

I. Introduction to Biblical Principles

For a while now, we have been dealing with Romans chapter 8, which deals with the two adoptions of our body: a spiritual adoption the day we get saved, and then the adoption of our body when we get the glorified body at the rapture of the church. We were talking about Romans chapter 8 and how the infirmity is that we do not know how to pray. That took us into a great study on prayer, and we looked at all the different aspects of that.

I have told you all through this, and you have heard me say now for over six years that we have been together here for the most part, you have heard me say over and over again how important biblical principles are in your life. I think sometimes that I know what they mean, and I use the term, but many times some of you do not know what it means. What I want to do is take these next couple of weeks, and I do not know for sure how long we will do it, but I want to give you a good understanding in greater detail of how we use biblical principles.

I thought about this a lot. I thought how I wanted to do this, how it would be the best way to do it. I told you a couple of weeks ago, I gave you a verse in Isaiah chapter 55 that really dealt with and laid out what our problem is. That great passage talks about the fact that the Bible says that God's ways are not my ways; His thoughts are higher than my thoughts. We come to the conclusion through that, that this is our dilemma, this is our problem. God thinks on one level, and we think on another level.

The real key in our lives to really everything that we deal with is getting—basically we use the phrase today—getting on the same page with God, getting our level of thinking on His level of thinking. I told you that biblical principles are simply in their most basic form. Bible principles—and we are going to explain them today. I am going to go in and give you a good foundation of what they do for you first. I thought this thing through for the last couple of weeks. I have to first give you an understanding of why they are so important. Then I am going to take probably 30 or 40 of them, maybe more than that. We are going to lay them out and talk about them and show you how they are used in different aspects and try to give you a good handle on how to use those.

II. Defining Biblical Principles

When we talk about principles, and sometimes they are called precepts in the Bible, we are talking about simply getting God's mind through the Bible, understanding what God's opinion is on every subject that is in the Bible and every subject in life. Then we take those principles that we learn and apply them and use them to make the right decisions in our life.

I love—I do not know how many of you have one, but I use mine all the time—there is a dictionary that we have here that I have told you about for years and years and years. It was put out in 1828 by Noah Webster. You know Webster of Webster's dictionary. The edition of Webster's dictionary that you would go out and buy today is not the same one I am talking about. Noah Webster was one of the founding fathers of our country. He was an educator that really

wrote most of the curriculum that was used in the public school system when this country first got instituted. He was a saved man, and he really loved the Lord, and he understood the bottom line of principles. That is why in the early school system, teachers, students, and the whole system was built on principles.

You will find that many times I use his dictionary because most of the time—and you do not find this today—but most of the time in his dictionary when he defines a word, he will use a passage of scripture in a King James 1611 Authorized Version to show you the true meaning of it. He does not always do it, but many times he does. Principles and precepts—back in the days when we understood what it meant, when Noah Webster wrote his dictionary in 1828, it went along with the Bible's definition of it because principles or precepts are directives that give you and me a rule of action in our lives.

Let me say that again. A principle is a directive. It is something that you read that directs you toward a rule of action in your life, what you are going to try to accomplish. It gives you the action that you must take to do that. Principles are the fundamentals of all structure of all truth. There is no question about that. It is the principles of the Bible which the Bible is built on.

III. The Essential Role of Biblical Principles

I want to talk to you as we get going here today about the reasons why Bible principles are absolutely essential in your life. In fact, I am going to make a statement, and that statement is going to be simply this: You are probably not going to survive in this world that we live in without biblical principles and adhering to them in your life. I do not know of a greater time in the history of the world where there has been more absolute confusion about everything in life. The old adage that I have said for years and years and years, and I said it as a joke, but it ceased to be a joke, and it is a true statement today. I used to say years ago that America is an insane asylum run by the inmates. That has come to a reality today.

The first thing I want to do is talk to you about what Bible principles do in your life. I am going to give you four or five things. You want to take these four or five things and bring them all the way through our lesson. You will find me going back to them over and over and over again, showing you how they all correlate together. Let us talk about, first of all, the reason why we have to have Bible principles.

1. Biblical principles always simplify and take the confusion out of everything that we face.

You and I are going to be faced with circumstances in our life, and those circumstances many times are going to be confusing. They are going to be overwhelming in some cases. We saw it in Job's life last week when we finished out our study on prayer. When you come to the point where you have something in your life that you have to deal with, there are going to be decisions that come into your life that when you are faced with them, you are not going to know how to deal with them. There are going to be decisions in your life that sometimes seemingly are going to try to overwhelm you. You are going to find yourself in maybe three or four different circumstances, all at the same time, where it all comes down on you at one time, and you are in a position where

if you make the wrong choice, if you make the wrong decision, it can lead to a chain of events, or a chain reaction rather, that is going to really make the problem even worse.

Biblical principles will always simplify any circumstance that you find yourself in. Biblical principles will absolutely take the confusion out of everything that we face in life. That is the greatest thing that it does. It absolutely cuts to the quick everything that you have to get into. People come in to see me with problems, and sometimes they are basic problems, sometimes they are very complicated problems. I can see many times when people come into my office and we sit down that they are under a lot of weight. They may have problems with their children, they may have problems with their marriage, they may have problems at work, they may have lost their job, they may have some area in their life that is weighing very heavy on them. Most of the time they come in to see me, they do not know what they should do. They are coming in to me for advice.

Now I do not operate in the realm, and I told you this before, I do not operate in a realm where I just give people my homespun philosophy of life, take two aspirin and call me in the morning, so to speak. What I do for them is what I have to try to do for myself. Because what Bible principles do, when somebody comes in and sits down and tells me what they are going through, while they are laying out and telling me what they are up against, I am thinking through the process of the principles in the Bible that I can give back to them. Now I may not be able to solve their problem that they have at that particular time, but what I can do and what I need to do and what you need to do and understand is what Bible principles do is that takes a very complicated circumstance and puts it into a perspective for you.

Every Friday night we had Institute. I had several of you tell me this. I had several of you tell me that we started the book of Hebrews in our Bible Institute, and I told you that and laid it out for you. I had many of you come to me afterwards and even last night and talk to me and tell me how you have read the book of Hebrews probably a hundred times and been through it many times on yourself, but you never got it. You never fully understood it. The lights never came on. You never saw it the way that you needed to see it until you came Friday night and you saw me lay it out, and I gave it to you in a nutshell, and you went out of here saying, "Now I may not understand everything about the book of Hebrews, but I have a handle on the book of Hebrews I have never had before."

That is not because I know so much about the Bible. That is not because I am such a great teacher, but it is simply because I have learned in my own life, and what I did for you is what I did for me. What I did for you is what I do when you come in and sit down and tell me about your problem. I took a very hard book of the Bible, one that is very complicated, one that 99.99% of preachers, pastors, theologians in the world could never begin to figure out, and I broke it down for you, and you went having it in perspective. That is what principles do for you and for me.

If you have marital issues or children issues or personal issues that are very daunting and very confusing, the only way you can get the smoke to clear, the only way you can get all of the things that do not matter out of the way, and what you are left with is what you have got to work

with, and then you see how you are going to work with it. When most people leave my office after we have an hour of going through that thing, usually the weight is lifted off of them. The weight is lifted off of them, but not because I have necessarily solved their problems, but when they come in with a very confusing scenario that had them weighted down, all I did was take the weight off of them, give them a plan, and show them no matter what circumstance they find themselves in, I will show you a step-by-step process to get out of that scenario you are in. In other words, they come with no plan, and they leave with a plan. They come not seeing the perspective; they leave seeing a perspective. They come with their problem and all of the side issues that really do not matter, but clouds the judgment and clouds everything that we look at, and biblical principles blows all of that away and leaves you with what you really have to deal with and then shows you what you have got to do to accomplish to get through it.

Biblical principles in any given situation in your life will always make the things that you have to deal with a lot easier. They will simplify the issue. They will give you a perspective. They will give you a plan. My favorite word in the Bible, and it is the favorite word used in Solomon, they are used in Proverbs.

Another thing that it does for you, this is still number one by the way, is that when it does all of this, we call this discernment. Being able to look at any given circumstance, what will make you people good counselors? What will make you people—and some of you are becoming very good counselors because you are not only taking what I am giving you and you are not only doing it in your own life, but then you are taking it to the next step which really puts the icing on the cake—you are dealing with other people in their lives, and I do not know of anything that makes you better, faster, quicker to learn the material that we are talking about than to take what I am doing and then use it in somebody's life.

I am telling you, you can look across this church for those that have been here for the full duration or most of the duration, and you can see the ones who have went through the process that are working with people and the ones that have not ever started working with people, there is a, I guarantee you, there is a vast difference between their understanding and discernment of things in the Bible because they are not just taking what they are learning and putting it inward, they are using what they learn, and it compounds the learning process in a greater way. You are going to find that when you use biblical principles, it gives you the discernment. Most people do not see the problem as it really is because of their confusion, because they are in the middle of it. What you do as a counselor or in your own personal life, what the Bible does for you is it clears all of the smoke away and allows you to see what you are dealing with in a more simplistic way as God sees it.

2. Biblical principles take the guesswork out of any issue of what you are dealing with.

The Bible says in 1 Corinthians chapter 14 verse 33 that God is not the author of confusion. If you are confused, if you are a Christian, let me just say this, if you are a child of God this morning and you have some issue in your life that you are dealing with or you are faced with, and it may not be a bad deal, it may be something that is a good thing, but you have to make a decision and you are confused about it. Let me just say this to you: Whenever you have a

situation in your life that you are not clear through a biblical principle and you are confused on, do not make any decision about that decision because the Bible principles will come in time.

I do not know what circumstance you could even imagine you could be going through this morning that if you came in and sat down with me, I could not help you find one. We had a little after Thursday night Bible study, you came up and you said, "I need a principle." Remember that thing? What did I do? I said, "Right here is one. I will give you a quarter." Did that help? Please say it did because you are on the spot. If you said no, I am out of business. I am going to quit because that is what they are. They take a scenario that you are faced with, and what it does, it takes the guesswork out of it.

The devil operates three ways in our lives as a child of God. He counterfeits Christ, he confuses the situation, and then after he counterfeits and he confuses, he deceives. Bible principles always take the deception away. It is absolutely impossible, absolutely impossible for you as a child of God to be deceived or confused if you just follow the biblical principles. If you do not know the biblical principles, then do not do anything until you find one. If you will follow those two basic simple rules in life, you are not going to make a lot of bad choices in life because you are limiting what you get into. The bottom line is the reason why it takes the guesswork out of it is one simple rule: God never violates His own principles. The devil will deceive you, the devil will counterfeit the principles, he will make them look real good, he will put something in your heart that you just know has got to be right, but when you got into the Bible you found out that is not what the Bible said. Biblical principles, if you do not have them and you do not learn how to use them, in the day and age that we are living in, you are going to have some serious issues if you have not got them rolling in your life already.

3. Biblical principles always take the emotion out of any situation.

Our biggest enemy in our lives is our emotions. I am just going to tell you that our biggest problem that we face is what we feel. You can just put a big red star by this one. The biggest problem we have is our emotions. The Bible says, one of my favorite verses in Proverbs chapter 25 verse 28:

Proverbs 25:28

He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down, and without walls.

You have no defenses against what comes at you because your emotions control the situation instead of you controlling your emotions in your situation. What the biblical principles do is take your emotions out. Bible principles will override our emotions to keep us from making emotional decisions. There are times in my life when I felt like I wanted to do that. I will give you a good example. This is basic and stupid, but it is one that you can grasp. When somebody has said something to you or ticked you off or really made you mad, there is another time in your life when you just almost came to the verge of letting them have it. I mean, seriously, you just came short of just tearing them up.

Now what stopped you from doing that? Other than the fact that he was a lot bigger than you are. What stopped you from doing that? Well, if you are a Christian, I hope several things stopped

you. One, you stopped yourself because you knew that is not what a Christian should do. If you are just a guy with common sense, you realize that if you hit somebody today, they are going to sue you for everything that you have got. You are going to go to jail for battery. Then you are probably going to have to go through it. It gets worse. Then you are going to say, the judge is going to say, "Well, you have an anger problem." So you are going to go to anger management classes. Then you are going to get sued. Then the next time you have a little altercation, somebody is going to say, "I want to put a bond of protection against that person because he has already got a track record of being a violent person." See how it goes? That is how it goes. What stopped you was a principle. What stopped you from laying them out was the fact that, "Well, if I do this," and I really want to, if I do this, and you are singing a song, "All I want for Christmas is your two front teeth." That is what you are at. But you stop because a principle came in and blocked the punch. See?

That is what principles do for you in every area of your life. There are things that I will face, things that you will face, that your first reaction is going to be an emotional one. You have got to have the biblical principles because if you take the next step and make a decision based on that emotion, then you are in trouble. Something has to take the emotion out of it. Something has to give you a perspective so your emotion does not get to the place where it runs you, but that you run it.

Then there is another factor to this, and it is, I think, the most important. We are human beings. The older we get, the less we have to give to God because as the older we get, the more we slow down a little bit. There was a time when I could go 24/7 all day long, all week long, and do whatever I had to do and never even faze me. I do not do that anymore at 58 years of age. It is a thing where you realize that you only have so much emotion to spend. Remember over in the Gospels, and this is a great little illustration, remember over in the Gospels in Luke 6:19 that Jesus was there, and there was a crowd around Him, and somebody reached out and touched Him and got healed. The Bible says that Jesus did not see who touched Him, but He knew somebody had touched Him, and they got healed because the Bible said virtue went out of Him. Does that ever make you wonder what that virtue went out of Him was? How did something go out of Him? What went out of Him? All they did was touch Him, and they got healed, but what went out of Him that He recognized that, "Wow, I am now a quart low," if I could put it to that terminology. In my case, it is more than a quart.

You see, virtue is spiritual strength. In this particular case, it was spiritual healing. Let me ask you a question. I will speak to you folks who work with people. Have you ever worked with two or three people in the same day or maybe just one person for a long time, and you know how exasperated and worn out you are at the end of that session? I know on my weekdays, I take appointments at five, six, seven, eight, sometimes nine. I know, God help the one at nine o'clock because I think I just answered your problem with a guy that came up at six o'clock, and I did not even figure your problem into it. No, I did not do that. But do you know what? At the end of a six-hour dealing with people, you are exhausted. Do you know why? Because you have taken your emotions that you have and your strength, and you have doled it out to people who needed it.

That is really what the ministry is. Do you know why some of you—do not take this in a bad way, but we are talking about reality here—do you know why some of you will never make good counselors? Do you know why some of you will never be a help to other people? Do not take this wrong, but it is the truth. You do not have anything to give. The spiritual strength that you give, you have to amass yourself. You have to learn the principles yourself, and they are in there. That is why you can start out in the morning and just really be all fired up, go through a day of work and giving and giving and giving to people, and that is why you are tired at night. You have got to go back to bed, and God charges up the battery, so to speak. Well, it is the same way spiritually. You and I only have so much emotion to expend into people. But we have got to be careful where we expend it. Spending it on things that do not matter and leaving nothing for the ones that do matter, that is where the problem lies.

Emotions are a damaging thing in a Christian life. The Bible needs to tell you, and this sounds very cold and callous, and I am going to talk about this a little bit later on, but the Bible ought to tell you when, where, and what to feel in every given circumstance and show you the measure by which you feel it. "Oh, nine tears, I am done crying." Not that simple, but kind of like that. Do not waste tears on things that do not mean anything. Do not waste tears on crying for things that do not really matter. Do not waste putting energy into things that bring no return for God. But that is what we do. When you understand that principles guide your emotions and that what you think, how you feel, and you do not waste the emotions on it, then you have more to give God what He needs.

4. Biblical principles remove family and friends out of any issue.

You realize how much you are influenced and I am influenced or people are influenced to do the wrong thing when you know they do the right thing by family and friends. There is tremendous pressure on us. When our kids grow up, we talk about peer pressure. Of course, peer pressure is pressure from kids that they go to school with that you are trying to teach them to do right, and their friends at school are trying to teach them to do wrong. So they feel pressure from their peers across the board. People that are the same place that they are. Well, family and friends do the same thing. There will be times when you have to make a decision.

Somebody said one time, "Blood is thicker than water." That is an interesting little phrase to me, and I have heard that all my life. One day I sat down and analyzed it, and I thought to myself, "You know what, that sucker just reversed the way it is supposed to be." Blood should be thicker than water. When we say it, we say blood is thicker than water, and I do not even know what that term really means. Blood is thicker than water. But in reality, from a Bible standpoint, blood should be thicker than water because water represents your physical birth into your family, and blood represents your spiritual birth unto God. Yes, blood should be thicker than water. You want to put the things of God over your friends and your family when your friends and family go against what the Bible says you are supposed to do. Blood should be thicker than water. No question about it. I agree. That is a great, great saying.

I had a friend of mine a number of years ago, to show you how this thing works. A number of years ago, I had a friend of mine who was pastoring a church in Florida. No, it was Alabama. In

the South, everybody is related to everybody. Like a guy said one time, "We have not been able to prove a capital murder case in Arkansas for the last 20 years." And the guy says, "Why is that?" He said, "Because everybody has got no teeth, and everybody has got the same DNA." There is a lot of truth to that. When you get down South, everybody is related. They are like up here in the North, down South, everybody is related. You have got Billy Bob and Jimmy Bob and Robbie Bob and Dobby Bob and Jimmy Bob. They are all hand-tied in there together.

This guy had a church of about two or 300 people. And he had, and 300 people made up of it all, four families. Everybody related to somebody. He told me, and this is, I have used this story many, many times in dealing and teaching people how to counsel. He told me, he says, "You know what, one of the," and I do not remember all the details, they have been so long ago, but he says, "One of the teenagers got into a real jam and did something really bad, really stupid." It was bad enough that the church had to deal with it. I just, I cannot remember what it was. But he did something really bad that the church had to deal with. They dealt with it publicly because it was that big of a deal.

What happened was that some of the family who were not as spiritual as probably what they needed to be, they got upset because they did not like, first of all, that their nephew, uncle, brother, kid, son, whatever the case may be, was brought before the church. It did not matter what the kid did because family-tied, blood was thicker than water in the wrong sense. It got to the point where in those kind of situations it always happened, the devil gets into detail. Here is a situation at the end when it was all done, he said, "I lost 60 people out of my church." Sixty people out of my church that were all connected through blood relationships over this issue because they felt like I handled the issue wrong. He handled the issue absolutely biblically. There was no question about what he did wrong. He said, "You know what the sad thing was?" He says, "I had deacons in my church that were connected to this family who told me privately that I was doing the right thing. But publicly they caved in to their aunts and their uncles and all of their family because the fact they did not have the courage to stand up and back me on a situation that I had to deal with here."

Because of that, and the end result was not that I lost 40 people in the church or 60 people in the church, whatever it was, he said, "We got through that. The probability was 90% of those people are not going to church anywhere now and are right back out into the world." All because God's people who were supposed to be leaders could not take a stand for what was right in the Bible over what their family squabbles were all about. That is a shame. That is a shame. You see, biblical principles are what build leadership. It is absolutely what builds leadership. It removes not only the confusion out of it, it removes the guesswork out of it, it takes the emotion out of it, it takes the family and the friends out of it.

I have known Christians. I have seen Christians that were struggling and had some real issues. Other Christians should have saw their struggles, but because they were not concerned about the ministry aspect of it, they just looked at it as a good time. They went ahead and encouraged them in other things instead of things that they should have been encouraging them in. Then everybody scratches their head and says, "Why is so-and-so back down into the world?" Do you know why? Because their friends, their friends did not have the courage to stand and say, "You

know what? We are not going to do that with you. We are going to go to church. We are going to do this. We are going to do that. Why do not you come with us?" They did not have the courage to do that. I am telling you, biblical principles, when you operate by them, it will separate these things out of here because these things I just gave you are what is going to stop you from ever being used of God because you have got to get to the point where you live by them and not what everybody thinks about you or what everybody says.

5. Biblical principles take you and me out of the issue.

I want to tell you something. Do you know why Catholics like going to the Catholic Church and being in the Catholic Church? Because they love somebody else taking care of their religion for them. That is why. I went into a, in France one time, I went into one of those big, big, big beautiful cathedrals over there, and they had a little shop there, and when I went out there everybody was looking around at trinkets. I saw a couple of nice things, like little necklaces, and I said, "What are these?" And the lady says, "These are called scapulas." I did not know what a scapula was. I thought it was a scalpel. I thought, "Oh, it is a scapula." "What is a scapula?" She says, "If you have one of these on the time you die, you have a 75% chance of going to heaven," just like that. Well, being me, Bob, the great mind, I said, "Well, give me two of them." I am going to wear them both. That is 150%. I have got it in, see. But you are laughing, but do you not know that if your Christianity and getting to heaven was not that simple, would not that be a good deal? Who would not want that? I just have to wear a little thing around my neck and wear it, and I am guaranteed to go to heaven. Boy, if that was true, that would be a good deal. Problem is it is not true.

People like to go to churches, places where you do not have to worry about keeping it. You can go live your life any way you want to and then show up one day a week, and the priest will take care of everything. You can run back out and do it again. Who would not like that deal? I mean, I like that deal, but it does not work that way. I do not, I was going to say I trust all of you. I do not think I can say that. I trust most of you. No, I trust all of you. But do you know who I really do not trust in here? Me. I do not trust me. I trust you much more than I trust me. Do you know why? Because I do not know you as well as I know me. I know me. I know me better than anybody in here. I know me.

Do you know what? I cannot trust me. When I am faced with some major decision in my life that may alter the course of my life or alter my family or whatever, do you really want to take responsibility for that and say, "I am going to make that choice?" How about if it is worse than that? How about if it is somebody else's spiritual well-being? How about this? How about if somebody is going to heaven or hell based on what you tell them? Do you really want to step up to the plate and say, "Well, I am Bob's spiritual?" I will just tell you. Do you want that on you? Do you want to make that? Do you have the ability? I do not. Do you have the ability to make that kind of decision and choice on your own? I do not want to make that. I am like a Catholic. I want somebody else to make it for me. Do you know who makes most big decisions for me? The biblical principles. Takes me out of it. I am the last person that needs to be in it. I guarantee you. Because my emotions will get involved. And I will see it the way I want to see it. On top of that,

Jeremiah chapter 17, nobody told you what my heart is. It is deceitful. Desperately wicked. Above all things, it says. Because I know me.

Let me tell you something. I did not survive in the ministry as long as I survived with the adversity and the adversaries that hate my guts down through life without figuring out how to survive and just play the game better than they did. I am telling you. That is a good side to that, and there is a bad side to that. The good side is I am still here. Because God gave me the wisdom and discernment to be smarter than they are. Wise unto my enemies for they are ever with me. The bad side of it is I can manipulate things for bad just like I can for the Lord. I do not want that side of me in charge. I want some safeguards that keep me from working the system to get what I want and then rationalizing it in the process.

I am going to tell you something. The only way you can know for sure. I am going to tell you something. I have said a lot of things up to this point, but you can throw it all away and just remember this one thing, and you will probably go farther in life than if you hear everything else and miss this. The only way, the only way, the absolute only way that I know that it is not me doing it and it is really God doing it is by the biblical principles that I follow. If you do not have a biblical principle, and I am going to show you the verses here in a moment. If you do not have the biblical principles in your life by which you are operating by and you do not have them clearly defined and detailed out that you are seeing them, following them, touching them, tasting them, handling them, you have absolutely no proof that it is not you just doing it. I do not want that. I do not want, hey, I know what the first 19 years of my life was when I was in charge, and I am not like a bottle of wine. I do not get better with age.

IV. The Defining Passage on Biblical Principles

Now having said that, I want to give you the defining passage on biblical principles and how they work, and it is found as you might guess in the book of Proverbs. I told you to go to Proverbs chapter 4. Here we go. I am going to read it for you. Chapter 4 verse 1. Now this, mark this in your Bible. This is the definitive passage on biblical principles and how they work in your life and my life.

Proverbs 4:1-9

Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.

For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law.

For I was my father's son, tender, and only beloved in the sight of my mother.

He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live.

Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.

Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.

Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.

Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her.

She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.

Now Father, we ask you to take this time today and to bless us. We thank you for everyone here. Lord, we pray that this will make an impact and change the direction of people's lives and how they look at things. Lord, we just love you and thank you and praise you in Jesus' name. For his sake we ask it, amen.

This is a great passage. Notice the first thing he says here in verse 2. He says, "For I give you good doctrine." We know that doctrine means to teach. Then he is going to give you good teaching. Those teachings will be the principle. Let us see how it works out. Look at the next thing he says. He says in verse 4, "He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words, keep my commandments, and live." You will find a similar thing in that in Psalms 119 where it says, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word." You take those principles, the commandments, and you put them in God's words, God's commandments, the principles, the rules of living, and then you put them in your life.

Now watch. "Get wisdom, get understanding. Forget it not." Look at verse 7. "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding." The Bible just defined the wisdom of God as principles. He says wisdom is the principal thing. Then the wisdom of God is found in the principles of God. But then he did not stop there, did he? He did not stop there, see? He says, "Get wisdom. But with all thy getting, get understanding." How do you do that? Once you recognize that the wisdom of God is the principles that are found in your Bible, once you realize that and see that they are the principal things, take those principles and apply them into your life, now you have understanding.

Do you know what understanding is? Understanding is to be able to look at any circumstance you find yourself in life or any circumstance you are beginning with somebody in life and know where to go with the biblical principles that give them the right answer. That takes the confusion out of it, it takes them out of it, it takes their family out of it, it takes their emotions out of it and puts it right down and simplifies the process of what they have got to deal with. So easy that is.

This is going to be a good series if you are paying attention. Some of you probably will not bother, maybe some of you it will even bore you. But I want to tell you something. Do you think this is not vital? Look at verse 8 and 9. "Exalt her, and she shall promote thee." What is the punctuation right there? What is it? A colon. "Exalt her, and she shall promote thee:" That is right now in your life. "She shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her." That is the judgment seat of Christ. That verse shows you what it does for you now and it shows you what it will do for you then. Look at verse 9. "She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace:" Right now. Later on, "a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee," the judgment seat of Christ. See that thing? That right now when you exalt it in your life she promotes you. Right now when you take it and exalt her she will give you a head an ornament of grace. What does that mean? It means that you will start to operate in the realm of biblical principles using God's grace in dealing with

circumstances in your life. And later on it shows you what it will take care of the judgment seat of Christ.

That is how you and I should operate. That is how basically a church ought to operate. That is why there is no politics involved in this church. And there never will be. That is why there is no favoritism in this church. That is why nobody with a lot of money could come in and flash a couple hundred dollars around and buy their way in and get this or get that. That is why there is nothing in this church and this ministry is based on a popularity contest. I do not know if you caught it or not, verse 8 said it best. Do you know what it said in verse 8? It says, "Exalt her, and she shall promote thee."

This is an army. We are supposed to be an army. Now I know that is a foreign concept today. I know that most churches do not use our hymnals anymore. Do you know what the reason why they do not use the hymnals anymore? Because they do not like those songs that talk about war. Somebody said one time, "You cannot get a good choir to sing 'Onward Christian Soldiers' because you have got too many conscientious objectors in the choir." That is probably true. This book is filled, you have got to see them time. It is filled with war, battle, blood, shields, swords, tear them up, shoot them up, blow them up, kill them up, let God sort them out. That is what it is all about. In any army, there is no favoritism in any army. Sergeant does not care how much money you have got. Do you know what a sergeant cares about? Do you know what a captain cares about? Do you know what a field grade major cares about? He cares about what you do on the battlefield, and what you do on the battlefield determines your promotion.

Now I know the Salvation Army is pretty much a social service thing anymore, and when General Booth started it, General Booth by the way was a Civil War general. He came out of the Civil War, he saw legs hacked off, blown off, shot off. He saw an eyeball blown out, heads blown off. He saw the most horrors of war. He saw he was a saved man. He said to himself, "You know what?" He said, "I am going to develop a system for God based on the armies that I fought with," and so he started the Salvation Army. Instead of killing people, this one was about saving people. For years and years and years they put a little paper in the back when their old soldiers died, they had it under their heading, "Promoted to Glory." I like that. See, I do not promote you. You had to go to Acts chapter 16 sometime and see how Timothy was picked to go with Paul. The pastor did not come down and say, "Well, Timothy's mom just gave a big old money check to the church so we will send her." It was not Paul. No, no, no. He got promoted through the combat of Christianity. That is how Paul and Barnabas got called to go to the mission field. It was not somebody said, "Well Paul, he has got a great personality, everybody likes him, let us send him." No, he got promoted through the combat of Christianity. Promotion comes down through the whole battle, and that is what makes you, it is what you do. It is what you learn to do, what the principles say that make you valuable in our combat right here. I do not promote you. Wisdom and understanding promotes you when it is displayed in your life.

You take somebody to come into church and their life was messed up, their marriage was messed up, their family was messed up, and just about everything was messed up, and then four or five years later everything that was messed up is now right or as right as it can be. Then you see somebody else that came in four or five years, same time period, four or five years, they are still

screwed up, they are still messed up, they are still making the same stupid mistakes. No, it is not me saying, "Well, this one is good and this one is bad," or "This one made it, this one did not." The wisdom and understanding that you put in your life promotes you. What verse eight says. We are in a war, we are an army, no politics, no favoritism, no money to buy your way in, no popularity contest, we are in a battle, and the soldiers that fight the best get the promotions. What do you not understand about that? All through your Christian life as you add to their repertoire as a Christian and you learn how to fight this battle, use the armor of God, be a soldier for Jesus Christ, you get promoted.

Then look at Psalms chapter 75 verse 6. Just turn over there real quick. After you go through Christian life and you go through this life of learning and growing and being promoted by the wisdom and understanding that you get by using biblical principles in your own life and then God using you to put him in the life of somebody else, but the catch phrase there is you cannot use him in somebody else's life until you get him in your own life first.

Psalms 75:6-7

For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south.

But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.

That is my final promotion right there. Right now in your life and my life, Proverbs 4:8, you exalt wisdom, you get wisdom and understanding. You let the principles get into your life. It will promote you. God will promote you and do things with you that you have never dreamed possible. All through your Christian life, you get promoted. But then one day when God says, "I am ready," you get the final promotion. We get to go to heaven. That is how it works.

I love people. I wish you could have met my dad. My dad died many, many, many years ago, but I bet I would have, I would have loved you, you would better understand me if you had met my father. My father never met a stranger in his life. My father, I never, I do not ever remember him having a cross altercation with, as it is my mother, with anybody in life. My father was a people person. He was gentle. He was kind. He was caring. He would do anything for anybody. My mother on the other hand was just the opposite. My mother on the other hand was someone, and she is still alive, and she has changed a lot. My mother and I, we have a great relationship, and I love her to death, and she loves me, but she has grown so much through life and is so better and so better today than when she was.

But I remember that in my mother's side of the family, they had a point where they could just cut you off, and you were gone. I do not know what happened. I was 10 years old, 11 years old. My grandmother, which was my mother's mother, was staying with one of her brothers, my uncle Milt. They lived about 40 miles. Something happened, and I do not know to this day what it was. They were always feuding and fussing about something. They never got along. My mom's side of the family had like four or five brothers and two sisters. It was, you mongers. My dad had, he had like, they had like 10 brothers. My dad was born in a log cabin. I will tell you where I am coming from. I will never forget, my mom and her mother got in a fight about something, and I do not know whatever it was, but my mom cut her off. My mom said to her, I remember as a

little guy, because I was hiding in the corner, I was scared to death. My mother said, "I never want to talk to you again." She is using a lot of superlatives that I cannot put in because my mother could cuss like a sailor. She said, "I never want to talk to you again. I do not care if you blankety blank die." She said to my uncle Milt, "I wish you had a blankety blank but died in the war." She just put them on him and broke the relationship right there.

Ten years later, never talked to her, never talked to her one time, never talked to her. Do not know where she went, what she did. We went back to Maryland, that is where we are all from. We went back to Maryland, and I went back on my dad's brother. My dad was dead then, and my mom and I went back, and we went back there to my aunt Nettie's, which was my father's sister, and we went back there, and they took me deer hunting, my uncles and all that, and that is another whole story. Then there was a little church down over the hill where my grandfather was buried, who died way before my grandmother. So we went down to see Grandpa's burial place. We walked up to that tombstone, and there was not just Carl Burkett being buried there, but Ethel Burkett, his wife, had died four years before that point. My grandmother, my mother's mother, had been dead four years, and my mother did not even know it, and when she looked down there and saw that she was already dead, it never moved her an inch.

Now I am a hybrid of those. I am a people person. I am like my father. In fact, many times I feel like that boy that his mother was black and his father was a Japanese, so he was a mixture of the black race and a Japanese race, and he was very confused, and every December 7th he attacked Pearl Bailey. I am like that. I am like that. You can see my dilemma. I love people. I am like my father in that sense. I really am. I get very attached to people. I really do. It is real easy for me to get attached to people because I am so thankful for what God has done for me, and I know what God can do for them, and when I see somebody that just halfway tries, I just want to do whatever. In fact, I have got to be careful because sometimes I violate my own principle, and I get too much involved.

I am like my father. Sometimes there is a shot of me that is like my mother because no matter how much I love people and how I get attached to people, that is my father's side. My mother's side tells me that I never let friendship come between the Bible principles and my personal life or ministry. Harry gave us a great testimony. Where is Harry at? Back here. Mind if I just give a little capsule there? Harry gave a great testimony. Harry came to Meshemia a while back, and Harry wanted to get help, Kyle, with the youth. I said, "Well, Harry, you know the problem you have got." Harry had smoked cigarettes for 50 years of his life, and he is only 26. I said, "Those things have got to go, Harry, because I cannot have you be an example to these kids." I said, "If you get it, and now how long are you clean now?" A month and a half. "If you have made a month and a half, you can make it." That nicotine gum you are chewing there today? Okay, good deal. There is nothing wrong with that. I know some people that put those little patches on. That is when I smoked, I said, "I put mine over my eye because I did not know what to do with it, and I am blind in that eye." But I will tell you what, that eye does not smoke. It does not smoke. No desire.

The bottom line is this. I say that to say this. What Harry did is he came to me, and I said, "Harry, if you want to do this," you know what it was? The serving God became more important

than the cigarettes. Now about three or four months ago, we had another family in the church, and they left the church mad at me. The reason why they left the church because the lady came to me and she says, "I want to disciple somebody." And I said, "Well, you and I know with the problem you have got, you are going to have to quit the cigarettes because of the fact that I am not going to let you disciple somebody when you cannot have victory in your own life over something." Now, where Harry said, "Yes sir," and did it, she got mad and said, "Well, I will find another church." My answer to her was, "You know what, in the infinite wisdom of God, that is why we put two doors in that one. One for you to come in and one for me to go out."

I love you. I care for you. I think you are one of the nicest people in the world. I love your family. It is too bad for them. But you know what? Bible principles are Bible principles. What is right is right for everybody. It is not something that we pick this here and pick that there. I have had people that were my friends remind me over the years how long they have been my friends and how they have stood with me through the tough times and how loyal they are to me. Hey, I am going to tell you something. I never forget what people do for me. I stand before you with a lot of problems today. What are you shaking your head for? I stand before you today with a lot of problems. Do it that way. That is my girl. I stand before you today with a lot of problems. But I will tell you one problem I do not have is ingratitude. I remember what people do for me. I never forget what people do for me. I remember something somebody did for me 30 years ago. I never forget what people do to me.

Loyalty, loyalty to me is a rare thing today. In the ministry, loyalty is an absolute necessity. I personally am a very loyal person. But in the ministry, the two can never override biblical principles. It just cannot. If you are going to be a pastor someday, or you are going to be in the ministry, or you are going to be a leader, their lives must run through the ministry and their families based on clear biblical principles. You cannot allow people to touch the lives of other people whose lives are in disarray or do not have the victory in their own lives and are not following the biblical principles. If your life is not operated by the principles in an area, friendship is a great thing, but never let it override Bible principles that we live by. Your loyalty needs to be before it ever comes to me. Your loyalty needs to be in the principles of the Word of God. That is where your real loyalty lies.

Now this can be a problem for me. A lot of this today is my own personal stuff because I do not know how else to tell you. This can be a problem for me because I try to be, in my life I have tried to be so principled, and there is a good side and a bad side to everything. I have tried to be so principled that I have got to be careful that the principles do not override my emotions so much that I do not feel any compassion for people. As somebody, I can sit and watch the news. I can watch something unfold in a tragedy in somebody's life, and I can sit there and weep. I will weep for a number of mixed reasons. For the probably lost, for the therein, something that I can relate to. I will sit there and weep.

I have very little sympathy for Christians who have had a chance and had the Word of God and had everything and then turn their back on it and walk away and then something bad falls down. It is hard for me, and I work on it every day, it is hard for me to spend a lot of emotion on something like that when it was very clear to me that, you know what, if you had just stayed with

what you were doing in the Word of God and not went back to the world or whatever, you would not be in this scenario.

Years ago, I had a kid in my college and career class, and he was a kid that, he was one of the nicest guys you could ever meet in your life. For about three or four years he really, really did well. Then he got hooked up with a gal, and like always, he was coming to a good church that taught the Bible, and he got hooked up with a gal, and she went to another church, so he started going to that church. That church did not teach the Bible, did not have what he was getting and what he needed. So it was only a matter of time, you know how the story goes, it was only a matter of time she moved on, he moved on except now he has lost the Bible principles that he has had. He is caught up now, and so he is right back into the world. For the next three or four years, he went right back to the world drinking, smoking, doing all the things that he did.

One weekend they went down to the Lake of the Ozarks for a big old power drinking, fast boat riding, water skiing, fun time as you ever want to have. They went out there, drinking at night, running on the lake, going out chasing everything around the world, all that kind of stuff. On a Sunday morning they were out there water skiing about six o'clock in the morning, and he is out when the water is very calm. He is out, and they were still drinking, they still had not sobered up the night before. They are up there, and they are driving, you know how you drive a boat when you are drunk. I know how I drive when I am sober, I could not imagine me driving one when I am drunk. Well anyway, he was water skiing, the guys were all drinking, all drunk, he fell down, the guys laughing, turned around, went back to pick him up and just split his head like a canoe with a boat. Killed him deader than a doornail.

So I get a call Monday morning, and I know this family. I get a call Monday morning, and they asked me if I would do the funeral. I said, "You know what," I said, "I think I am going to have to pass on the funeral." I said, "I do not think I am going to preach the funeral." I said, "Wherever funeral home you are going to, for another hundred bucks they have got somebody on call that will take that and do the funeral." Because I knew what was expected of me. It was expected of me to get up there and talk about how wonderful this kid was. I also knew that probably his funeral was going to be 300 kids, just his age, or all his buddies from school. Who probably in the same situation and only maybe a heart's beat away from where he is in eternity.

I will tell you the truth, I could not just get up there and use a bunch of nice, fancy, foamy things about how great he was without getting up there and saying, "Ladies and gentlemen, all you kids down here, I want you to understand, he is dead this morning, and the bottom line is this, he would still be alive if he had been in church on Sunday morning instead of been out there with you guys." That is what I wanted to say, but I knew I could never say that. I knew that the family would not accept that. I did not really care about the people that were out there, but I knew the family did not want that. They want, like most funerals, they wanted a celebration. Have you ever noticed how in the obituaries it is all, in the funerals, it is all a celebration of life? See, for a real Christian, there should be no celebration of life. It ought to be a celebration of death. That is what I wanted to do. I figured, "You know what, he was a lousy witness the last four years of his life. If he could come back right now, if God would give him 30 seconds to speak to us, you know what he would say? He would say, 'Bob, preach the hardest message you can and tell them

where I am at and why I am here and that somebody else does not get messed up just like me." But how do you say that to grieving parents? See, that is something I struggle with.

Then, so they ask another guy to do it. He did not really like me anyhow. So he wanted to hold it over me because he did not know they asked me first. So he comes over to me and he says, "Well," he says, "I got called to do so-and-so's funeral." And I said, "Oh, did you?" He said, "Yes." He says, "Oh, I was quite surprised that they did not ask you to do it." I said, "Oh, they did." He said, "Well, why did not you do it?" I said, "Because you know what, this is going to be the defining moment in your life, pal, because you are going to do one or two things. You are going to get up there and tell the truth for 300 kids out there that are probably lost, or you are going to follow the song and dance routine that everybody expects us to do, and you are going to get up there and talk about everything instead of telling them what the real bottom line is or why this kid is dead this morning." So I said, "Let us see what you have got now. You wanted it? You think you have got one up on me because you got it and I did not? Let us see if you could. Let us see if you are ready to hit the ball. They are going to pitch at you up to the plate. You are in the big leagues now, son." You know what? You are going to be like a broken deck of cards. I sat down there in the third row, and I just watched him the whole time. Never took my eyes off him. When he was done with that sermon, he could not even look me in the face.

See, I struggle with those things. I struggle with those things because I do not want to lose. For me, it is a balance. Most people cannot separate the two. Remember last week I told you that the victory of God in our lives is not on the top of the hills of life, but it is where? The real victories are down in the valleys. Let me just give you something to associate with that. Real leadership is not the ability. Real Christian leadership. Real leadership is the ability to make the Bible choices based on biblical principles, not when everything in life is easy, but when it is hard, when it goes against your family, when it goes against your children, when it goes against the popular mode of things. But you know it is the right thing to do biblically because that is what the principle says to do. That is the real mark of leadership. That is the real challenge in people's lives today. Most of us do not make that grade. Boy, thank God for the few that do.

V. How to Find Biblical Principles

Now what I want to try to do in the next couple of weeks is show you how these principles work. I am going to take 30 or 40 of them from all different areas. I cannot do them all that I like to do. I cannot explain them all. We are going to do this in conjunction with Thursday night Bible study that I maybe will not define it the way that you want it to, but then on Thursday night you can bring it up, and we will talk about it, and I will give you the whole thing there because there is just no way I can do it. My purpose is not to define them all. My purpose is to show you where they are at and how you get them. We are going to start with the basic ones and then we are going to work up to the very complex ones.

When you start to talk about biblical principles and you start to talk about how to find biblical principles in your Bible, you find them three ways. There are three ways that they are found in your Bible.

6. You are going to find some of the books in your Bible in the Old Testament and the New Testament will contain a complete picture of what we are faced with in our overall principle.

We saw that last week in the book of Job, did we not? You see the book of Job is a whole book that shows you the struggles that one man went through for seven days. So sometimes you will find books like that. The book of Exodus is another one. Remember back when we were going through each book of the Bible? You can get this on the website. The book of Exodus starts in chapter 1, 2, 3, and 4 shows Israel down in bondage with Egypt. Picture you and me before we got saved. They cried out, "I needed to deliver." God sends them to deliver. Moses, you cried out. God sent you to deliver. Christ. Then they get out of Egypt. Picture the world by the blood on the door sacrificing a lamb. Then every chapter through Exodus shows you some other addition to your Christian life that you need to put in it. That is a whole book too. I told you Thursday night how the book of Colossians, I showed you in chapter 1, how the book of Colossians, the whole book of the book is the latest in church. First Corinthians shows you what the whole book shows you what is wrong with the church. Second Corinthians shows you what is right with the church. So the first thing you find is you find it in books in the Bible.

7. Principles will be revealed through passages of scripture or what I call stories.

These will be from anywhere from 4 to 10 verses to maybe 2 or 3, 4, 5, 6 chapters. We both know them like stories of Adam and Eve. See, story of Noah, story of David. They will be found in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, the Gospels anyhow. Again, they will illustrate some major principle that you want to get into your life, and with those there will be about 20 or 30, 30, 40 other sub-principles that will go along with it. They will usually always tie up the principles in the New Testament.

8. The third way you are going to find them is what I call singular or singular verses.

I call these standalone principles. These are what you put on your 3 by 5 cards that so many of you do. These standalone principles are like chicken wings. Notice I said chicken wings, not chicken fingers. When you order chicken wings they say, "Well, we have got three kinds. We have got mild, we have got hot, we have got neutral." I am sorry that everything in the Bible I equate with food, but I do that so I will not forget to eat. There are some single verses in there, standalone principles that are mild. You just look at them and you say, "Wow, that was good." There are some in there that you find that are standalone that they are hot. You go, "Whoa, that was really good. I can use that." Then you find some in there that just knock your socks off. You cannot imagine how one verse can contain so much weight that you have absinthe, those are nuclear. There is a whoa, wow, you have got to sit down and take a breath when you see those. That is how you find principles.

Now your Bible says in Proverbs chapter 20 verse 18:

Proverbs 20:18

Every purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war.

That is a good principle, especially in light of what we read in Romans chapter 8 verse 28 last week when it says:

Romans 8:28

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

Well, now you have a one that says that every purpose, if you are called to His purpose, the Bible says every purpose is established by counsel. That counsel is principles.

VI. Applying Biblical Principles: National and Personal Accountability

Let us get some good counsel through biblical principles. The first one I am going to talk about today, I can say I am going to start real general and then we will tighten it down. The time we get done with these, I am going to show you about how to pick a mate, give you some principles, what to do if you find yourself in a situation that you know you are married and you have kids by other marriage or other relationships, we are going to go through the whole gamut. We are going to talk about personal issues that you may face. This is, this series, and the devil always knows how to do it because nothing you can do about it, but for the most part, everybody in our church out of here this session. But the devil knows exactly who to get to go where with what with who and know exactly who to get sick here, where to there, and that is just what he does. The devil will always be in the details, but I am telling you this thing has the potential of fixing whatever problems you have. I do not know what to tell you, but that is just the way it is. It frustrates you, but that is life on planet Earth.

Now the first one I am going to talk about is something we can all identify with, and it is certainly an easy one to see, and it is certainly probably the most one that affects us in any of them all. This is the dilemma we find ourselves in in America today. I use this one because it is such a great example and yet at the same time it is such a pertinent thing in your life and my life. We find ourselves in an absolutely unsurpassed dilemma in this country, not only in this country but globally around the world. You have heard me say many, many times that the reason why there are no answers on the horizon for what we face today. You have heard me say many, many times that we are in the course where we are right before the coming of the Lord. There is certainly a time that we ought not to be operating in biblical principles. You have heard me say that obviously there is no leader on the horizon. There is nobody in America, not a Democrat or Republican, not anybody anywhere that can fix the problems that we have got. There is nobody on a global scale who can come up and answer all the problems.

The problems in this country are so many and so diverse. They are so impacting. They are so compounded. They are so tied together that this country is like a person when a ship sinks and he jumps off the back of the ship right before it goes down, it pulls a great suction of that ship going down. If you get caught in that suction, you could be the best swimmer in the world. You could be the strongest swimmer in the world. You can have five life jackets on. That suction is going to

pull you down. The weight of the material that is sinking is creating the suction that nobody, unless you have got a greater weight than that, is going to be able to survive. The problem is the suction is so great and the destruction is so ravaging that you and I cannot stay afloat. That is why you have heard me say, the only one that is going to fix this is when the man of sin comes on the scene. But he may not be here for a little while yet.

I do not know of more of a time that more people are confused, afraid, on the verge of panic. You listen to a thousand experts. Nobody tells you the same thing. Some people say, "Now is a good time to buy the stock market." Some people say, "Well, get your money out." Some people say, "You need to buy a house." Some say, "You need to keep your money." Everybody has got advice. Nobody is telling you the same thing. Everybody claims to be an expert, but then it was the very expert that got us into this mess in the first place.

Somebody said one time, "Well, you believe that Bible." I believe that the real salvation of this country and this world is in the great minds and the great professional minds that go on. I said, "Oh, really?" I said, "Let me ask you a question. So you are telling me that my salvation and everything that is saving the earth is in the professionalism and the great knowledge and the great professionalism and everybody else out there that is just kind of going along in life, and believe the Bible. We are just what? We are just laymen, and we do not have any things." "Yeah, that is basically it." So let me ask you a question. Who built the Titanic? Professionals. Who built the Ark? An amateur. I will stick with the amateurs anytime, anyplace, anywhere when they are based on the Bible.

Now, I want you to watch how the Bible takes away the smoke and makes this thing absolutely so simple for you to grasp. Bible says, "Get wisdom. With all thy wisdom, get understanding." Understanding is the key. Bill O'Reilly, Rush Limbaugh, Glenn Beck, Sean Hannity, all those great guys, they could not even get to this if their life depended on it. Now, if I had a radio program, here is how I would open it up. "Ladies and gentlemen, the world is in a mess today, is it not? You see your 401? It is down now in a 101. Next week it is going to be 01. They are going to take the 1 off of it. We are in a mess. Now, you are probably out there, I just listened to so-and-so over here, read his book, read this guy over here, this book, read this guy over here, this book, heard so-and-so on the news over here, read a newspaper this morning, read Wall Street, read Time Magazine, Newsweek. Everybody is saying the same thing or different things, and everybody does not know what they are talking about. Now, I am going to clear it up for you, ladies and gentlemen, because I am Bob Alexander, and my radio program is built on the, we not only do not have a no spin zone, we have got an absolute zone, and that is where we are going to go today."

"Now, you want to know why we are in a mess we are in? I will tell you why we are in a mess we are in, because the Bible operates on seven basic laws. We will call them principles. The whole world operates on those seven basic principles. There is not anything in this world, ladies and gentlemen, that does not operate on these seven basic principles. Because despite what all the theologians say and despite what all the atheists say, God is still God. I know he is still alive, I just talked to him. He is still okay. I am telling you right now that this world that you and I live

in, this physical flesh and blood world, when God wrote a supernatural book, he made the world and then he built the world and set it on seven laws. Principles."

"Now, you want to know what is wrong with America? Let me just tell you, in the last hundred and plus years, America has been actively involved in violating three of those major principles. For the last hundred plus years, the United States, your country, my country, have violated three of those seven laws. What you are seeing today is nothing more than the effect of a holy God with a righteous book that says, 'This is the way it runs.' And man says, 'Oh, watch us, we are going to run it this way.' But now, ladies and gentlemen, it does not stop there. That was not simple enough. You want to know why we are in the mess we are in? You want to know why we are not going to get out of this mess? You can kiss your 401k goodbye and everything out with it. You want to know why that this world is not going to turn around. This country is not going to get better. It is only going to get worse."

I am going to tell you why. Because for the last hundred years, we added a fourth law to that that we began to violate. A fourth principle that will be the final coup de grace. That means a bullet in the head. That is the accountability factor of Galatians chapter 6 verse 7.

Galatians 6:7

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

It simply states this. We have taken the accountability principle out of everything in this country, and you violated the basic principle, you do not, never, under any circumstances, reward bad behavior. Does it work in your family? It never will work in your family. You give your kids and give your kids and give your kids and give your kids and have no accountability in that. Then when your kids grow up and they turn out one way or the other, then you scratch your head and you say to yourself, "Man, what happened to them at 15, 16 or 17?" I will tell you what happened to them. You, their parents, put no accountability in their lives.

Every church has got them. I call them helicopter parents. Helicopter parents. You ought to get your little beanies with a little copter blade on it. Wear it to church. Wear it wherever you go. Let everybody know you are a helicopter parent. Do you know what a helicopter parent is? It is a parent that flies around, and every time their child gets in a jam, they throw them a rope. They are there to rescue them. They are there to drop food. They are there to drop supplies. Every time there is a whim, the helicopter parent comes flying with a rocket. Throw to rescue them from their dilemma.

What is wrong with this country? Most parents say to their kids, "I went through some terrible experiences in my life, and I do not want you to go through those same experiences," and then never wonder why they not only, your kids go through those same experiences, they turn out just like you with the end result. Do you know why? Because there is not enough. There has to be an accountability factor, and this country has lost its accountability factor. It has lost the concept. Simply put, when you break something, you have to pay to fix it. The principle in the Bible is it will always take longer to fix than it took for you to break it. That is just the principle of life.

This country, the economy is broke. The housing market is broke. The banks are broke. The automakers are broke. The airlines are broke. Every functional system in this country is broke. Why is that? It is because of one, not two, one, one violated principle that we just keep bailing out more money after bad money after bad money, and nobody is held accountable. The banks go broke. They say we are going to go bankrupt. Our government follows the situation ethics that the end justifies the means. So we have got to keep the banks afloat because if the banks go down, we will really have a mess. Oh, really? What do you call this? So what you do is you give the banks \$50 million, \$10 billion, \$100 million. What do they do? They do not lend any more people money. They give their CEOs \$50 million bonuses. They go down to Pebble Beach. They have their big conferences that cost them \$60 million. You go into your room at night, there are diamond cufflinks, nice watches, everything that you could ever want as incentives. Nothing changes.

Now, we just keep printing more money. We do not have any money, so we borrow the money, so we do this, so we do that, and it all comes down to this. I can tell you how to fix this country in 20 minutes. It is the same way you fix your family. Shut off the spigot. Hold them accountable. The automakers say, "Well, we are not selling any cars." Why should you? You are making cars that nobody wants now anyhow because you made bad business choices. Your workers are making more money than anybody on this planet. Your unions are running everything up the world, and then every car you build, you give your healthcare now cost \$1,500 per person. What are we going to do? Well, we will just add that to the price of the car. It has to stop somewhere, except the difference is, ladies and gentlemen, it is not going to stop. It is a basic, simple violation of one principle that will destroy your family, that will destroy this country, and will destroy you as an individual. If you do not learn, if this country does not learn, the concept of personal accountability, personal responsibility, shoot down the helicopter parents.

People cannot manage their budget. They bought a house way over their head. They never thought about when they had to pay for it. I was telling somebody this week, I never forget the first time I took my Calvi out to buy her first car, I bought both my kids their first car. After that, it is on your own. You pay your own insurance, you pay all this, I will buy your own car. We went out to look at a car, so we go down to a car place. That is where you go to look at a car. Anyway, we get down to a car place. I am over here in the used car section. She is over here in a new car section. She is looking at the leather seat, sniffing it. She is looking at the CD player. She is looking at the dashboard. She is looking at the wheels. She is looking at the tires. She is looking at the spoiler. She is looking at the convertible top. She is looking at everything except the price tag. That is how we are in life.

Somebody had to write a book, *The Day Accountability Died in America*. We pay out trillions of dollars with absolutely no accountability to fix what is wrong, and it keeps on going. We are doing nothing but treating the symptoms by throwing more money at the problem. It is the same way down in the inner city. "Well, what do we do to fight crime? Better education. More money. Better facilities." You know what? That only means that when you give them better facilities, they will go buy a better can of spray paint to put the graffiti on it. Putting money to something

never changed anything. It is the accountability factor that changes things. It is the principles involved.

Who is going to fix it? The government? If you want to read how to do your taxes, the government who is going to simplify our problem has a tax code book with 80,000 pages in it? It blows my mind what these people in this country allow to happen. It blows my mind that we are fast approaching a national debt of \$4 trillion. It blows my mind that God's people, you know what? You sit out with somebody today, anybody, and you say you are over dinner and you say to them, "You know what? Can you believe the national debt is over \$4 trillion?" And they say, "Oh yeah, that is bad." "Would you pass the taco sauce?" If you and I understood the concept of owing \$4 trillion, you would never sleep tonight.

Who do you think is going to pay for that? I will tell you who is going to pay for it. You are going to pay for it? Your kids are going to pay for it to 10 generations. It still is not going to fix anything because we have lost the accountability factor. Continued spending without the money. It does not mean anything to us. A trillion dollars has no meaning. It has no principal value to you and me. If you had one trillion dollars in \$1 bills and you counted it out, \$1 at a time for 20 to 24 hours, it would take you 9,500 years to count \$1 trillion in dollar bills. 9,500 years. If you take dollar bills and put them in a stack of a trillion dollars, it would go out to the moon, come back to the earth, go back to the moon, come back to the earth, and it is 250,000 miles. One trip, one way. Oh, but that is not enough. If you had \$1 trillion, you want a perspective? If you had \$1 trillion, you could go out today and buy \$45 million Ford Mustangs, brand new. \$45 million, \$1 trillion. But that is not enough. The last year alone, we now have added to that national debt, and it now stands at \$4 trillion. If you take every dime, every dollar we spent from the Declaration of Independence in 1776 up to the year 2000, 2008, you could count the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, the Mexican War, all wars, World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and every social, every disaster, every dollar and dime that we spent from 1776 to today does not reach \$4 trillion.

Jesus lived 2,000 years ago. It has been 2,000 years since His birth. If you had \$4 trillion and you spent a million dollars a day, not a year, not a month, a million dollars a day, since the time Jesus was born to now, \$1 million a day, you still would not come to \$4 trillion in debt. Do you know why it does not bother you and me? Just a number. We are like Joseph Stalin. He said, "When one man dies, it is a catastrophe. When six million people die, it is a statistic." Boy, that is so true. We get more important things. You and your kids, your kids and their kids, the 10 generations will be saddled with the debt that was spent and given to people in organizations that will never learn from their mistakes because they did not have to pay for their mistakes. There was no personal accountability, no personal responsibility, no personal stewardship, no self-control, no motivation, no personal motivation. Now, it would just spend more money.

Now, type that concept. Do you want to know what is wrong with you and me? Do you want to know why we do not have a victory in life? I will tell you. I will make you a great parallel. Just as most of the world looks at \$4 trillion and says, "Oh, it is just a figure." Most of God's people look at the principles that I gave you today and said, "Oh, that is just a verse." It means nothing to you. Just like there is no value to \$4 trillion, there is no value in your life, the Bible principles.

America's demise, it is not hard. It is not even confusing. It is not even complicated. You can take that same concept and apply it to global warming, the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, and anything else you want to apply it in life. It is just a violation of one major principle that compounds into other major principles by which God set seven principles by the world has to run. This country, any individual in any country at all, will never, will never, never get past it when they break the accountability principle. You will never survive in life. You will never, never, never, not today anyhow, you will never survive in life without an accountability system in your life.

Now that painted a pretty black picture. Just as I understand that this thing is a mess, I also understand that I am not worried about it. Because the same principles that tell me how it is a mess are the same principles that show me that it is okay for me. Because I belong to Him. Now I am not saying that the principles, when you get in a jam like this, here is what you have got to understand. It does not mean that you will not lose your house. It does not mean you will not lose your job. It will not mean that you do not lose everything physically that you have, but if you really understand the Bible and Bible principles, those things never really mattered much anyhow.

Somebody said, "Well what are you going to do if you lose your house and you have to live under a cardboard box in I-435?" Then you know what? Based on the principles, I know this. I will have the best cardboard box of anybody. I will have room to cut windows in mine. I will get a big refrigerator box that has a lid on it that I can make a sunroof on it. You will be in a little Tide box, or better yet, a toilet paper box. Because I believe no matter what the circumstances, the principles still apply. You see, I am not worried about my 401. I am not worried about anything out there. Because my principle says, Philippians 4:19:

Philippians 4:19

But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

You see, you want that verse to read, "My God should supply all that you want." And He never said He would. No, my dollar bills, it says, "In God we trust." Somebody says, "We want to take that off the money." I think you ought to. I do not trust in the government. I do not trust in the money. I trust in Proverbs 3:5-6:

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

That is where I am coming from. You say, "I am so worried. I am so burdened. Bob, what do I do?" 1 Peter 5:7:

1 Peter 5:7

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

That is what you do. That is what you do. You say, "Well, man, I am confused. Everybody is confused. What are we going to do?" I do not know what you are going to do, but I am going to do Philippians 4:11:

Philippians 4:11

Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

And if I wind out under I-335 bridge and lose my house, I guarantee you I will have the biggest cardboard box, double walled cardboard box, windows in it, and I will have a nice place. See, it is principles.

VII. Applying Biblical Principles: Understanding God

Now, let us do one more real quick here, and then we are going to be done. Let us take God. That is a good place to really start. How many times have we looked at God and said, "Boy, that is a complicated deal. Wow, God, you are so big, and I am so small. Wow, God, you are so mighty, and I am so weak. Wow, God, you are so complicated. Boy, you are so hard to understand." You said, "Oh, when I was 855, the year-aways are my way. I am going to be in the world." When I was 855, the year-aways are my way. My thoughts are my way. Yeah, but even in that, God gave you a way to get on the same wavelength with Him.

Do you know what God did? This complicated God, I gave the guys in the institute a while back, Proverbs 9:1, it says:

Proverbs 9:1

Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars:

I showed them that doctrinally, that those seven pillars there are the seven major truths that the Bible is built on. Historically, they would be the seven spirits of God the way it operated in the Old Testament. But inspirationally, it is God, see? It is God. You want to understand God? You think God is complicated? You think God is hard? You think God is tough? You think He is approachable? You think that you have to spend 30, 40, 50 years before you build a relationship with God? You think because Isaiah 55:8-9 said it was so hard, and He thought one way, you thought this way, that it was unapproachable? You think you cannot get there?

Let me tell you what God did. God broke Himself down into seven pillars. Seven being the number of perfection. You want to know God? Learn these seven pillars of God. Learn these seven principles about God, and you will know God. You want to understand Him? There are seven aspects to Him. He took His humongous complication about Himself and His eternalness, and He said, "You know what? I am going to make myself so even Bob Alexander could have a relationship with me. I am going to break myself down into seven pillars of wisdom." It is God's wisdom.

Do you know what the first pillar is?

- 1.) Truth.

Absolute truth. There is no relationship with God without truth. Truth that never changes. That is what gets me through tomorrow. That is what gets me through today. The fact that I am in a changing world with an unchanging book. The fact that if religion changes, or they change their ideas, or the country changes, and it is always in flux. It started out as a republic. Now it is in apostasy. It started out believing the Word of God. It winds up in apostasy without God anywhere. It changed, but the book never changes. Truth about everything in life, including ourselves.

- 2.) Forgiveness.

The second thing you have got, the greatest thing about God, and I think personally it is the greatest single aspect of God, and that is forgiveness. You want to understand God? You forgive how God loved you when you were unlovable. You want to understand God? You understand God's forgiveness of you and me. How God forgave me. Because it forms the basis for you forgiving others. Do you know why so many of God's people have so many problems in their lives? They do not even know this. They do not even have a clue. Do you know that Bible says in Matthew chapter 6 that if you and I are a Christian, and we do not forgive some other Christian for some other whatever they did, and we do not forgive them, you realize at that point on the basis God told you to forgive them on the basis He forgave you. At that point when you refuse to forgive somebody, God just quit forgiving you. And your daily little sins, even though you just keep piling them up and saying, "Oh Lord, forgive me," God says, "Sorry, cannot hear you."

I do not have any kids living at home, but you kids anymore, the little kids, I have got the grandkids come over, and it is true of them too. But it is true of my dogs, and I know it is true of your kids. My dogs have selective hearing. You relate to this. They know words. Now dogs cannot reason, and dogs cannot read. But dogs learn to associate, and they are smart in what they do. But my dogs know words. They can be sound asleep, and I will just, and I do a field test sometime with this, and I will say the word, "Treat." "Where, where, where?" I will say, "Want to go out?" "Out, out, out." I get them out there, and I say, "Come on, let us go, back in." "What did he say? What did he say?" Daisy said, "I do not think he said anything." I say, "Come on, guys, let us go, let us go, let us go in, let us go in, let us go in." They are just doing their own thing. And I say, "Hey, get in the house!" And they come. Magically, the selective hearing goes off.

Your kids are like that. I always tell parents when I am talking about having their kids obey them, how many times do you want to tell your kid to do something? Who said once? Who said once? Once. You do not even have any kids. They are that old. She is telling me something that I need to know about. One time, you are right, Donna, one time, one time. But how many times do they do it? I have watched you, people. "Come on, let us go. We are going to go." It is not like saying goodbye at our church when the service is over, the Bible is over. There are 45 minutes of staged goodbyes. We cannot just say, "Good to see you, sweetie, I will see you next." "You want to shake my hand?" "It is okay, good to see you, honey." "You want to do what you do not want to." "Good to see you." I have already got you cold. You have been spitting on me ever since I have

been up there. We cannot do that. It has got to be goodbye, bye, bye. Bye again, goodbye again. I watched you eat at the shelter. "Come over here. Now, I am not going to tell you again." He is in his head. "Yes, you are." Good. You have got brothers and sisters, here is what they do. "How many was that, Tim? That was six. Two more before we have got to start paying attention." I say I will have to say this. We are like little children. We not only have selective hearing when it comes to God, but do you know what else we all do? We all have this problem. We have selective forgiveness. We like to forgive some people and then choose not to forgive others, do we not? It is what we do. It is what we do best. And you cannot do that when it comes to God.

We are going to study Calvinism here in a couple of weeks. Do you know what Calvinism is? It is selective salvation. It is God chose you, it is God chose you, and He did not choose you. It is about you are going to heaven, you are going to heaven, you are going to hell, you are going to hell, you are going to heaven, you are going to heaven, you are going to hell. And God selected. Selected. I do not know what they sing in those churches. I mean, you imagine a song service, "Jesus loves me, sorry about you, you are not one of the chosen few." I do not know what they sing. "Life is now sweet and my joy is complete cause I am saved, saved." No, you are not. Oh, okay. That is heresy. But then slow, selective, forget it. You see, we are not Calvinists. We are not Calvinists in our theology. We are just Calvinists in our practice. We believe that God offered forgiveness to everybody, but we do not have to.

- 3.) Charity.

Do you know what the next one is? Charity. In 1 Corinthians chapter 13, if you have a King James Bible, it will say charity all down through that chapter. If you have any other Bible, it will take the word charity out and put the word love in. Do you know why? Because they do not understand the word charity. The word charity means unconditional love. Charity is the true word of love in the Bible. Charity is the word that God loves you without wanting anything back. That is hard for a society that has an ulterior motive behind everything it does.

- 4.) Light.

Do you know the next one? Light. You do not go four verses in Genesis chapter 1 where the Bible says God divided the light from the darkness. God's greatest attribute is contrast. Contrast.

- 5.) Giving.

Do you know what the next one is? Giving. Where forgiveness may be the single greatest aspect of God, giving is His fundamental character. We forget the fact that He loved so well of the world that He gave. God has been giving to you ever since you got saved. You do not even thank Him for it. God has spared you and given to you and taken care of you in situations where you did not even know about it. Some of you sit down and plop your carcass down and eat your hamburger, eat this or that, and never bother to thank your Father for giving to you what He did. Do you know what? Maybe that is why God is going to take it all away because maybe that is the only way we will learn to be thankful to God.

- 6.) Sacrifice.

Do you know what the sixth one is? Sacrifice. We have absolutely no understanding for sacrifice. That is the reason why we do not serve Him. We do not have an understanding of it.

- 7.) Longsuffering.

Do you know what the last one is? Longsuffering. Patience with others. Children patient with their wives. Husbands and dads patient with their children. Children patient with their parents. People patient with other people. Do you know why? Because God had patience for us. We needed to have with others.

Now you see, let me just say this, and here it is. If you want to know God, we are talking about knowing God. Oh, I just took a big old complicated God, brought Him right down to where you could grab Him. God down into seven concepts. Now, do you want to know God? Do you want to know God? Then get your concordance, sit down, and go through those seven things. Sit down and learn those seven things backwards and forwards. Take them wherever they go. Not only are they seven principles, but you will find 150 other principles that will add to those principles, and at the end of the day, you will know who He is.

Now, let us just take this, and here it is. Seven principles applied. You want to be like God? When I talk about being like Christ, being Christ-like, being like God, you want to be like God? All right. If you want to know God, then you learn these seven principles. If you want to be like God, then you live these seven principles. It is just that simple. Now, what is complicated about that? I gave you enough theology in the last hour and a half that you could skate through life the rest of your life if you are willing to take the principles and to see how they work.

VIII. Conclusion and Future Topics

We have got to close. This week we will continue on, and we will look at these things, and we will see how this thing works its way all the way down to the basic fundamental things in your life. How many of you own a gun? Let me see your hand. How many of you own 10 guns? How many own a 50 caliber? Here I ask, how many own a bazooka? The reason I ask that is this. I will show you how far I am going to take it down. You think owning a gun is your First Amendment right? Well, the First Amendment says you have a right to keep and bear arms. Second Amendment. That is right. Second Amendment is love your wife as yourself. I forgot that one. Second Amendment. How many believe that you have a right or the Second Amendment to keep your gun and have a gun? Good, good, good.

Now, forget the Second Amendment. Throw it out. You do not even need it. Do you know why? Because when we are all done with this, I am going to show you the principle in the Bible that says not only do you have a right to have one, but you better have one. I will show you where this thing goes. I am going to give you down there. I am going to show you the verses to show you how to treat your dog if you have got one. I am going to take you down there and show you how to treat your goldfish. I am going to take you and show you a principle to show you the most basic fundamentals in life. I am going to take you in a principle to show you why you should never have a bathroom outside in your yard and always have one in your house. I will show you a principle in the Bible that tells you why you should never hang a picture on the wall

in your house. I will show you some principles. I mean, we started big. We started with God bless America, and now we are down in with the God, and now when we get done with this thing and it all funnels down, it is going to be what are you packing?