with our own government and all of the problems that we face. He said that the real issue was not the stock market going up and down. He said because traditionally and historically, the stock market, and he cited several instances down through the last 50 years where it has been bad, it has been good. I myself can remember in my short time, can remember at least three recessions that we went through, and there is always the fear of jobs being lost and outsourcing jobs and all of that. He made the point that the real issue is the fact that people need to understand that these things happen. He says that people need to realize that in their daily planning of what they do, they need to prepare financially for when these things happen.

He said that most of us, when the good times are here, we never think about the bad times. We have the good times, we have more money, or we have this or we have that, so what we do is we just focus on more of what we want than looking ahead. As I listened to what he was saying, I thought to myself, “My, my, my, I think he is a Christian.” I never personally met him, but he claims to be, and he certainly has some good, sound biblical principles that he operates by. But I thought to myself, “My, my, my, that is exactly what is wrong with people serving God in the ministry today.”

How many times have I told you, especially you folks that are in the upper echelon of leadership and you want to take a part of the action here in this church, how many times have I told you that a good leader is constantly looking behind, looking around, and looking ahead? That is basically what he is saying. The problem we are in now financially is because we as individuals cannot look for the handout and the bailout from anybody. But we as individuals did not look ahead and foresee by looking behind to see where we are at today. That is so true of what it takes in our relationship with God.

III. A Hub of Training

To me, the importance of having a base of operation. Even though God has certainly blessed us and brought us where we were before, the upside of where we are at now is simply that we have a home base of operation, a hub of training and learning to build God's people.

When we were finishing all this up, Larry, the guy who owns all of this, he asked me, “Well, when are you going to put your sign up?” I already took the sign off the old place over there and got it over in Steve's warehouse at some point. It will fit perfectly. There is an ordinance. Did you ever notice that there is a truck out here and there is a van out here that has signs on it, one for the fly shop and the other one for the “we sell it for you eBay”? Do you know why that is? You see those trucks stationed around the parking lot. The reason is because there is a city ordinance; you cannot put a sign out there anymore. So what these guys did is got around the system that they got a big old truck and van and painted what their sign is. As long as it does not stay in the same place for a period of time, they drop it around the parking lot. That is why

sometimes you will see it up here, sometimes you will see it over here, sometimes you will see it over here. There is always a way around the system when you want around the system.

I told him, "I think that we probably at some point will do that." But I said, "I am not in any hurry to do that." Then I drove out the other night after a Bible study. As I drove out the other night after a Bible study, I looked up and I saw that sign that is already out there, the big one on a pole. It basically says, "The Apple Tree Center." I thought to myself, "God in His infinite wisdom, looking down through all of eternity and doing things the way that He does and giving us this place, He probably named the place of this a lot better than we ever could."

Proverbs 25:11

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

In the Bible, apples are likened to the Word of God. You find it in Song of Solomon 2:3 and 8:5, and then again in Proverbs chapter 7. When you come through the Bible, apples are a picture of the Word of God. As I drove home that night and I saw that sign at Apple Tree Center, I thought to myself, "What a fitting name for where I want to go with what we have now." Because I, and you have heard me say it before, I am not into a building. I would have been satisfied to stay where I was. But when God provided what He provided and gave the burden in my heart of what we need to do, I understand how important it is to have a base of operations, a hub of training where we can really build God's people on a number of different levels.

I want to give you my introduction today before we get into Romans chapter six and showing you some of those things and understanding. The beauty of this church is not what is on the outside, but rather what is on the inside. If you would go back to the Old Testament and you would walk through the Old Testament time, you would see an old dilapidated tent. It looked like it was a used army surplus tent sitting back there in the middle of the nation of Israel. You would walk around that tent. It was made out of old skins of leather, badger skins and all of that. It just looked like the most dilapidated, beat-up thing you ever saw in your life. When you walked into that tent, you found out that you were in the sanctuary or the tabernacle of the nation of Israel that God had given them. In there were seven pieces of furniture. Every one of those pieces of furniture were made out of a certain kind of wood and overlaid with gold. You would find that as you walked through there, every inside when you got into there, it was the most absolutely incredible, beautiful thing you ever saw in your life. You would go to the East end of that and you would find a curtain. Beyond that curtain, you would find the Holy of Holies. There is where the Ark of the Covenant was that was overlaid with gold. It had the two golden cherubs kneeling over it. That is where the blood and the sacrifice was put when the Old Testament nation of Israel priests made their sacrifice.

You see, that is such a picture of what your life and my life should be. That is why the Bible says that when we study the Word of God, we perfect ourselves. The Bible says we need to, at the end of the day, the product is that we will be thoroughly furnished, not thoroughly finished, thoroughly furnished. Because that tabernacle was a picture of the outside, just ordinary me and you. But the inside is where God dwells and the holy things of God are. That is where the beauty of Christianity really is. That is why it does not make any difference to me if we meet in a

building, a barn, or a warehouse, because the real beauty of it is just like in an Old Testament picture of the tabernacle. If you would have seen that, it looked like any old tent you would have seen anytime, any place, anywhere. But what the real beauty was, was on the inside.

I look at this as a picture of silver. Silver in the Bible is a picture of redemption filled with the golden apples that represent the deity of Christ. That is our job as a church, is to be a vessel, a vessel of silver, which contains all the deity that God has given us through the Word of God. What we want to be able to accomplish here in this church is that God has provided for us. Again, I do not believe there are any accidents. I do not believe there are any accidents in anything that God does. We want to build on what we already have. I want to continue defining the great doctrines of the Book of Romans. I have told you many, many times, a church as an individual Christian should be in a constant state of redefining and rebuilding.

Everybody complains about the Chiefs because I have been here now in Kansas City since 1975, you figure it out. Ever since I have been here, they have been in the rebuilding program. That does not fare well if you have a football team. But that is exactly what a church ought to be in. Do you know why? Because you are all in different stages of growing. Some of you are here this morning, and you are very young Christians; you have just gotten saved. Some of you have been saved a year or six months or eight months, and you are moving up, so to speak. Some of you have been saved longer than that, and some of you have been around ever since we started the church. You have an active part in what we do here. Everybody should be in a constant state with any church of looking inward and redefining and continuing in rebuilding themselves. You people that came in two years ago, you should be ready to help other people now.

I do not know if you are where I am at with it, but I look around and I know in my own personal dealing with people and my own aspect of people coming over and people coming to the church, it has absolutely exploded. There is hardly a night that I do not do four or five hours every night of somebody coming over and getting the Word of God or getting saved or trying to get their marriage put back together or their life put back together. That is really what it is all about. Over the last year, without any fanfare, I am so sick and tired of getting up and saying, "We are going to do this," and then everybody signs up, and about six weeks later, five of you are left. It is a thing where most churches and most Christians, they are very, they walk by sight, not by faith. When you give something exciting, they want to do it, and then after the reality of what it costs comes down, then they quit doing it. That is just the way it goes.

But I have very cautiously over the last year, knowing, trying to time the thing the way God was going and what He was showing me, without a lot of fanfare, slowly taking people who were working with me and people that we were perfecting along the line of putting together an infrastructure in this church, a structure that would get us ready to go when everything was pretty much ready to go. Here we are this morning; we are ready to go. We have now for the first time in our lives, not only in the Book of Romans, which is invaluable to where we are at today, and that is why I say the timing of this is incredible. But we are also at a place that I have never really been in my life in the ministry, and that is, I have more people to work with than I can simply handle myself. Yet, as I look at this and I think to myself, "What an incredible opportunity this is."

Over the next couple of months, I am going to vary basically, I am not going to make a big deal about it, but there are some things that I have put together and been working on for the last year that just waiting for the thing to get the right timing and everything to get where we could be and get it all done, that we can begin to really specialize in some of our ministries.

IV. Developing Ministries

When we started our church, you remember that I took about 10 or 12 of you couples. We were all new to the church, and we started, and what I did, we met over our home, and I basically taught you how to disciple somebody. You were my first group that I worked with that really took those 10 lessons that we worked through, and I got you ready to take somebody and work with me, and you will be able to disciple somebody. Out of those 10 or 12 couples, probably five couples are actively doing it today, and that is just the way it goes, that is just the way it works. But I want to begin to take another group of young couples, and I say young couples, I am talking about anybody that wants to do it basically, and begin to teach you again how to begin to disciple somebody and bring you through and show you the inside out. I am not interested in just walking you through the lessons. I want to show you when you work with somebody for me, and then you begin to learn and discipleship, which is our entry level. You begin to learn and understand exactly what you want to accomplish in that person's life. I want to begin to do that, and I want to begin to get some people that are up there ready. You have been around now for a while; you are ready to go. You need to get the confidence and the training in your own personal life of what you want to do and how you want to operate from there.

At the same time, I want to develop a specialized ministry for young couples in this church. I have been working with young couples on a regular basis now all through the week. I have had a number of them saved. I have had people that have been coming through the counseling ministry, and I have been talking with some of the, a couple of the young couples that I want to develop a ministry that basically in time, you guys take over the ministry as far as of all young couples that come in. Many times young couples will come in, have been married, I say young couple, been married maybe five years or less or whatever, and they come in, sometimes they are newlywed. We have a couple right now that somebody else sent to our church for marital counseling because of the fact that they did not have confidence in the pastor where they were going. We are going to be working with them. I have a number of couples out there, young couples, that what they need is any other young couples that can really be a model for them. I want to put together a ministry where then in time, you guys do the marital counseling if they are, when somebody is going to get married, that you guys are the ones that when they do get married, you bring them through the marriage classes and get them up and ready to go. You are the ones that basically, when a young couple comes in and they struggle with problems after I deal with them and find out where they are at, they become part of your ministry. We tie it into the athletic ministry. We reach out with couples that you maybe already know that are struggling or have no church or do not go to a good church. We actually have a hub of all of the young couples that really want to get involved on whatever level you are. It does not matter. I can give you something to do no matter what level you are at that you can be a part of really helping other young couples. You identify yourselves as that. You work throughout the week and have different social events. Like

I said, we tie it into the athletics. We tie it into what we do here on Sunday morning. You hitchhike off of where I am going. You all have people that you will be responsible for and you will develop from there.

Where I want to go in time. Let me just say this to you. Look around, look behind, look ahead. Do you know what it costs to get married today besides the rest of your life? And your shotgun, your fishing boat, and your dog, and your Camaro. Do you know what it costs to go someplace to get married? Do you know what I would like to see in time? I am not going to do this tomorrow, but this is where I am looking. I have to get the base of young couples up because I want to develop a young couple's ministry that is ready to take on all the young couples that come in. That you will work with me and it will bring them right through. It does not matter where you are at. It does not matter if you do not know squat about the Bible. I do not care. We will work together as a team to get everybody on whatever level they are. If a couple is going to get married, they can move into this area and get the counseling that they need to get on marital counseling and work through there under my supervision and direction. We will work it that way.

But what I would like to do in time is this. Have you ever looked at renting a place to get married? I did a wedding for Chris, Chris's daughter, who umpires our ballgames. I did a wedding for Chris, and he had to rent a place, I married his daughter, and he had to rent a place over there in Overton Park. On a Sunday afternoon, that is when they had to get married. It cost them \$2,500 on a Sunday afternoon to get married in a place that was not much bigger than this. On a prime time night, it is like \$6,000. I am telling you, there are a lot of people out there, the young couples that want to get married, but the dilemma they have is not having a place to get married. Now that is one of the beauties of this thing here. If you ever decide you want to get married, you have a place that will never cost you a dime if you want to get married here. You are a member of this church. It is your church. You can do whatever you want to do here within reason. This can be where it is at.

But what I thought about is this. Look around at what we have here. We could develop a time in a webpage where we develop a thing where we give them an alternative. Charge them a very nominal fee, and then allow them to use this and have the people out of the young marriage be the wedding coordinators, do the marital counseling, do everything that we can do to reach out and to reach those couples. We have to use every avenue we have to reach out for people. One of the problems and the failures in missions around the world is missionaries do not have the ability to penetrate the culture that they are trying to get into. We have an opportunity, and we also have the people to be able to penetrate into our own culture and do what we need to do to try to reach out and be there for them, extend ourselves to them first, and then as the Bible says, give a reason to any man that asks us for the reason or the hope that is within you. All kinds of things that I want to accomplish through that. We will not do it all by next week, but we want to begin to build. We want to begin to take the young couples and begin to circulate, take the young ones that are just into this church, take some of the older ones that have been around for a while and build a cadre of teaching and training that gets you ready to handle that aspect of it.

At the same time, I realized that we have ladies in our church that maybe you are married or maybe you are single, and if you do not fit into that young marriage particular class, or maybe

you do, whatever. But I want to have a class for the ladies. That class is going to be right around taking young ladies and middle-aged ladies and older ladies and moms and dads, whatever, and help you build your own personal relationship. I guess the best way to say it is to help you define yourself and your role in this church. So many of you have been into this church now for six months or a year, and you know what? You have a lot of potential. It is time now that we begin to restructure and refocus and help you be better at what God wants you to do. We want to put some classes together where you begin to go through some things and help you develop those skills. Maybe you have, you can go through it with your daughter if you have a daughter in this church, and together you can go through and build your own relationship, and build your relationship as you minister. There are so many things that we can accomplish with that.

I also want to do it with the single men and begin to, and I work with many of them, and the single gals too throughout the week as they come over, but I want to develop a thing where you can get exactly where you are at. I want you to be able to see where I am going, understand my vision and where you fit into this. I love all of us older folks, including myself. We go to a grocery store on Tuesday now because they give senior citizens just the groceries on Tuesday, so that is where I am at with it. You are the stable force in this church, and I love it, but you know what? We cannot, we always have to constantly look around, look behind, and look ahead. Ten years down the line, if Jesus does not come, you and I are going to be down at John Knox Village holding a thing up down there. We have got to always be looking ahead at the lifeblood of this church, and the moment we stop doing that, we are in trouble. We have got to be able to always look around, look behind, and look ahead. I want to help develop you in a personal way, to be the man or the husband that God wants you to be, or the father that God wants you to be. Tying it all together with the Book of Romans and getting to the place where you understand what you believe and why you believe it.

We got a proof this week at a Dr. Ruckman's bookstore down in Pensacola, Florida, it will be an extension of their bookstore. I ordered \$2,000 or \$2,500 worth of material, study materials, going to be here this week, going to go in our bookstore back there. I want to make this a hub of learning. No more, folks, do we have to worry about whose house we have to meet in, because we cannot get the building, and wonder what we have to do with the kids. Anytime you want to meet here now and have something going on, it is available. If you have kids, we do not have to run around and find it. There are enough high school kids, when we are right here, you can give them a couple bucks to watch the kids in the nursery, and everything becomes centralized where we want to do and what we want to accomplish.

V. Qualities of an Effective Minister

When I look at it, I talked to you Thursday night about what I look for in people. I have been in this business for a lot of years, and I can sit down and almost tell you by talking with you, if you have it or you do not. I told you, I never tell somebody they do not, because my job is to give you the best shot that I can. But there are certain qualities that I look for in a person. I am not saying I am déjà vu or clairvoyant. I am just saying, over the years in ministry, I know what it takes to be an effective minister. When I see those basic, raw things in your life or in your life

that I had to see in my life, then I begin to say, “That is the kind of person.” What I will do is I will take those five things, and I will begin to develop those things and then see where God goes with it. Everybody gets the chance. If somebody is not at church this morning because they quit coming to church, that is their choice, not mine. Everybody gets the shot. But I know here at the Apple Center what my job is.

I look for a person who has adaptability, because in the ministry, you have to be able to adapt to every situation. There is no place for rigidity in the ministry. There is no place for being stuck in your own ways. The ministry is a constant, fluid thing that changes not hour by hour, not day by day, but sometimes minute by minute. Somebody has to have the ability to be able to be adaptable, to be able to see what is going on and be able to adjust to it. I see that in some of you. I see it in some of you who are beginning to read the circumstances and the situation before it even happens, and then you move to it. That is what I am talking about.

The second thing is flexibility. You have to be flexible. When you work with somebody or you get into the ministry, I hate to tell you this, but your time pretty much for your own is gone. You have to carve some of that out, keep it for your family and your wife and your kids. I am not talking about that. But the bottom line is this, you have to be flexible. You have to be flexible for what you have to do for God when He wants you to do it. It does not cease to be, all of our lives, let us face it, all of our lives, we run our lives on our schedule. When you come to the ministry, that has to change, and you have to do it on His schedule. I am sure in Acts chapter eight, Philip did not really care, did not have any ideas. That morning when he got up, the Holy Spirit was going to pull him out of the revival and send him over to the eunuch on the backside of the desert. But you want to find the five things in a man? Study his life. You study his life, and this is where I got him years ago. You will find adaptability, you will find flexibility, and then the next thing is you will find is dependability. I see dependability in some of you. I know if I give you a job to do, the job is going to get done.

The next one is durability. You are going to have to come to the place where the ministry can be hard on you. You have to learn how to balance yourself. You have to learn how to get it all working and that you can get it done without really hurting yourself. Because the ministry is like, the ministry is like so many other things. It can become so overwhelming, and you do so much of it that you lose sight of what is right around you. I do not know how many times I have seen men in the ministry over the years that had great ministries but lost their families. Because they were so busy ministering to anybody else out there, but they could not minister to the first ministry they have, the first church that they have, and the second church of their family.

Then the last one is compatibility. You have to get along with people. If you have not figured it out yet, the ministry is people. Not everybody that you are going to work with is always a nice person to deal with. But the bottom line is this, you have to minister to them and deal with them anyhow. These are the things that I look for. Many of you have these things, and tying it all together with the Book of Romans, getting to the place that you understand why and what you believe. Putting it and helping you get to that point.

VI. The Mark of the Philadelphian Church

You know, the mark of the Philadelphian church. We talk about this a lot. I talk about how what I want to do is I want to build a Philadelphian church. We all know that that was the most profitable church in all of the Bible. I talk all the time of how I want to build a Philadelphian church in the Laodicean Church period. It has been my goal from day one. It has been my goal for years, ever since I saw the great principle. But I have to be honest with you, one of the marks of the Philadelphian church, really it is a mark of the biblical line going all the way back to the New Testament, was their ability to win people to Christ.

You know what? This is not a criticism. Because I understand we are a young church in many, many, many ways. This is just all part of the process. But probably 85 to 90% of you in this room probably could not lead somebody to Christ if you found yourself in that situation. The mark of the Philadelphian church was their ability to be able to open up the scriptures and show someone how to become a Christian. Leading somebody to Christ. If you have been around here, you found it a couple of Thursday nights ago and on Sunday morning last week, and throughout just about the time that one of my biggest fears, one of my biggest problems, because so many people are doing so many different things, is the fact that get here on a Thursday night and somebody or two or three people want to raise their hand to be saved. My biggest fear is looking around that crowd and finding somebody that I feel confident with. Now, it is not about you being confident with yourself, it is about me being confident with you. Very frankly, you find people in life that they are very confident in themselves, but I have no confidence in them.

Proverbs 25:19

Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.

That is so true. Dependability to me is when you take somebody that I know you have the ability, you have the ability to win that person to Christ and to deal with the issues that you may find. You see, this is why you cannot just get the Romans Road down and figure out what you want to do. You have to understand, and this is why the Book of Romans is so important. In a minute, we are going to deal with a major piece of you understanding this. This is why the Book of Romans is so absolutely important because when you win somebody to Christ, you win somebody based on not just knowing what somebody has shown you, but the real key is understanding the process of how somebody gets saved in the Bible and laying that thing out and knowing it and being comfortable with yourself.

So I want to take some classes, and I want to take some of you ladies, and I am going to put you into a situation where we teach you how to win somebody to Christ. I am going to do the same thing with some of the guys that we take you through and we show you. Get everybody on the same page. That does not mean that everybody is going to be at that point ready to do it, but it will show me who has the ability at this point and where you need to go from there. Bottom line is, it is up to you. My job is to provide you with the instruction, provide you with the material, provide you to help you understand and give you what you need. But if you think just coming to a class is going to prepare you for anything, you are going to have to go home and you are going to have to work it through, understand it yourself. But I have some people that can help you do that.

I want to come to the point where when I get into a Sunday morning service or a Thursday night service on Bible study, and that I have in my grasp, I have 10 or 15 people. I only have to think about it. The hardest thing in the world is to give an invitation, try to communicate with that person, and then at the same time be looking around and saying, "Now who do I have out here? I want you to get saved, but boy, I need somebody that I know can deal with this situation." That is the most frustrating thing for a pastor to have to do. Not your fault, not your fault, not your fault. Most of you have not been around that long, but I am telling you now, from this point on, we have to solve some of these issues. I am going to have a class for the ladies, going to have a class for the men.

A couple of years ago, we put in deacons. I waited for two or three years before we even put the deacons in just to get a good base of foundation of where we are at. Remember I gave you a charge. I talked about how you men and your wives are basically the perimeter of our outer defenses of this church. Your job is very clearly defined in the Bible. It is a step that brings you to the next level, which is an elder in this church, which we do not really have any of those at this point. Hopefully we will get some there in some time. But you should be the central hub of this ministry as far as what this ministry is going on. You are the wall that protects not only me as a pastor, but protects the church and each member that is a member of Old Paths Baptist Church. You protect the doctrine, you are on a watch. We have the watch care of this church. Now that we have a base of operation, and we have been somewhat handicapped because with so much going on in such a limited time and a place to do it. I want to spread this out over the next year. This is not, we are all going to try to jam this all together the next couple of weeks. Some of it we are going to start very quickly. But it is something that we have in our church, probably two or three guys who between the three of them have about 100 years in ministry as far as being deacons, being in good churches, bad churches, dealing with in a good side of deacons and a bad side of deacons. I want them to take you young guys and to spend some time really helping you define what your role is as far as the protector of this church. Helping you understand exactly from their experiences what your job really is. And get you to the point where you become even a better asset than you already are.

A lot of things that we have to get accomplished in a lot of people's lives. I want to give you every opportunity I can. Obviously, this is not a thing where there is going to be a sign-up sheet back here because it would be the same old, same old. Everybody would sign up, and half of you, less than half of you would finish it. Come on, I am not interested in that. Right now we have a new building, it is exciting. We have nice couches, we have nice chairs, we have nice fans, we have nice this. Thank you, David. We did pretty good putting them up, did you? You know what I almost forgot? I was going to tell one of the guys to make sure I do not know if I got all these tight. We will find out before the service is over. So much going on. We have to come to the point where we really, really, really get this thing up to the point where it is operational. To whom much is given, much is required. You know what, I have worked with many of you over the last couple of years, and we have worked together faithfully, and you have grown so much, and now it is time to take you to the level. Some of you were already working with me in small group levels, part of that thing that I put into effect in the last year or so. Now we are going to take it to the next level. Everybody who wants to, and if you do not want to, it is

fine, but everybody who wants to, I want to try to give you the opportunity because God will only give us as many people as we are willing to take care of. We are fast coming to the point where I am at my capacity. I want to specialize with what I do best. I want to be able to train up young men and young ladies that can handle part of this work and that I have the confidence in that you can do that.

I am not asking God for a new building. I did not ask Him for this one. I was content to stay where I was. But I do ask God constantly for a new vision, for a redefining of not only myself, but this church and you. New people, fresh, ready to get to transform themselves into the image of Christ and pick up part of the load of this work and get it done. That is where I am going. That is the end result of what God has given us, and there is something for everybody. On whatever spiritual level you are, if you want to perfect yourself or you want to prepare your heart to seek the Lord, I will get you there. But we have to do some things that will help you, and I have sat down with people over the last six months and got this basically organized, ready to go. I was waiting until we had a hub of operation where we could get it done and begin to lay it all out, and that is what we want to do. Along with all of that, we are going to continue the Book of Romans, studying the great doctrinal position of the New Testament church found in this book.

I talked to you a while back, it has been a couple of years now, about how my goal and my dream was to develop a counseling ministry. Many times God gives me the concept in my heart, but He always changes the perspective by the way it is done. I actually understand better now and see it better that already within our group, I have those that are rising to the level of being able to get into that aspect. You young marriage, basically, what you are going to find yourself into, basically without ever putting a label on it, is a counseling ministry. You young gals that are going to get the material and your moms and dads are going to get the material that is going to help you be a better Christian and focus on the things that God wants you to focus on, what you are going to find up is God, once you get the material, God takes you back to work and somebody struggles there and you have the ability to deal with them. Same way with the guys. It is the way it works. It is the way it works. If you are ever going to win people to Christ, you need to understand the concept of doctrine of salvation inside and out.

VII. The Baptism of the Holy Ghost and Jesus' Death

Today, having said all of that, I want to go back to the Book of Romans chapter six, and I want to talk today about one of the most important aspects that you have to learn if you are going to deal with people as far as their eternal destiny is concerned. When we have the classes, and I have one of my ladies show you how you ladies how to do it, and then one of the guys show you guys how to do it, and then we tie it all back together and we work through this and get it all ready to go, I will tie all of these things back together. I want to talk today not only one of the greatest things in the Bible, but one of the most screwed up teachings in the Bible. I want to talk to you today and define for you what it means when the Bible talks about the baptism of the Holy Ghost. That is something you hear a lot today. I want to talk to you about what is called the baptism of Jesus' death, and I want to tie the two together.

Romans 6:1-4

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Father, we thank You and praise You today for the Lord Jesus. Lord, I stand today, Lord, and I know this church stands today at a great pinnacle point in our ministry. Lord, I understand that You have given us all of this and provided all of this, and it is for a reason behind it because there is nothing that is an accident with You. We can actually stand here, and there are not too many pastors that could say this, not too many churches that can say this. We actually can stand here this morning and say that what we have here today that we did not orchestrate ourselves. We did not go out looking for a place. We did not check the listings in the paper to find a place. We were content to be where we were, and God, in Your timing, where we are at as a church with the people that we have here today, with where we are at in the Bible, You decided to give us what we needed to go to the next level. Now as a pastor, it is my responsibility and my job to lay that out to these people. Lord, I know that not everybody in this room will do what they need to do, but I know that many of them will. Lord, help me to define the many. Help this not to be just something that they are excited about today and then get a better deal next Sunday so they do not come to church. Help them not to be someone, Lord, who just gets excited about today and then Thursday night when a better offer comes up, they would rather be there and do what they do there. That is not what we are looking for. Lord, I am looking for men and women that have the vision to be committed to this ministry of people. We have enough young couples here and enough good, solid men and women that have been around now for three or four years that could take this thing up and run it. We have enough young people here, Christian people, that need some of these foundational things in their life to work with other women, to work in these areas and develop these ministries. Lord, we just ask You, I ask You, Father, to speak to the hearts of these, Your people. Lord, this is Your church. I have tried to always follow Your leading in everything that You do and never get ahead of it. At this point, Lord, I can honestly before God say that I followed that and I have done that because we are here this morning, Lord, because of the timing of God in our lives, and let us see and understand that. Then, Lord, help us to learn these great principles. Help us to go away today if we can just grab these two concepts of what it defines in the Bible of the baptism of the Holy Ghost and the baptism of Jesus' death. Lord, we will call away a little richer, and these people will be a little closer to being able to help somebody else in the Word of God. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name for a sake we ask it, amen.

Basically from Romans 6:1-4, there are basically two heresies that we find here. There are two heresies that we have here that are very, very prevalent today. You are going to find that when it comes to heresy, you will find heresies come in two forms. You will find heresy that I call it within the body of Christ, and then heresy without the body of Christ. What does that mean? There are certain bad teachings that exist within saved people's lives. The particular bad teaching

that exists within saved people's lives here is the aspect of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. There is a group of people out there, and I will not tell you who they are. There is a group of people, there is immaterials, a group of people out there that teach this. They teach that when you get saved, you do not get all of the Holy Spirit of God that there is. So you go through a period of time in your life, and after a period of time in your life, you come to the point where God, who has your name on a big clipboard up in heaven, I guess, finally gets down to you on the list, and suddenly you get dumped on with the Holy Spirit of God, and wow, look out, here you go. It is usually evidenced by speaking in tongues and all that stuff, and it is called in the charismatic world and the charismatic circles, the baptism of the Holy Ghost. That is not exactly right. To put it the way they say it, the baptism of the Holy Ghost. You have to run those two words together for it to be official, but that is where we are at.

The other teaching is taught the fact that this baptism here in Romans chapter six is water, and it is the teaching that salvation comes through the public water system and washes away your sin. The Church of Christ teaches that along with other churches, and of course, they hitchhike off Acts 2:38 when Peter is talking there in verse 38.

Acts 2:38

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

That verse kind of works for both. When the charismatic crowd wants to teach that you have to get baptized and then get the Holy Ghost, they go to that verse along with Romans six. When somebody wants to teach that salvation, but baptism is salvation, that is the way you get to heaven. They will go to Acts 2:38 and then go to Romans six; they will tie the two together. Of course, they both misuse it.

Now if you ask your Bibles, I want you to see this verse. Turn over to Matthew chapter 20. We are going to pick it up in verse 22. In this particular passage, the disciples' mother has come to Jesus, and she has a request. Her request is, "When You come and set up Your kingdom, can my two boys sit next to You on the throne?" Of course, she did not always understand the great dispensations of the Bible. Nobody ever bought her Clarence Larkin's book, so she could not have figured it out. But Jesus says in verse 22,

Matthew 20:22-23

But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

He saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

You see, when you go to Romans chapter six or Acts chapter two, and somebody says, "Well, that baptism there is water baptism." When you go to a place like Matthew chapter 20, you begin

to see very clearly and plainly that there is no way it could be water. Because He is saying here that future tense, “You will be baptized with a baptism that I am baptized with,” but the truth of the matter is Jesus and the disciples have been baptized in water three years before this time. So it cannot be in reference to water. They have already been baptized in water. You see, that is what is called comparing scripture with scripture so you do not just take one verse and write a context and make it say what you want to say. Now, can you take Romans chapter six there and read that or Acts chapter two and read that to say that is water? Yes, you can. If you ignore Matthew chapter 20, you put Matthew chapter 20 in, and you have something else, and there is a context here that you have to see.

Let me just say this and understand this, and this is what you want to get down first. This baptism of Jesus' death, which is also called the baptism of the Holy Ghost. I am going to show you today the connection between the two, even though they are separate, they are connected. They come at it from two different aspects. The baptism of Jesus' death, which is also called a baptism of the Holy Ghost, the first thing I want you to see is it has absolutely nothing to do with water baptism, not a thing. The next thing I want you to see is it certainly has nothing to do with you, with the teaching that you do not get all of the Holy Spirit of God the moment you get saved.

Now let me give you a verse that puts that in perspective for you. I gave you one in Matthew 20 to show you the baptism of Jesus' death. Now let me give you one in Colossians chapter two that goes along with and shows you that when you did get saved, you got everything that there is to get. You know that Colossians chapter two from our previous studies all has to deal with the great chapter on spiritual circumcision, really what really transpired the day you got saved. This is the great chapter on the dividing of your soul from your flesh, and the Bible says the operation of God made without hand, verse 11. It says this in Colossians chapter two verses eight, nine and 10, it says,

Colossians 2:8-10

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

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

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

Nobody just told you in verse nine, He just told you in verse nine that in Christ dwells everything that God is. Now look at the next verse, verse 10. That verse says that you just got everything that Jesus Christ had, and He had all that God was. The moment you got saved, at the time of salvation, the Bible says you are complete in Him. You have all of God that there is. You may not be able to tap into it yet. You may not understand how to use it yet. It may not be prevalent in your life that it has overtaken you and you are doing all the things for God that God wants you to do, but nonetheless, you have it.

Now you see, let me go back to my original where I started in our introduction, which was a lengthy introduction but needed to be said. This is what I want to do. I want to key off to the

aspect that right now if you are saved, no matter what spiritual level you are on, right now if you are saved, you have all of God that there is. The problem is you have not developed it. The problem is it is not apparent. You have in you right now if you are saved everything that you need to be the most effective, dynamic, incredible minister, person, soul winner, Bible knower, anything in this world, you have it right now. The problem is you have to develop it.

You walk into a Gold's Gym. You see on the wall 800 million tons of barbells. You will find machines that will work your abs, work your arms, work your back, work your neck, work your legs, work your feet. You will find everything you need, but buying a membership to Gold's Gym does not make you a world-class bodybuilder. But it does give you the tools that you need that in time if you work out hard, work out faithfully, work out and really put it to yourself and do what you need to do, in time you can accomplish what you want to accomplish, what I am talking about. This church has the tools, it has everything you need to develop what you already have. The key is, do you want to do that? That is the only question. My job, as I said earlier, is to take you who want to and put the exact things in your life that you need. Not all at one time, but help you mold and make yourself that you develop your skills that you in time can take a part of this ministry.

I look at a thing like the little demographic groups we have, you young couples in this church and you couples that are planning on getting married. When I say young couple, I mean you can even have some kids obviously and still be a young couple. But the bottom line is this, whatever group you are in, we now have to go to work at fine-tuning our missionary abilities to penetrate that culture that is out there. You do it at work. I guarantee you God will put people in your life that it is your set, it is your office, it is your desk that will walk into your cubicle and they will start throwing up all over your table about what is going on in their life or what is going on in their marriage or what is going on with their kids. You need to have the ability to give them what they are looking for. Now you do to a certain degree. I mean, you are all good people. But you have to get better at it. You have to get specialized in it. You have to be able to come to the point that whatever you get thrown into, flexibility, adaptability, those things we talked about, wherever you get dumped into, you can respond to it. That is what it takes.

When you start to talk about the baptism of the Holy Ghost and the baptism of Jesus' death, from the Bible itself now, we have nailed down two things:1.) It certainly is not water.2.) It has absolutely nothing to do with you not getting all of God the moment you got saved. The instant you got saved, you got everything that God wanted you to have.

Now, the reason why there is confusion on this is because when you can, I am going to show you some verses here so you will want to stay with me, but you have to learn this. A while back when we started our church, I came through the great doctrinal seven series with you, and I showed you all the major doctrinal sevens that are found in the Bible in a doctrinal format of teaching. You can get them on the website, they are still there. One of the things that we went through was I showed you the seven baptisms. I showed you that in the Bible, there are seven distinct baptisms. Now, the reason why there is so much confusion on the baptism of Jesus' death and the baptism of the Holy Ghost is because people do not understand the concept of those seven baptisms. If you asked the average person who believed that they had to be baptized to go to

heaven, or the average person that believed that the baptism of the Holy Ghost was what they said it was of getting all that God is, if you would ask them to lay out for you the seven baptisms in the Bible, they could not do it if their life depended on it. I am very suspect of people who want to tell me what to believe when they do not know what they believe themselves. This is part of the problem, see? This is what I want to fix.

I not only want, and a lot of you, and I love you, bless your heart, and you are invaluable to me, you really are, but I will tell you what you do. I love it, it is okay right now. You come to Thursday night, and you come to Sunday morning, and you hear something I say, and you like what I say, and it motivates you, and you want to use it, so you go to work the next day, and somebody bangs up against you, it has been a tough time about this and that, and you pull it out and you whack them with it. The only problem is when they want to go toe-to-toe with you, after you basically got what I gave you, you do not know what to go from there. Do you know why? Because you are just parroting what I am saying, but do not understand why you believe it for yourself. That will get you along for a while, but we have better people here than that. We really do. I know what I have. Do not take my remarks earlier as being disparaging remarks. I am excited about what I have, because I know that for the most part, everybody here wants to do and get to that level in your life. I know that. You would not stay here and take this verbal abuse, not that today is verbal abuse, but you would not stay to the hard messages if they did not somewhere in there, you did not want to do it. Now maybe you have something in your life you cannot get rid of or you are going to struggle with. I have said it many, many times. If you want to get rid of whatever you are struggling with in your life that has a hold on you, throw that away and let this get a hold on you. In other words, throw out that, replace it with this. It is the greatest thing in the world for you. That is where we are going. That is what we are going to do.

I want to take some of you folks, bless your heart, now that we have a hub, but we can do it here and get it done, and we can spread it out, and we do not have to jam it into somebody's home or jam it here, we have everything we need. I want to take and fine-tune you to the point where wherever you are at, we do not need a sign. You give me 100 or 120 of you folks and let me turn you into a sign, and all you need to do is tell them where the Apple Center is. The rest will take care of itself. I want them to see golden apples in you and your life and your body, the silver vase by which God carries it around in. I want them to see you as the picture of a sign of Old Paths Baptist Church. I want them to see your life and say, "Wow, something different about them." His family is right, her family is good. Look at that, something has made a difference. In a world where it is an absolute disaster, they teach you in missions. They do what they call a demographic study, a study of the situation around you and whatever culture you are going to go in. In some places, they have great poverty. So what they do is they go down, and when they build a church, they build a church that also functions as a social center to reach out to the people because they have no clothes or they have no food. So the church exists not only as a preaching place, but it uses the poverty to reach out and give something to the people and then share Christ with them. I have been in places where the medical care was next to nothing. We took teams of doctors and nurses down in there and worked in clinics. The church actually opens up a clinic. You see, we do not need a clinic. You can go to Walgreens and get one of them. I was going to

say we do not need passing out food and clothes, but we may in the next year or so. But America does not have any. Have you ever walked into a grocery store lately?

I remember one time in Romania, I went into a grocery store, and I got there early, and I wanted to see how the culture was operating, and there was a bakery right by the grocery store, and there was a line about a quarter of a mile long of women waiting in line at five o'clock in the morning for a bakery to open at eight o'clock, and not even half of those ladies got a piece of bread out of that because they could not fulfill everybody. I walked into a grocery store. Do you know what they had on the shelves? They had six cans of something that looked, or jars that looked like it had been pickled and jarred 20 years ago. Not a thing. Have you ever walked in our grocery stores? Well, you cannot go one mile in every direction, and you will find a grocery store. John's grocery store, Hy-Vee, this one over here, Aldi's, wherever you want to go. You walk in there, and it is a virtual paradise of food. Everything you could want. America does not need food. America does not necessarily need medicine. Well, we have people coming to our country to get our medicine. You see, those are the needs of those countries. But if we are going to reach our own culture, we have to define, first of all, what that need of our culture is. Let me just tell you in a nutshell. Do you know what America is? America is an insane asylum run by the inmates. That is what it is. America has broken marriages, broken families, broken marriages, broken husbands, broken wives, young couples just like yourself that struggled, that got married before they should have got married and find out that marriage is something more than they thought. Young individual people who are disillusioned with life, who put all their time in their career and now it is a dead-end street. Middle-aged couples that have come to the place or middle-aged singles that have come to the point that they realize that life as they thought it on planet Earth does not meet their physical needs. They are looking for something. They are looking for something. Instead of just rolling the dice and spending \$3,000, \$4,000, \$5,000, putting a big sign out there, hoping by chance they will drive by, I just as soon send 150 of you out to get them.

Look at Ephesians chapter four. You have seven baptisms, six of them are a picture of just one of them. That makes sense to you. The one that the other six picture has absolutely nothing to do with water. Now look at Ephesians chapter four, pick it up in verse three.

Ephesians 4:3-5

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

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

One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

You see that? Yet I could take you through in the Bible, and I could show you seven distinct different baptisms. We are already talking about two, the baptism of the Holy Ghost and the baptism of Jesus' death. There was another baptism over there in Acts chapter two we looked at, which was the baptism of Israel's repentance in Acts 2:38, there are three.

Now the defining verse that pulls this all together, and this is what you need to understand. The defining verse on the baptism of the Holy Ghost and the baptism of Jesus' death is found in 1

Corinthians 12:13. Now the lights are going to come on in some of you. Now you are going to see this thing. My suggestion is you get this tape this morning and take it home and work it down because if you are going to be one of the ones that want to learn how to win somebody to Christ, I guarantee you at some point or the other, and you are dealing with people, this issue is going to come up in the baptism of the Holy Ghost. More baptism for water salvation. Now here is the defining verse.

1 Corinthians 12:13

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

Now try to grasp that truth. Let us read it again. 1 Corinthians 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

The one true baptism, the one that the other six are pictures of, including the one when you and I got baptized, we will talk a little about that in a moment. The one true baptism of 1 Corinthians 12:13, and also of Romans chapter six, our text today, also called the baptism of Jesus' death in Matthew 20:20-23. It is not water. But it means that you, at the point of salvation, you are immersed, immersed, immersed, baptized with and in the Holy Spirit of God. At that instant of salvation, you are now immersed with God's Holy Spirit.

I do not know if you know this or not, and let me help this out. We talk about Jesus living inside of you. But the actuality is Jesus the man does not live inside of you. Jesus the man, if you know your Bible, is where? Right hand of God. So what in the world am I talking about when I say Jesus is living inside of you? He is living inside of you through the person of the Holy Spirit of God. So take it one step back, one step forward, whichever way you want to go. When I talk about you being baptized in the Holy Ghost at the time of salvation, and you having all of Christ that there is through the Holy Spirit of God, it is because when you got saved, you were immersed with the Holy Spirit of God from head to toe. Then the Bible says that you were sealed without in the book of Ephesians 4:30, unto the day of redemption. The Bible says in Ephesians 1:13 that you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

Now, your baptism is a picture of two things, ladies and gentlemen. Your baptism, when you got baptized. Have you ever seen me baptize somebody? We have it over there, Jerry and Joe's every year. When I get them down there and put them down there in the water, what do I do? What do I do?

Romans 6:5

For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

So what do I do when I baptize you? We go down in the water, and we stand in the water, and I hold you there, and I ask you if you know you have been saved. Now, we know that baptism is a public testimony. We know that. We know that baptism does not save you. We know that when

you get baptized, everybody in the New Testament that got saved, got baptized after they were saved, not to be saved. We know that when you stand down there, I ask you this question. I say, "Do you know for sure if you trust the Lord Jesus Christ as your own personal Savior? If you would have died today, you would go to heaven to spend an eternity with Him?" And you say, "Yes, I do." Then I say, "Upon your profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and because of your obedience to God's command, I baptize you, my brother or sister." Then I take you and I say, "Buried in the likeness of Jesus' death under the water, raised in the likeness of His glorious resurrection." What is that a picture of? It is a picture of two things. Water in the Bible is a type of the Holy Spirit of God. It is also a type of the Word of God. We know now that there is one faith, one Lord, and one baptism. We also know that at the time of salvation, that you and I were baptized by one Spirit into one body. That baptism took place at salvation.

So when I baptize you, here is the deal. Here is the deal. Baptism of the Holy Ghost, baptism of Jesus' death. Two different aspects of the same concept. When Jesus died on the cross, He died. He died. The Bible says when He died, where did He go? He goes down to Abraham's bosom. He went under. He went down. He went under. Did you ever read in the Bible back there in Psalms when it talks about physical death? David likens it to billows of waves crashing over you and going down to the bottom. Do you not know when Jonah, when Jonah was going to get eaten by the whale and he goes down there and he drowns and he talks about the waves compassing him and all of the things, and he says, he is talking about being down in hell. When Jesus died on the cross for three days, He went under. Under. Under the ground. For three days, He was down in Abraham's bosom. On the third day, He came out.

All right, so when I baptize you, it is your public expression of what you have done on the inside, asking Christ, acknowledging to the world that you believe if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. When I put you down under the water, it is a picture of baptism of Jesus' death because He died and went under. You can be, and rose again, you can have the newness of life in Christ Jesus because of the baptism of His death. He came down, He died, He went under, and He came back out. So when I stand you there, I take you down, it symbolizes you going under the water, it is a picture of Him going under the ground. I just do not hold you there for three days. Obvious reasons. The least of which, my arms would get tired. When I bring you up, what do I say? "Raised to walk in the newness of life!" That is a picture of the death, the baptism of Jesus' death!

If you know anything about your Bible, and I do not mean to get complicated, but you know there is water at the top of the second heaven in Genesis 1:1. The Book of Job. So when Jesus, that baptism of Jesus' death, when you really look at it, He came off that throne, went down through that water, came down to earth and died, went underground, and then came back up and went back up through that water. That is the baptism of Jesus' death. It had to do with His physical death of Him coming down from heaven and going down and coming back up again. Now that is why we immerse.

At the same time, baptism of the Holy Ghost, the moment you got saved, you were all baptized by one Spirit into one body. You got all of Jesus Christ there is, the second you got saved. You

got immersed with the Holy Spirit of God. Type of water in the Bible. So when I stand you down there, and it is a picture in there, I take you and I put you under, it is a picture of you at an outward testimony of what has already happened inward to you, what took place inside you the moment you got saved. When I put you under that water and bring you up, it is a picture of two different aspects.1.) The baptism of Jesus' death.2.) The baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Now you have got to understand that concept in dealing with people about their soul. I am not saying you have to explain it like I just did, but you cannot explain something unless you know it yourself. At the same time, you know I meet people all the time, and so do you, and so will you, who have trouble with the aspect of, "Can I lose my salvation?" We tell you something, this is why you need to know it. When you understand what took place the moment you got saved, and you really understand this concept, you could never in your worst nightmare, worst fear, worst day of your life ever fall for the trap that you can lose your salvation once you understand how you got it. That is the problem. People do not understand what God did for them. When you do not understand what God did and you do not understand what you believe, you know how it goes. When tough times come, you panic. You do not know what took place in your life. You do something wrong, you do something stupid, and the next thing you know, you are driving home, beads of sweat rolling down your head. "Oh, I am going to hell for sure." Well, maybe we ought to, but we are not, sorry. We are not going to hell for a moment.

1 Corinthians 12:13

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

Then the Bible says we are sealed on the day of redemption, sealed. That baptism will wash away your sin and make you as clear as the driven snow. The baptism of the Holy Spirit of God and the baptism of Jesus' death are different, but they are connected. In a sense, one represents His death coming down and dying and going under and coming back up. The other one represents the one true baptism, which all the other six picture in the Bible. One Lord, one faith, one baptism, but there are seven when you come through the Bible. Why? Because six of them point to that one, including the one you and I, the one you got and I got baptized.

VIII. The Flesh and the Soul

Here is how it works. Let me walk you through this. I think part of the problem is, is we talk, and again, this is not a criticism, because I do it too. It is just where we are at. I try to be so exact with what the Bible says, and I know I do not all the time, but I try to be, but I do not. I do not know that given where we are at, if we can, I do not know. But I think a lot of the confusion comes in, comes into the idea of what I hear preachers say all the time. How many times have I heard a pastor get up and say, or somebody get up and say, or somebody talk to somebody and they say, "Well, you have Jesus come into your life." Now that is technically not true. He cannot affect your life until He comes into your soul. See that thing? He is not going to save your life, because you could get saved and die five minutes later. Not going to save your life, going to save your soul. Now He can make your life better after you get your soul saved, but He is not going to

save your life. You are going to die someday. Are you trying to tell me there were not boys that before they went into combat someplace that did not get saved, somebody went into Christ and went into battle the next day and got a bullet right between the eyes before they got 10 steps? Salvation will not save your life, but it will save your soul. That is the key. Once it saves your soul, yes, you can change your life.

Here is how it works. If I were you, I would not put this in your Bible maybe just yet, but I would put it down in these simple basic stages. Because when you learn how to win somebody to Christ and we take the basic concepts and lay them out for you, you have to know how this thing works. All right, we know, first of all, we talked about this before, that an unsaved man or an unsaved woman before they are saved, their flesh and their soul are stuck together. We know that. That should be an old accepted concept by now. You should know that. They are stuck together. That is why in the Old Testament, you find the word soul and the word body used interchangeably because they are one in the Old Testament. An unsaved man and woman today, they are stuck together. So when that person dies, because that soul was stuck to the flesh and that flesh is sinful, they go to hell. That is just the basic theology of it.

Colossians chapter two says that the instant of salvation, the operation made without hand by God, the spiritual circumcision, what does it do? It separates the soul from your flesh. Now you are set free. At that instant, at that split second, you were immersed with the Holy Spirit of God from head to toe based on the fact that Christ came down and died for you on the cross. So at that instant, you are baptized into Jesus' death, and you are baptized with the Holy Spirit of God. Your soul is sealed in the day of redemption. Ah, but now we have a problem. Now we have an old flesh that wants to go back and do the old things. Then we have the new man or the new nature that wants to do the good things. They are separate now. You have heard me say it week after week after week, whichever one you feed is the one that is going to control you.

The truth of the matter is that at that point in your life, and this is where many of you are at right now or a little bit down the line. Right now, because you have had this spiritual baptism and you have been baptized into Jesus' death, you now have the power of God to be complete in Him and do whatever God wants you to do. I say again, you may not understand it, you may not recognize it, you may not be able to work it, you may not be able to deal. It is as simple as that. Whichever one you feed is the one that is going to run you. That is why I talked to you a couple of weeks about when you get saved, you have to separate yourself from some of your old friends. You have to separate yourself from the world. You have to separate yourself from the music you listen to. You have to separate yourself from the thing that you do that pull you the other way. Come on, it is not that hard. If I tied a rope around your waist and then told you to go do something and put a million dollars over there and said it is yours if you can get it, and you are right over there and said it is yours if you can get it, and you are running and I am pulling you back on the rope, you are not ever going to get there. Well, there is a million dollars in a millennial eternal inheritance that is waiting for you right over there, and the world and the devil have a rope around your waist keeping pulling you back. This is where the Bible says in the Book of Romans that you now have the ability through the power of God to, and we are going to get into this in the next couple of weeks, reckon yourself dead. Oh, what a word.

Now here is the problem. Before you were saved, you were stuck to a dead corpse. After you are saved, you are no longer stuck to it. It is separate, but you are still stuck with it. He is looking over your shoulder right now. He is always just a whisper away. You see, this is the problem people do not understand. Just because you got saved and your soul is sinless, listen to me, listen to me. Just because you are saved and your soul is now sinless does not mean that you still do not sin. Do you understand that? Your soul cannot sin, it is sealed. But your flesh still can. You say then what is the point? Well, other than you are not going to hell anymore, not much. The point is this. You and I are still going to struggle with the flesh, but we now have the ability for that flesh not to run me. I can run it.

Right now, let me tell you something. Let me show you how this thing works. I know this is true, because I talked to many of you all week long. Right now, some of you in here are saved. You really want to do what is right, but your flesh has got its claws in you. You are struggling with a particular issue in your life. You know what? That is probably where you should be right now from where you are at. That is okay. You look at your problem as a multi-magnitude problem. It probably is to you, and it may be it is in life in general. But it is the single thing that keeps you from really doing what God wants you to do. You have talked to me about it, and you try to, you are doing everything you can to get around it, and in time you will.

Let me show you how this thing works. Just use you, for example. Right now, let us say you are struggling with some thing that you know you need to get rid of. Do you know there is always going to be something in your life that you need to get rid of? Do you know what your life should be? It should go from bigger to smaller. Let us say you are a drug addict right now. We do not have any drug addicts in here that I know of. But let us say, you say you are a drug addict. I use a nice generic term, so nobody thinks I am talking about anybody. Let us say you are a drug addict. That is your big thing. It has got a hold of you right now. As you grow through the Word of God, and you let the Word of God do, and you tap into the Holy Spirit of God, 10 years down the line, do you know what your big issue in life is going to be as a Christian? If you do what is right, let the Word of God help you. Let the church help you. Let me help you. Let this church do for you what it is supposed to do. Let us develop what is supposed to be developed. Do you know what your big problem is going to be 10 years from now? Not reading your Bible enough this week. Now the real key is going to be that when you get 10 years down the line, you ought to feel just as bad about not reading your Bible as you do today about the drugs. See that thing? Sin never goes away, it just gets smaller. But you know what I have learned in life? It is the small ones that kill you. Not the big ones. It is much easier for you to identify, "I have a drug problem," than it is for you to identify and not justify the fact you did not read your Bible this week. See? It is the little things that kill us.

Now, you see that sounds like a contradiction in terms. When you got saved, you are free from sin, but then you still sin. The difference is, and here is how you have to understand it. The moment you got saved, your soul cannot sin. It is separated from your flesh, which is sinful, and then it is sealed, and you have all the power of God, you are complete in Him, you have everything, you have been baptized with the Holy Spirit, you have been baptized into Jesus' death, and now for the first time in your life, you stand at a place in your life where you can

absolutely get control of your life and say no to the dominating factor of sin in your life. That is the key word, domination. The ability to keep getting up and never in spite of the flesh lose your focus of what God wants you to do. Mel used to tell us, "I do not care if you fall a thousand times a day, get up, 1001, and keep on going." The difference is, is when you do not have this, when you fall into sin, you just stay there. You just stay there. It is not that you do not sin anymore, we all sin, we all fail God, but you do not yield your members to sin, live with sin, live in sin, sin has no more dominion over you, and you are free from the bondage, and now you struggle with the flesh, but God even made a way for you to deal with that.

Let me just say to you, that soul that got sealed in your flesh, here is the real issue, when God fellowships with you, He fellowships through the soul. The only way God could fellowship with you and me as a filthy sinner was to separate one part from the other part, seal this part, and then deal with you through that part, knowing He can never have anything to do with this part. See how it works? It is just that simple. That is how God does it. That is why the more you feed this one, the more this one diminishes. The more you feed this one, the more this one diminishes. It just works just like that. Now, God fellowships with you through this. When you let this take control and you sin, this gets fellowship when God gets broken. Do you know what you have done? You have turned the switch. You went from the good to the bad. You just walked over in your life and said, on and off. Now, you have said something, done something, whatever, and now because of that sin, you have broken that fellowship because God cannot fellowship you with sin.

But here is the concept of the baptism of Jesus' death and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Because you are separated and the Holy Spirit of God is within you and you still struggle with your flesh when you do sin. You do not have to go out and get saved all over again. You are sealed, it is there. What you have to do is just get that fellowship back. That is why 1 John 1:9 says,

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

That is not salvation. That is after you are saved and daily restoring that fellowship. Now that is what you have got to learn to do and got to learn how to understand how that works. When you are saved, this one is sealed, this one is not. Sooner or later, this thing is going to give you problems. When it gets the upper hand and fellowship is broken, you have two choices. You can go and just keep on going and let it get worse and worse and worse, and it will get worse and worse and worse. Or you come to the point at that point, and come on, let us not kid ourselves that if you are saved, you do not know when you do something wrong or not. Can we just move right on by that one? You just stop and you simply say this, "God, that was wrong, and I am sorry. I should not have said that. Lord, that old lady was going so slow in front of me, I should not have rear-ended her over the cliff. I am sorry for that. Next time I will go back and help her."

Old Mel used to tell me, "When you understand this concept, son, and no money people do, you can, you know what? We all have the worst day in our life, don't we? We all have the day when it

just seems like we screw it up from day one to beginning to end. There is just one thing after, you are going to have days like that.” Most Christians do not live in the reality of life. You get these little, you get these goofy little churches that have these little dial-a-things, you know, where you get the prayer for the day or you picked up some, you call it a number and you get some goofy person that sounds like they are a plastic made in Japan someplace and it says, “This is the day the Lord hath made. Let us be glad and rejoice.” I heard a while back, the atheist got one phone call, you call and you call in and nobody ever answers. The truth of the matter is, we will never have one, but if we did, here is what it would say. “Hey, look pal, this is the day you are going to get it in the neck, but God made it. Get up and keep on moving.”

You know how you all have answering, have little answering things on your phone? I used to have a killer. It was the greatest thing, I took it off because too many people complained, but I loved it. Somebody got me a cassette of World War II or combat battles, machine guns and bombs going off and exploding and guys running screaming bayonet charge and machine guns going off. What I did is I got, you know how you have a, you put a message on your cell phone, you know, “This is Bob, I cannot come to the phone right now, leave me a message and I probably will not ever call you back, but anyway.” So I got in there and I had about 10 seconds of gunfire battle and everybody go. Then I come in like I was running in and I say, “Hey, I cannot come to the phone right now. I am really, I am really busy. But if you leave me a message, I will get right back to you as quick as I can, back as I can.” Then it would be a silent, you hear the gun going on, I come back and I say, “Hey, war is hell, ain't it?” And hang up. That is much more reality the way it is in life than “This is the day the Lord has made.” Every morning you step out of that house and into your job, into your car, you are in a warfare, you are back in a battle. Sometimes before you even get out of the house, you are in a battle. The ability to keep getting up and never in spite of the flesh, stay in a state of losing your focus. That is so vital to every one of us. That is the difference between this church and every other church. It is the difference what will make us fulfill the ministries for God and not fulfill them for God. Understanding what happened today, you got saved, the baptism of Jesus' death, the baptism of the Holy Spirit and realize the moment you got saved, you are two people in Christ Jesus, you got an old nature, a new nature. When you fail, you simply confess it to God, ask Him to forgive you and then get back up and keep moving.

Mel said one time, he said, “You could fall down a thousand times a day. And at the end of the day, you could say to the Lord, it was a good day. It started in fellowship and it ended in fellowship. What goes on between is just a matter of the battle.” Really do not think you are going to get to the judgment seat of Christ and lay that seal down and lay that sword down. God pick it up, look at that thing, see all the nicks and the pieces out of it, all the dents in it, look at that sword and see all the scratches and all the nicks in the blade where you have been slicing it through all your life. It is a battle, folks, but there is a way to fight it. A process of taking control through responsibility, structure in your life, accountability and availability. Constantly building your relationship through the process of crucifying your old nature, learning how to use your Bible.

I am very skeptical of most Christians, not you guys, but I hear people all the time, I know a person that everything you talk to him about, his is his answer. "Well, I am going to have to pray about that, brother." You say, "Well, why don't you, why don't we, you know what, I think that would work better if you tried this." "Well, I am going to have to pray about that." "Well, what do you think you are going to do with this scenario?" "Well, I need to pray about that." Everything you ask him, everything you give him or everything, his answer is, "Well, I have got to pray about that." Now, nobody understands the importance of prayer more than I do, but let me tell you something. If you have been saved five, 10, 15 years and you have not figured out yet that there are some things that you have to do in life or you have to take care of in life you do not have to pray about, the Bible clearly has already told you what to do, you are in trouble. When I meet a guy like that, you know what I have got? I have got a guy that does not know his Bible, at least in my life, and I am not saying I am some great prayer warrior, but I know what I need to pray for and what is clearly written in that Bible that I do not need to pray about. We like to use those things. It is the ability to use the Bible and know how to use it. That is what I want to do. I want you to get whatever scenario God puts you in, wherever He places you. This next year as we move through and God, you know where He takes us from here, if He gives us another year, simply taking you on whatever level you are at and using the people that I already have at my disposal to help you get to the point in your life where you really, really, really, really know why you believe what you believe and are able to stand on it and then be effective in this ministry, no matter where you are at, no matter where you are at. I do not care where you are at, spiritually, there is something you can do. You may not know one Bible verse, you may not be able to win somebody at Christ, and you may only been saved for a week, and you may say, "Bob, I cannot do any of those things." You know what you can do? You can sign up back there and help me put this thing on for the kids.

I told the story Thursday night about a friend of mine years ago in the ministry that when I went to, we used to go to camp, we used to have these dirt bikes that everybody rode and they used to just tear the fire out of them, beat them up, break them up, they did not work, they would not run, and I bring them back and spend four, five, \$600 every year getting them ready for camp next year, and this kid came in and he had just gotten saved and he said to me, he said, "Bob, he says, I watched these kids down here, he said, I am a mechanic and he said, you know what I will do for you? I will take those bikes and I will keep them running for you. In fact, I will just pick them up, take them home, I will store them for you, you let me know when you need them, I will bring them back, I will get them running and have them ready to go." You see, he did not know anything about the Bible, he did not know anything about winning anybody to Christ, but he knew that he had a job and that job was the fact that he was a mechanic and he saw a need and he simply said, "I will just take and start with what I know to do and give that to God." You know what he wound up, wound up being a missionary five, six years later. That is where it starts. I hate people to tell me what they cannot do. I hate people who come to me and say, "Well, this is the way it is, now what are we going to do?" You know what we are going to do? We are going to find another way to do it then. That is what we are going to do. We are not going to complain about the fact that it did not go my way or our way, then we will find another solution and we will get it done. That is the way it has to work because in your life, as a Christian, that is what

you are going to have to do. You can start whatever level you are on. It does not matter, it does not matter.

I have not been out there for a long time, but out of Worlds of Fun. I love the arcades. There is an arcade game in there, maybe they do not even have it. I have only seen it one other place, down the Ozarks. But there is this little game, and I have always thought to myself, this exactly reminds me of my flesh. It is a machine, it is a game, it is about this big, big flat board on it, it has got about 12 holes in it. You get a big soft mallet. You put your money in, and then it pops up, there are these gophers. The job is, you have to be faster than a gopher because you only come up for a second. All wood players, you are sitting there. I watched a lady one time, they had three machines together, and what happened is you get a point when you hit the gopher when it is up, but it is only up for a second. So you have to use your dexterity, you have to watch it coming up, and you have to whack it and you get a point. She was whacking it so much that out of control, she started whacking on the guy next door on the next machine. I thought to myself, sitting there and playing that game, I said to myself, "This is exactly what my flesh is. It pops up at the most unexpected time and just for a second, but it causes me great damage." What I have in my hand is not a soft mallet, but I have a sharp two-edged sword. I do not just whack the little suckers on the head, I cut their heads off with this sword. That is what we need to do. Your flesh is like those little gophers. They are going to be everywhere causing you all kinds of problems. Beating them just sends them down, and they will come back up again. Fix it, fix it. I guarantee you, you stood back there and put your quarter in and stood back with a Browning High Power 9mm or a Sig Sauer Glock and blew those little heads off every time they popped up. After a while, they would not come up anymore. Biting them down is not the key. You have to kill it. You have to kill it.

Galatians 2:20

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Everybody, no matter where you are at, no matter where you are at. Let us pray. Father, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus.