

## I. The Book of Romans: Constitution of Christianity

I showed you when we started the Book of Romans, and we have kind of taken a little side tour based on a concept in Romans chapter 8 that dealt with principles. The Book of Romans is a book that really defines the principles for New Testament Christianity. I told you when we started that in the old days, they used to call the Book of Romans the Constitution of Christianity. It was the document that God wrote to you and me that really defines all of the doctrinal issues that you find in Christianity. And I told you that the importance of this book is unparalleled with any other book in the Bible.

Normally, Romans is one of those books that everybody will tell you—and I would have told you this also many years ago—that it was probably the hardest book. But we saw that the key to understanding the book is the way that it is written. How Paul approaches this, much like our founding fathers approached the writing of the Constitution, in a very legal format that really defines everything in terms that are very, very biblical and very, very doctrinal. And given the fact that we all live in a Laodicean church age and are not too biblical and have no doctrine, it is easy to see how people can get messed up with those books and how important they really are.

And I showed you how the way your New Testament begins to lay out. I showed you that you have Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Remember? Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John basically give you the historical books that bring you up to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Then you have the next book, and the book is the Book of Acts. The Book of Acts is basically what the title says. We call it the Book of Acts, but in reality, that book is called the Acts of the Apostles. And it is basically what the Apostles are doing during that intermediate time from Christ's death until Paul comes on the scene in relationship to God dealing with the nation of Israel.

We talked about the Book of Acts, and I showed you how the Book of Acts basically transitions you from the historical books—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—which primarily deal with the nation of Israel, and then bring you into the Church Age. You have Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, historical books. You have Acts, the transitional book, and then by the time you get to the Book of Acts, you are in the Church Age. And so it is no accident that the next book that God put in the order of the books in your New Testament is the book that defines what the Church really is all about and gives you the fundamental doctrines by which everything that we believe is based on: that would be the Book of Romans. And then after that, you have the books that are written to the churches. After that, you have the books that are written to the individuals, and then it goes on from there.

I showed you how the Book of Romans breaks down into four natural sections for better understanding. I told you how chapters one through chapter five focus on the historical aspect. Chapters six through chapter eight—and that is where we are at right now in chapter eight—deal with the great doctrines of the Church. He begins to lay it out in chapter six and brings it all the

way up to chapter eight. Chapters nine, ten, and eleven deal with a prophetic sense of what God is going to do doctrinally in the future with the Church and the nation of Israel, putting that all into perspective. And then the fourth section, chapters twelve through chapter sixteen, is the practical section. I really cannot wait to get to this section, but there is so much that we have to deal with, it will be a while before we get there. It shows you and I how, as a New Testament Christian, we are to live our lives. It shows us what our attitude should be toward everything that we are supposed to be as Christians, and it really gives you the summation of everything that we have, the way we need to look at things, and the way we need to conduct ourselves. That is how the book breaks down.

## II. Review of Romans 8: Redemption of the Body and Doctrinal Truths

Remember last night at the institute, I told you I gave you a verse in Hebrews as we were looking at it. I told you that the single greatest concept that I have invested my life in for forty-plus years of studying the Bible has been understanding the term that everything—and I showed you the passage last night—I showed you how everything in the Bible falls down and breaks down into a pattern. Finding those patterns are absolutely key to understanding your Bible. I give you those patterns all the time. I even mention those patterns in the process of what we are looking at and what we are trying to accomplish in it.

And then I showed you how, in these four sections which are the pattern of the Book of Romans, each chapter has its own pattern and it breaks down. That is what we have been doing, coming through each chapter of the Book of Romans, putting it into the context of the overall book, but then looking at it chapter by chapter. That brings us up, or brings us back I should say, to where we are at in Romans chapter 8.

And I have told you this before: Romans chapter 8 is probably the greatest chapter in the Book of Romans. It is certainly the weightiest chapter because I do not know of another chapter in the Bible that has more doctrinal material in it that you and I need to know. We have come pretty much halfway through it. I told you that the theme of Romans chapter 8 is the redemption of your body. It shows you that there are two adoptions, and it lays them out very clearly. Something that is totally unknown to most of God's people today, and this is why so many people struggle with their own salvation. You would be surprised how many people do not understand how they got saved, and consequently, because of that, every day they are afraid that they are going to do something that God is going to take their salvation back from them. Of course, the Book of Romans, and especially Romans chapter 8, puts that to rest if you are paying attention and studying the Word of God.

It shows you that there are two adoptions. You were adopted once spiritually—that is the day you got saved—and the theme of Romans chapter 8 shows you there is another adoption coming, and that is going to be the adoption of your physical body when you get a glorified body just like Christ. As we were coming through Romans chapter 8, that forced us—if you remember—to look at some more great doctrinal teachings that many, many people are messed up on. I talked

to you about the heresy of amillennialism and postmillennialism. How these two false teachings come into churches and may come into Christians' lives because they do not understand the Book of Romans, and how the Bible's approach to the Second Coming of Christ is what we call a pre-millennial approach. He is coming back before the millennium, whereas the postmillennialist thinks that he is going to make the world a better place to live, and when he gets the world all cleaned up, then Christ comes back. That is not ever going to happen. And then the amillennialist, he believes there is no millennium at all, and it just continues on, and we just get better and better through a process of Christian evolution, I guess. But we know now that the pre-millennial doctrine is the right one. We looked at the two that are wrong, and we talked about the great doctrine of the rapture of the Church, which is fast becoming a doctrine that most churches do not believe today. We talked about that. How, in the Bible, when we talk about a rapture of the Church, we explained all that and showed you how it is a Bible doctrine and always has been.

Then we looked at the aspect of you and me as a Christian becoming a joint-heir with Jesus Christ. I mean, that is probably the single greatest thing in this chapter, and what it means to understand the fact that someday, if you are saved this morning, someday you are going to reign with Him for all of eternity in a glorified body. You know, when I say things like that today, with most of God's people, it just does not resonate at all. It does not mean anything. It is like, "Oh, okay, let us get home so we can see the ball game." "Oh, okay, well, let us go home so I want to do this or I want to do that." That is the single, that is the whole crux of everything that we are as Christians. That is the end. That is, as Paul said in the Book of Hebrews, the sum of all matters. It is going to end the day you and I get glorified with Christ and become a joint-heir. The single greatest concept in all of the Bible that is probably the most unknown concept in all of the Bible.

Then we looked at verse 18, which was a great principle and a great promise that puts it all in perspective. I call it a reality verse where he says:

*Romans 8:18: For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

And that is a reference to you understanding what we go through right now. The trials and the tribulations, the heartaches, the things that we struggle with, are all part of the process. Someday, when you stand there with Him and you look back with the mind of Christ firmly encased in your glorified body—which you have in a book right now—and you look back and you understand God's program of eternity past and you understand God's program of eternity future, and in crystal clarity you understand where you are at in your life and relationship to it, it will all come into focus for you. I guess, as a pastor or dealing with people, that is the single hardest thing to get people to do in their life: to stay focused on why we are doing what we are doing. Staying focused on what our job is after we get saved, and that is a great principle.

Then we talked about verses 19 through 24. We talked about the curse on planet Earth, how the animals also are looking for the manifestation of the sons of God. We talked about Isaiah 11 and how that takes place when Christ comes back in the millennium. Then—and this is where we got into the principles—we talked about verses 26, 27, and 28. We talked about our prayer life, and I

showed you the Bible says there are three infirmities we all have, and one of them is not knowing how to pray. And we took a very lengthy study on prayer and laid that out in all the areas and put it all together. Then we took that and we went from that into the principles and showed you how the principles apply, and we probably were there for four, five, or six weeks. That is where we are at, and it brings us back up to speed.

### III. Addressing Heresy: The Case of Calvinism

Now today, we are in Romans chapter 8, verses 29 and 30, and today we are going to start to look at something that in time you really need to grasp and understand. Part of my job in equipping you is not only to teach you what is right in Christianity, but also to teach you what is wrong with Christianity. It would be a perfect world if everything that was taught out there—if you just turned on the radio or sat down and listened to a preacher or listened to a Christian—it would be a wonderful situation if everybody taught the truth and everybody laid the Bible out the way it was supposed to be laid out. But obviously, we know that that is not true. It is not just something that is relevant in our time. If you go back through the history of the Church, you will find that in every age and dispensation of the Church, there is always some heretical teaching that has been taught that has messed people up and kept people from ever getting the truth of God and what God wants for them.

It was true in Paul's time. In Paul's writing the letters to the churches or the letters to the young men like Timothy, Philemon, and Titus. He is warning them and telling them that there are already people at work who want to corrupt the Word of God and destroy the basic, pure teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ found in the Word of God. And so we are going to start and look at a teaching today that has probably messed up a lot of Christians down through history. And it is something that starts back in the middle of the 15th, 16th, 17th century, and then began to develop itself through there, and then kind of went under by the wayside for a while, and then resurrected itself in the last 50 years, and now is becoming a strong thing with many of God's people, and it has got a lot of people messed up.

And I might say that this study is going to be a little different than normal because I am not just giving this to you. For the last three or four years of our ministry, I have had about 15 or 16 people that have either emailed me, called me, or I have met at some point, wanting me to do something on this that they could have as a definitive something for their own church or for their people in their church. I have requests all the time, and I could spend all day long doing it, and I just do not have time to do it. I have requests all the time that people will send in to me and say, "Hey look, I want to study this." "Will you make me a tape of just this particular thing and send it out to me so I can study it?" I could do that all day long, and I have about 15 or 16 people that over the last couple of years have been asking me to do something on the concept of Calvinism, on the concept of what we know as predestination, on the concept of what is known today as Reformation Theology, because it is a fast thing that many, many churches are being sucked into.

It is something in time, if you are going to grow to some point in your life, you are going to embrace it some way, or some shape, or some form. You are going to run into somebody that believes in the concept of Calvinism. You are going to run into somebody who believes in the

concept of predestination, and I wanted to define it for you today, not only for you, but for the folks that have been waiting for this. I kept telling them, I said, "You know what, I am in Romans, just give me some time, I will get there. I do not have time to do it now, I have got to take care of my own people." Well, the time has come. But to people out there that have loved ones that are caught up in this, I know of one lady in particular that just bugged me to death, that her daughter and her son-in-law are caught up in this. And they do not seemingly have any answers for them. And of course, we know the answers are in the Bible, and that is what we are going to talk about today. And so we are going to deal with this for the next couple of weeks.

Now my goal is simple. I do not like to do anything halfway. And so what I want to do, since I am already here and we are dealing with this, I want to deal with this in the proper way where, when we are done with this, we have everything laid out so that you have the tools, that you are equipped to go home and study this. In time, you are going to have to learn every heresy out there. And I am not going to have a heresy class where we just go through all the different heresies. I can do it in the course of what we are doing when we are studying naturally through the Book of Romans. Because sooner or later, every heresy that you are going to get into is going to bang up against something in Romans, because Romans is the structure for what we believe. We have already looked at the heresy of amillennialism and postmillennialism; we should have those down. We already talked about the heresy that there is no rapture, so that one is already done. So this is just one more in a series as we work through Romans, and here again in chapter 8, verses 29 and 30, we are faced up with the word and the concept of predestination. And we want to define it for you today.

#### IV. The Nature of Heresy and Its Impact

Now let me talk to you about heresy. And when you talk about somebody who is into heresy or a heretic—a heretic is a person who teaches heresy—you are going to find that heresy comes in two formats. You are going to find heresy that is outside Christianity. That kind of heresy will be the heresy that you have got to be baptized to go to heaven. See, that is a heresy. If you believe you are going to have to be baptized to go to heaven, you are going to split hell wide open. That is not a teaching in the Bible. Baptism does not save you. You have people who believe you have got to work your way to heaven. And of course, that is a heresy. But those are heresies outside of Christianity. In other words, those are heresies that will send you to hell.

Then you have another form of heresy: a heresy that is within Christianity. And that is the heretical teachings that come into the body of Christ that will not send you to hell but will certainly mess you up when it comes to the Bible. Hey, it goes back to the thing I have told you many, many times. If the devil cannot get you into one heresy that sends you to hell, and you get saved in spite of that, then he will try to get you into another heresy that will keep you from growing or being effective. That is just the way it is. But you need to understand, in dealing with people and dealing with concepts, that you are going to run into heresy.

Now our first impression of that would scare us. Or we would think, or every pastor would say, "Oh, I want to keep heresy out of my church." "I do not want heresy creeping in." You know, there is no real danger in heresy. In fact, Paul takes the opposite position. He says that heresy is a

good thing. And I guess it is one of those things that you are always going to have, so you might as well figure out how to use it to your own advantage. And there is a lot of truth to that. He says in 1 Corinthians 11:19, and we talked about this last week, he talks about the fact that:

*1 Corinthians 11:19: For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.*

And you have got to remember that Paul said that heresies are a good thing. He said, "There must also be heresies among you." And the reason why heresies are important, and the reason why a church that is a New Testament local church does not have to worry about heresy creeping in, is because they have such a strong stand on teaching the Bible and Bible truth and Bible doctrine that heresies have no penetration point.

You know what? You find in the early 1st and 2nd century a lot of bad teaching creeping up. You find the concept of water baptism for salvation. You find the concept of a lot of baptizing babies and a lot of concepts that began to bring itself upon the Church. But when you look at the early true Church, the people that followed a guy like Nestorius, or the people who followed the guys like the Manichaeans, or the people who founded the guys like the early 1st century Church. You know, those guys never had a problem with heresy. You know why they never had a problem with heresy? Because they took such a strong stand on the Bible that they had, and they taught it, that heresy has no way to get in.

You know why a church does not have to be afraid of heresy? Or maybe I should say this: Do you know when a church needs to be afraid of heresy? When they quit teaching and preaching the Bible. The thing that keeps heresy out of this church will be the strong teaching and belief and the doctrinal fundamentals that we keep pounding into your head week after week that does not let the heresies ever take root. And in that case, it is a good thing because Paul says that heresies really show you who the real good guys are and show you who the bad guys are. Paul said in Romans 16:17, he said there are going to be men who come in who bring in false teaching. There are going to be men who come in and try to divide the Church. You know what Paul said? He said, "You mark those men." You mark them. You mark them. He told you in Philippians 3:17 basically the same thing. He says that you have an object lesson right before you, and you do not have to be afraid of heresy coming into your church, hurting your church, or hurting people, when you have a whole church full of people who know the Bible, understand the Bible, and realize what the Bible teaches in a doctrinal format.

Now that is my job, and that is why when it comes to the Bible, I am not wishy-washy with you. When it comes to the Bible, I do not care if you like what I teach or you do not like what I teach. I am going to give you the truth and tell you what the Bible says because I am not interested in making your day. I am interested in making you strong when it comes to the Bible. I want you to stand alongside of me and help keep the Church in the right doctrinal frame of mind that keeps the heresies out. And the day you have got to worry is the day when I get up here and start giving you some wishy-washy sermon that means absolutely nothing to you anymore. Of course, that will never happen. But the bottom line is simply this: That is exactly where you need to be.

I see the same thing with people coming up in Christianity. You know, years ago, I think we talk about young people and young people being destroyed by the world and young people being destroyed by the things of the world. Let me tell you something. Let me tell you in Christianity what destroyed more young people than what they ever thought about, and it was a concept that started back in the 60s and came up through the 70s and the 80s, and is pretty much prevalent today: the Christian school movement. I guarantee you the Christian school movement destroyed more of God's children than anything the world ever had to offer. You know why it did? Because parents thought that the Christian school was the answer to raising their kids right. They were afraid of the fact that if they let their kids go to public school, they would get destroyed because we all know what is in the public school.

Let me ask you a question. You that like to eat salads. You that like to eat tomatoes. Or for those of you that are classical, "tomatoes." Let me ask you a question. Which is better? Hot house tomatoes or the ones that are really big, beefy ones that you grow out in your backyard? The garden ones, right? You know what? There is something. I do not trust hot house tomatoes. They are not as big. They are not as bulky, and they do not have the same texture. You know why? Because we thought somebody grew them in a hot house, and growing them in a hot house, oh, you may have protected them from the bugs. You may have protected them from the elements, the rain, and the frost. But you know what? Sometimes those are things that you need to have in raising tomatoes that makes the tomatoes better than the hot house ones.

You know what? You are under a false concept if you think you have to keep all the things of the world out of your child's life. You are making a big mistake. You know what you are going to do? You are going to raise up a child that has no concept of the world, has no concept of interrelationship with other worlds. They were raised in a hot house. You either homeschooled them or you planted a little Christian school. And when they go out into the world—and sooner or later they are going to have to—you know what they are going to do? They are going to collapse like a broken house of cards. You know why? Because your whole life you raised them in a hot house. Our society has turned that way. You ever notice in the little kids' thing that nobody loses anymore? Nobody loses anymore. And we think that in our "green" society, where everything has to be positive, that we do not want this little child to feel like he is a loser. Well, let me tell you something. All my life as a little guy, I lost everything I did. And look what it made me. Losing is a part of life. Losing builds character. Losing is something that builds determination that next time I am going to succeed. And you have got to understand that sooner or later the world is going to come knocking at your door.

You know what? People are afraid of heresy like parents are afraid of the public school system. And the truth of the matter is, if parents saw the public school system for what it really is, it is a tool to train your child. Use the system against itself. If you are a parent, you know what you do? And if in a school system, in a public school, you as a parent get involved. You be there. You help that teacher. You put the influence in. You make sure. And then when your kid comes home and says, "Johnny said this," or "Mary said this," or "Tommy did that," or "This happened at school today," or "This happened," then you have a comparison to show them what the Bible says and use the system against itself. In other words, do the same thing that we are supposed to

do with heresy. It is not a bad thing if you use it the right way. It is only a bad thing when you do not use it. You have to fear it when you do not know how to use it against itself. And as a parent, you have to fear the world when you do not understand how to use that world system against itself to help your child become what it needs to become. You do not isolate your child from the world. You insulate your child from the world. And there is a process to do that. I am not going to isolate you from heresy. I am going to insulate you from heresy by the biblical principle. Why? Because when you use the system against itself, it proves who is right and who is wrong. And it is a good thing. It is a good thing. It is heresy that shows you the truth. It establishes the real from the phony.

And it is like the Bible says in Ephesians 4:14, where God's people are blown about by every wind of doctrine. Everything that comes down the line. Every new thing you see on the Internet, every new thing that somebody says, "Oh," we run out and we get worried because of the fact that we do not know how to deal with it. And I am telling you, this is the reason why this church, or you, if you are equipping yourself, never have to be afraid of heresy. You never have to be afraid of a heretic. You never have to be afraid of a heresy. And as a pastor, I certainly do not worry about it ever creeping into this church. You know why? Because truth needs no defense. Truth will stand on its own two feet. Heresy will not. Heresy will not. That is why you are going to find that in every heresy you have, they have to add something to it. They just cannot stay with the Bible. When I teach you, you do not see me running outside and adding something to prop up what I want to believe. Truth is truth, and truth needs no defense because it will stand on its own two legs. And that is the approach you have to take.

I gave it to you last week. The answer is real simple. It was in Proverbs 20:21, and I hope you got it down in your Bibles by this week, but you probably do not. And that was the fact that God—the whole thing, this whole concept of everything we do—was that in everything that God gave you, that you would know from God the certainty, the certainty, the certainty of the words of truth. You know what is true and what is not. You know what is certain and what is not. And you need to know in time all of the heresy. We do not have time to go through them, and as I said, I am not going to go through a "heresy 101" class, but as we naturally come through the Book of Romans, we are going to deal with it. It is my job of equipping you. And in this particular case, there is really not much to it. And I have never had much respect or thought much of anybody who followed the line of Calvinism, and I am going to explain it to you here in just a moment.

I mean, there are some religions that you would get into, or some heresies you would get into, that are very damaging heresies and are very hard to deal with. If you deal with a Roman Catholic, you are dealing with somebody who has, what, almost 1600 years of tradition behind them that you have got to unweave. If you deal with somebody that you know is into Buddhism, you know Buddhism comes into effect as all the Far East religions. Comes into effect after 606 BC, when the time that the Gentiles start, and that is when all those religions come on. So you have got something there that is very entailed and may take you a long time to work through that. But you talk about Calvinism. Calvinism, if Calvinism would send you to hell as Roman Catholicism would, I would say that going to hell with Catholicism is going in a Cadillac, and

going to hell with Calvinism is going in a VW without an engine. Not much to it. And of course, we are going to show you how everything works under itself.

## V. The Five Points of Calvinism

Now let me explain this to you, and I want you to see this because we are going to do this in two parts. Now the heresy of Calvinism, or what we know it today as Reformation Theology, that is built around the concept of predestination, is not hard to grasp, and I want to basically just lay it out for you. And I am saying this now because I have got a lot of people out there that want this, so the bottom line is this. I am going to address some of my remarks to you. And at the same time, I know I have got about, oh I do not know, maybe 10 or 12 guys in my life around the country that are caught up in the heresy of Calvinism, and I know I am talking to you now. I know you guys listen to the website and get everything up there, so maybe this will help you. Do not take it personal, but if you want to take it personal, that is okay with me.

Now Calvinism is based on a five-point system. I want to talk very briefly about this five-point system. I do not want to spend a lot of time on it because it is pretty much worthless. And this five-point system is what I told you that all cults do. This five-point system is a fabrication of Calvin in his own mind. Calvin did exactly what the Roman Catholic Church did. The Roman Catholic Church is built on five concepts. You take any one of those five concepts away, you do not have a Roman Catholic Church. And I am going to give them to you next week. The Roman Catholic Church is built on five concepts. You take any one of those five concepts away, and you cannot have a Roman Catholic Church. Now in the Roman Catholic Church situation, none of those five are found in the Bible. You could not find any of the five that that church has built itself on anywhere in the Word of God. Calvinism is built on five principles and five concepts. And just like Roman Catholicism, you could not find these five concepts in the Bible with a laser beam and a flashlight. They are simply not there. They are nowhere to be found.

People talk about Calvinists are big on the sovereignty of God. I have never found the term 'sovereignty of God' anytime in my Bible. Calvinists are big on the sovereignty of God, and they do not think about free will because Calvinism basically takes your free will away from you. I had a guy say to me one time, he said, "So you do not believe in the sovereignty of God?" "You believe in free will?" And I said, "That is correct." He said, "Well, I do not understand that." I said, "I would not think you would." He said, "Well, I do not understand what you mean." I said, "I never find the sovereignty of God one time in the Bible. I find free will 17 times in the Bible by itself." Now I do not know what you go for in authority, but I am not going to believe something that I cannot find in the Bible when I find the opposite to it 17 times. And I am surely not going to believe you who tells me to believe in the sovereignty of God when they are not in there, when I find free will 17 times. It does not take a rocket scientist to figure that out. I am a Bible believer. Alright, now here are the five points that are not in the Bible, but Calvinism is based on.

1. Total Depravity The first one is the term 'total depravity.' Now, given we talk about man being totally depraved, and you have heard me say that, talk about the total depravity of man. That term is not found in the Bible. You will never find the term 'total depravity.' And at the same

time, you will never find—when I talk about total depravity—I am not talking about the same way that a Calvinist does. And this is another thing you have got to watch out for. Cults will do this. Cults will say something that sounds close to the truth so it pairs itself off as being true, but when you really examine it, it is not the truth. Now let me tell you the difference between my total depravity and their total depravity. My total depravity is this: I believe we are all totally depraved. I believe that in me there is nothing good. I believe in you there is nothing good. I believe that you and I are absolutely totally without Christ, destined to go to hell and burn like a torch for a billion, trillion years and all beyond that for all of eternity. I do not think there is anything in your life and my life that has anything good, or that you and I on our own cannot get to God. The Bible says there is none that understand it. There is none that seek after God, and in Romans, it gives a whole list of our throats and our minds and our hearts and everything down the line which is wicked. You know how you and I got saved? We did not get saved on our own. We got saved because God, in spite of my depravity, came down and told me about His Son dying on the cross. If it was left to me to find God, I never would have found Him. You know how I found Him? Because the Bible says, "The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost." You know how I got saved? Because He was the true light, the light of every man that is coming into the world. On my own, I would have never found Him because, yes, I am totally depraved in everything that I do. So it was God who had to make the initiation of coming to touch me, or I would have never gotten saved. Now a Calvinist teaches total depravity this way: He says that total depravity is based on the fact that you are so depraved that God will not come and touch you at all. You do not have the ability that when God does come to you, you do not have the ability to respond to it. You see, when I was an unsaved man living like the things of the world and doing all those things, there was a time in my life—and you got saved the same way. There was a time in my life when God touched me, showed me, dealt with me in some fashion, and at some point in my life I made the choice that I am going to follow that. It may have taken me a while, it may take you a while, but in time you get there. A Calvinist, when he teaches total depravity, he says this: He says it does not matter if God touches you because you do not have the ability to respond back to Him after He touches you. So he says, because you do not have the ability to respond back to God, then God chose some to be saved and some to be lost because you do not have the ability to choose. And that is where it starts with total depravity. You do not have the ability to choose God when God first touches your life, so therefore God made all the choices for us and chose some to go to heaven and chose some to go to hell.

2. Unconditional Election Well, that brings us to our second point: unconditional election. And here you have the second point, which is not found in the Bible: the heretical teaching that before Genesis 1:1, because you and I could not make the choice when God touched our lives, God came down and chose. He looked out into the future; He saw every man and every woman that ever lived. And because you and I did not have the ability to choose God after He touched us, after He illuminated our life through the Holy Spirit of God—because we were so totally depraved it did not have the ability to respond to that—He simply chose. And He said, "You are going to," He said, "Heaven, hell, heaven, hell, heaven, hell, heaven, hell,

heaven, hell, heaven, hell, heaven, hell, heaven, hell." And some of you are going to heaven and some of you are going to hell.

3. Limited Atonement Now that brings us to the third point, which is called limited atonement. Limited atonement is based on the first two, which simply says—this heretical teaching says—that when Christ came down, He did not die for everybody on the cross; He only died for the ones that He chose. So His atonement on the cross is limited, limited to the ones that He chose. And that is the limited atonement. Certain of the elect, certain of the people, only ones that are going to get to go are the ones He chose. The rest of you, tough apples, you are out.
4. Irresistible Grace The fourth one is irresistible grace. That is simply this: If you have been chosen, you have no say in it. If you have been chosen, you have been predestined to be saved. And you are going to get saved. If you are chosen, if you are one that God picked, you have no say in it; the grace of God is irresistible to you. You cannot resist it. And at some point before you die, you are going to get in. And that is irresistible grace. Now the irresistible grace is up against the limited atonement. If you are lost, you cannot do anything to get in. And if you are one of the chosen, you are going to get in, and there is nothing you can do about it to get out. That is how it works.
5. Perseverance of the Saints You have the perseverance of the saints. That is the fifth one. And that, Tim Peley, is the continuance of the grace of God in our lives that you have to persevere all the way through your life. And of course, that has nothing to do with New Testament Christianity and the way that the Bible lays out the word perseverance.

Now those are the five concepts. Now let me break it down and make it real simple for you and show you how this figment of Calvin's imagination and everybody in the process comes into being. Alright, here it is. Before Genesis 1:1. God looked down in the future and saw all mankind. Because we were totally depraved and we could not get to God, God said, "What is the point?" "Why should I come down and light anybody?" "Because nobody has the chance." "I will just choose some people unconditionally." And some people He will choose unconditionally. They will not be able to resist My grace, and they will get saved. We will call them the elect. There are some that will not. And I am not going to choose them. But when Christ died on the cross and showed up at some point later, then it was a limited atonement. Christ did not die for everybody. He only died for those whom God chose before the foundation of the world, and everybody else is out of luck.

I do not know what kind of church service they have, but it has got to be the deadest thing you ever saw in your life. I mean, what do you do when you bring a visitor? You check them at the door to see if they are one of the elect or not? What are you saying? "Jesus loves me." "Sorry about you." "You are not part of the chosen few?" I mean, what is wrong with a song like you sang this morning? What does it have to do with it? Nothing. I mean, the joy is gone. I mean, what do you do when you leave a person and you think, "Now, well, I am sorry, you are just not one of us?" Of course, that is the whole concept. If you are the chosen, it is irresistible grace. If you are not, then there is nothing you can do about it one way or the other. You are lost and you are on your way to hell. So I guess, "Eat, drink, and be merry, because tomorrow you are going to die." And then the elect ones have to persevere. Now that is what you basically find with a few variations.

## VI. The "Back Door" Strategy and Discerning Fools

Now, let me tell you what you have here. Now next week, I am going to show you how to make an absolute fool out of a Calvinist. Everything in this world, like I said, when you believe the Bible and you stay with the Bible, the Bible stands on its own two feet. Any heresy that you get into, any heresy that you are up against. You will find that because it is a man-made deal someplace along the line, what they have done is they put up a great front, and that front just looks magnanimous. That front is just absolutely stupendous. That front looks like it is the real deal. What every heresy has forgotten and not dealt with is the back door, because every heresy out there has a back door that somebody is forgetting to guard—the back door of a truth that will destroy what they put up in the front. For you as a child of God, you need to learn where the back doors are. You need to learn how to destroy and dismantle any heresy on the face of this planet. Paul said, "Mark them, expose them, and then you use them to teach others." And like I said, next week we are going to get into the details, and I am going to show you how that if you ever, if somebody ever says to you, "I am a Calvinist," you ought to say back to them, "Well, I would not tell anybody that."

Now last week I gave you a great principle. I hope you got it in your Bible in Proverbs 15:28. Remember what it was? Last week I told you, never make an issue when somebody has a problem with you, somebody has an issue with you, you never make that issue between you and them. You never take it personal. If you are in the ministry and you are doing God's work, then you understand first and foremost that any attack on you is not against you; it is against the Book and God that you are serving in the ministry. So do not take it personal. And I gave you Proverbs 15:28. It says, never make an issue somebody has with you a personal thing. Always make the issue between them and the Bible. That is what you want to do. You have got to always remember that. Well, in the same thing, that is what you do with somebody who is teaching heresy or is a heretic. And you make it between them and the Bible, and you personally stay out of it. I will show you how to do this next week. But this is how you deal with anybody who is teaching something wrong or is messed up.

And then I have got to give you two more principles here. I know we are in Romans 8, but you have got to see this. Come back to Proverbs 26. You have got to get this. You have got to get this. You have got to operate on these two principles more than anything else that I do. These two are very discerning principles, and these are absolutely key in you dealing with people. And I do not expect you to fully understand it all this morning when I give you this, but it is a place to start, and you can see how it works.

Now Proverbs 26:4-5 is probably an incredible, one of the greatest verses in the Old Bible of dealing with people and your attitude about it. Now look at 26:4-5. The first verse says:

*Proverbs 26:4: Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.*

I want you to look at that very carefully. Let us read it again. "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him." In other words, you are supposed to be smarter than him. In this case, you do not answer him. Now look at verse 5. Oh, just the reverse.

*Proverbs 26:5: Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.*

Now see, two verses that simply contradict each other. One of them says, "Answer not a fool," and the other one says, "Answer a fool." And it looks like a contradiction, does it not? But it really is not because it is showing you that there are two kinds of fools.

Now a fool in the Bible is defined in Psalms and Proverbs as somebody who does not have the truth of God. It can be an unsaved man who is lost without Christ. It can also be a saved person who does not have the knowledge of God. Now there are two kinds of fools. Now when you say a man, when you talk to, nobody wants to be called a fool. But in a Bible sense, a fool is not always a bad thing. A fool is somebody who just has fooled himself, you see. We use it in a much worse connotation. A fool is somebody who has been fooled, see. It does not mean it is your substandard plant life IQ. It just means you have been fooled. Now the key is this: How have you been fooled? Because there are two types of fools. There is a fool that is somebody who has just been fooled, who when you sit down and you open up the Bible and you show them truth, they respond right to it. Then there is the other type of fool who you can open up the Bible all day long, and all he wants to do is fight and argue with you. In other words, one fool is teachable and the other fool is unteachable.

Now let us put it in context of which one is which. Verse 4: "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like him." Here is a Bible study. Here we are. Some visitor comes in, maybe you bring him. And that visitor comes in and you say, "My friend has got a question he would like to ask." And I would say, "Okay, go ahead." We will let you be the first good to you here tonight. In fact, because you are our guest, you can pick any book out of the bookstore back there. You know, be really nice to him. And he asks the question. It is totally off the wall. He asks the question, oh, I do not know. He asks the question, "Really? If the Bible is really true, where did Cain get his wife?" "Because the Bible says that there is anybody else around." "So if the Bible is really true, and I have trouble believing the Bible, if the Bible is really true, where did Cain get his wife?"

Now my first answer back is going to break the ice because now you see there is a little tension. Because I know that the Bible is true. Now you brought somebody into the Bible study. Who is somebody who has got some legitimate questions? And now, you know, and I know you are out there, you are all stiffened because now you are saying, "Oh, you just, what is Bob going to do?" I mean, that pulpit, he could jump over that pulpit and tear that guy's lungs out. He does not need this kid down that low who he is fooling with, you see? While he could rip this kid up and beat him out there, he is not going to take my friend out and hook him on the back of his truck and drag him around the parking lot and chain around his ankle, did he? Absolutely not. No, no. We are going to have Joe and those guys just shoot him on the way out the door. That is all. No. No. The verse says, "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him." I perceive in this kid that he is not—he has got a legitimate question. And I am going to break the ice and I am going to say, "Well, you know, where did Cain get his wife?" Let me think. "Oh, I know, from his father-in-law." Now, that is not the answer he wants, but I am breaking the ice. See?

Now, when I take that kid through and show him the genealogies between the chapter over here and over here, and show you that by the time Adam and Eve are kicked out of the garden, by the time Cain takes a wife, there is probably what, 300 years? It is just a turn of your page on the Bible, but when you come down through the genealogies and the timelines, you have got 300 years of kids, of people having kids. But that does not—you are not told that in the Bible because that is not the point. The point is the story that he is trying to tell about Cain and Abel. But once you explain it to the kid, he says, "Oh, okay, I see now." "Well, that makes a lot of sense." You see, he was a fool, but I did not answer him according to his folly because if I would have answered him according to his folly, then I would have been just as foolish as he was because I would not have the discernment to see, "This kid is not a problem kid." This kid has a legitimate question and he wants to know, and when you give him the truth, he will probably take it, and if he will not take it, he will work on it, and you can give him more truth, and he is a teachable person. Have you ever seen people like that? You people meet people like that all the time, all the time. You tell me about them. So there are some fools who have been fooled, and when he comes with a question, notice, "Answer not a fool according to his folly." I do not answer him according to his folly, I give him an answer from the Bible, okay? But I do not get caught up in his folly because I know he is a teachable kid who has a legitimate question, and I discern the fact that this kid is not coming in with a private agenda. He really wants to know, and he is going to get everything he needs. Afterwards I will probably walk him over and I will say, "You know what, here is a book." "I told you you could have a book, you can still have a book, but here is another book you can have." "This will really help you figure it out." "You know what else?" "If you really want to go through and see how this thing works, you know, there is a Bible study tonight, I did not have time to go through everything, I will help you put it through." You go out to him, you give him everything that he needs, that if he wants the truth, he responds to the truth. That is the first kind of fool. And you do not answer him according to his folly.

Ah, but look at the next verse. "Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit." Now let me say something to you about this. And I do not mean this in a bad way, I really do not. And if you take it in a bad way, then you probably do not know me, or you probably do not want to know me, or it does not matter if you know me or not, you still want to think what you want to think. But bottom line is this, I am a nice guy. My goal is to help people. If I have got somebody who wants to know the truth and they want to learn the truth, even if they have got some issues they are not squared up on, I will spend whatever time it takes. But brother, bring somebody in or have somebody come in on a Thursday night who has a private agenda. Bring somebody in on a Thursday night who is looking to cause a problem and to inject something into this church or come in with an issue or a chip on his shoulder, and I will tell you what, it is a gun fight at the OK Corral at high noon. I do not know how to tell you this, and I hope you never have to see it, but there is a side to me that most of you have never seen because I am such a nice guy and I have the patience of the world, and I can spend as much time as it takes, never lose my temper, never come to the place where I—but there is a—you have never seen the Bob Alexander that is sitting on a coiled spring inside that deals with those kind of fools in the next verse.

I know every back door of every heresy that there is. While you are out there looking over the front and you are trying, everybody else is coming up to you and knocking on the door and saying, "I would like to talk to you," and they give you your verses and you give them your verses, and you are back and forth, and you just walk away saying, "Well, I think I made some progress," and he walks away thinking he is an idiot, he does not know anymore about it. You give him your verses and you give them, and you are standing at that big front of that heresy at a big old door, and you are talking back and forth, and you are just giving him your little verses and he is giving his little verses, and you are saying, "Well, let us just agree to disagree," you know, that is a nice little warm, snuggly feeling term today, and "I will come back later and we will share some," that is another nice warm little thing, "share each other," you know, and "you have your way and I have mine," and "I hope I will persuade you," and he said, "Well, I am hoping I will persuade you." You see, that is how you do it, see. And while you are there, I am way in the back. If you look out that back window, there is a fence line back there with a strip of woods on it, and I am back there, and I am putting camouflage on my face. I am tying down my legs, my pant legs that do not catch on the bushes and make any noise. I am strapping my knife down here and putting my over here and have got my H&K 9 millimeter over here with my silencer on it, screwing that thing on out there. And while you are up there sharing and talking those things, I am moving up to the back door and down the line looking in the back door, and he is up there expecting, "Who else is coming now?" "Oh, who else is?" "Are these Baptists?" "They are so goofy." "They come up here like they know something." "Oh, send me another one, send me another one." And about that time, boy I will tell you what, I jump out of the shadows, pull his head down, pull out that knife, stick that knife up there with a Japanese call, the wind tunnel in the back of his neck, and ting that thing and scramble legs, man. You know what? You never take him on front. Find the back door. Find where he is not prepared. Find what they did not teach him about the Bible because truth stands on its own, and every heresy has to have something added to it. And I will tell you what, I hope you never see that side, but I will tell you what, you want to push me into a corner in the Bible, I will come back and bite you.

I do not know much anything in life. I do not know how to fix cars. I do not know how to grow tomatoes. I do not know how to do this. I do not know how to do that. I have spent my whole life doing one thing, and that is finding out the certainty of the words of truth. It is the only thing I know in life, and it is the only thing I am halfway good at. But it is all I know in life. I could not paint a house without getting more paint on me than on the house if my life depended on it. Every time I cut the grass, I break the windows into people's houses because I do not put that little guard down, and I am throwing rocks out like mortars. Now next week I am going to show you why you do that.

You know what people want? You know what a heretic wants? You know what a person who believes in heresy wants? You know why he wants you to come to the front door? Because every—what is the one thing that every heresy and every heretic—what is the one thing that a heretic and a heresy that is not based on the Bible? If the Bible is truth and the heresy is wrong, what is the one thing that he wants so desperately that makes him look legitimate? You know what it is? It is credibility. It is credibility. You ever see it in the Church? Somebody gets mad at somebody in the church, they leave the church, they go around and call on everybody and tell them why

they left and telling this and telling all that. You know why they have got to do that? Because they want credibility. It is not enough that the issue was the issue, and they want to go out and just deal and deal with the truth because it is not the truth. So what they want you to know is, "I have got credibility." Let me tell you my credibility. Truth does not need credibility. Truth will be the same yesterday, today, and forever. Truth is truth. Somebody says, "Oh, you defend the King James Bible." Listen, buster, that Book is big enough to take care of itself, and I will tell you something else. If God needs somebody like me to defend that Book, we are all in trouble. That Book will take care of itself. I just know how to use it.

Ever see one of those old Errol Flynn movies? Captain, yeah, you love those, I love those too. Captain Blood, remember that one? Who played the bad guy in Captain Blood? No, who played the bad guy in Captain Blood? Who was it? You know, anybody know? Well, I am not telling you. You have seen that movie, and he is out there and he is there. And he swipes, he misses him, cuts the candles off. And they are jumping on tables, kicking him over, bouncing on. That is what you ought to do with the Bible. That is what you ought to do in the Bible. Back in the old days in church camp when kids were trained with the Bible, you know what they used to have? Used to have what they used to call sword drills. Sword drills. Because they want credibility. And what you do when you talk to them and it is change your verses. You give them exactly what they want. Anytime you enter into a Bible discussion based on principles or verses with somebody who is a heretic, all you are doing is giving them credibility that they