

# Romans 10:1-3

Sunday 8/16/2009

SEC: Introduction to Romans and Israel's Role

Last week, we started Romans chapter 10. We've been coming through the book of Romans, and I've been showing you almost chapter by chapter, breaking each chapter down so you could understand this great book. I think Romans is probably one of the greatest books in the Bible for you and me as a Christian, simply because of all of the content that it deals with as far as understanding the Scriptures and what God is doing.

Remember I told you that when Paul wrote the book of Romans, he wrote it from the standpoint of giving you and me, the body of Christ, a complete understanding of all the doctrinal things and all of the things that God wants us to know that change from the Old Testament to the New Testament. You are going to find that in these passages coming through here, some incredible material that we have talked about. We started in chapter 1 and worked our way through, and then we showed you how that chapters 9, 10, and 11 all focus on God dealing with the nation of Israel.

We took a lot of time in chapter 9, and I showed you that chapters 9, 10, and 11 are a progression of how God is dealing with the nation of Israel. He did it this way so that you and I would understand the big picture of what God is doing. In chapter 9, we saw how He showed us why Israel got into the problems that they got into. He also showed us how they were God's people in the Old Testament, but because of sin, they lost the blessings of God and were relegated to the back burner, so to speak. Then God began to turn His attention to the Gentile nations under the New Testament concept of the church.

That is where we started last week. We started talking about chapter 10 and God sending the gospel to the Gentiles because of the nation of Israel's rejection. Once we get through chapter 10, then we are going to move through chapter 11, and we are going to see that chapter 9 shows us how Israel was God's people, and they rejected God. So God put them on the back burner, and then God turned His attention to the nation of Israel. Then we are going to see in chapter 11 how God in the future is again going to restore the nation of Israel as His people.

Your Bible is built around two components. We studied it in a Bible Basic class. The first component is the Old Testament nation of Israel, God dealing with the world through the nation of Israel. Once they rejected God, God then turns His attention to the Gentiles and calls out a body to Himself of the Gentiles by which He then takes the gospel and accomplishes His purpose in the New Testament through the church. We are going to start the New Testament in our Bible Basic class this week and then put the whole thing together for you.

SEC: Paul's Burden for Israel and the Need for Balanced Zeal

We started and talked about Romans 10:1-3. We are going to go back there again today, and I want to read it for you. It says this:

*Romans 10:1-3*

*Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.*

*For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.*

*For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.*

Father, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. We thank You for those that have come out today in this foul weather with all the rain, Lord, but we know that in this book, Lord, are all the blessings that You have for us today. Lord, we pray that Your Spirit will open up our hearts and give us what we need, Lord, and we will thank You and praise You for all You do now in Jesus' name, for His sake, we ask it. Amen.

Last week, we started coming through here, and I want to just recap to bring everybody up to speed, and then we are going to move on. We talked about, first of all, Paul's burden for the nation of Israel. We talked about how frustrating it was for Paul, how he saw the nation of Israel. He understood the nation of Israel and all that God had for them, and he sees them rejecting God and throwing it all away, so to speak. He feels so frustrated for them because he understands what God has for them, and they cannot see it for themselves.

Remember, I made the parallel that that is like being a pastor today, looking at people's lives and seeing what potential they really have. There is nothing worse in Christianity than a young man or a young lady, or a mom or a dad, or a grandma or grandpa, or whoever, who wastes their life because they never really find out what God wants to do with their life, or maybe they do not care.

Our attention last week was based on Romans 10:3, and this is where I want to pick up today: a great concept of our spiritual growth process. It was talking about in Romans 10:3 that they have a zeal but not according to knowledge. We made the parallel to you and me as Christians, how young Christians always have a zeal, especially young men. I have dealt with young men all of my life and taught them the Bible. It has been my whole life's calling, as I told you last week, and I have seen just about every kind of young man and young lady that there probably is to see. I have experienced all kinds of experiences with them. I have seen some good ones, some bad ones, some really good ones, some really bad ones, but the bottom line is this: all of them start out, me included, the same way, and that is that we have a zeal.

I do not want anybody that does not have a zeal for God. A zeal for God is absolutely imperative in your relationship with God because it is that zeal that will carry you through. You find a lot of people that come to churches, they get saved or they come to church, and they say, "I really want to serve God," and about four weeks later, you never see them again. Their zeal is temporary. Their zeal is based on maybe some emotional thing that they went through. The bottom line is this: a real zeal for God will never go away.

When I got saved 30-some years ago, it was absolutely a life-changing thing for me, and people want to know what is wrong with me. People want to know why I am the way I am. It is real simple: I got a zeal the day I got saved, and I just never lost it. In fact, I have to confess, it has probably gotten worse, and it turns into a passion, but it has got to be according to knowledge.

Then we looked at another great verse. I call this the great balancing verse in John 1:17. It is a great definitive verse that shows you and I how to balance our life. Balance is so important. I do not care what you do in life; you have to learn. I think that is one of the greatest things a Christian has to be able to learn to do: that is, balance their life. Balance everything in their life. You know why that is so hard? Because once you get the balance, you have to learn to balance the balance. It is never a time in your life where you do not have to learn to balance things, and that is the key, in my mind anyhow, to really being a successful Christian with all of the things that you get in the Bible.

So, John 1:17, what a great verse it is. It says:

*John 1:17*

*For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*

Grace and truth here versus the law, what a great contrast it is. We talked about the fact that truth and grace deal with the New Testament, where the law dealt with Moses in the Old Testament. When Jesus Christ established His church, He established that church with these two concepts: grace and truth.

Remember, I told you truth is knowing the Bible, but grace then is knowing how to use the Bible that God gave you. You find a lot of churches that have truth but they have no grace. You find a lot of churches today that have grace but they have no truth. You find a lot of God's people that have truth but they have no grace, or they have grace but they have no truth. The balance in your life and my life is to have the truth but also to have the grace to understand how to use the Word of God in any given situation in your life.

This is where we focused last week. This is where we focused to talk about the danger of young Christian men and ladies. The formula for disaster in a young Christian's life, the formula for disaster in a young man's life, is to have knowledge and have a zeal but have no grace. We saw last week when Paul was writing to Timothy that he talked about not being a novice because they get lifted up in pride, and we talked about pride. Pride leads to arrogance. Arrogance leads to being puffed up, and then puffed up and arrogance and pride lead to self-righteousness. That is the problem we find ourselves in many times in dealing with young men and young ladies.

Then I gave you the number one ingredient that I look for in dealing with people. I told you last week that my calling in life is real simple: take young men and young ladies, moms and dads, grandmas and grandpas, young couples, I do not care who. If you want to learn the Bible and you want to understand the balance of life, then I am your guy. I want to help you. I have done it all in my life, and that is all really the thing I know how to do in life: to take people who want to learn the Bible, not only teach them the Bible but then show them how to use the Bible that I give them.

I told you that there are a number of things that I look for. I look for character. I look for integrity. I look for the ability to have self-discipline. I look for the ability to be willing to do whatever God wants you to do. But I told you the number one ingredient that I look for in people, the number one thing that you have to have to learn anything about God and to grow

through the process that I am going to show you here in just a little while, is to have a teachable spirit.

If you are not able to be taught, if you are not able to submit yourself to an authority that maybe knows more about it than you do, and that is part of the problem you have with people, they get, especially young men, they get to the point where they get a little Bible under their belt, and they think they know more about it than anybody in the world. That is not the way it works because you have to have experience, and you have to have the process in your life that you are taught the things, and that simply comes down to submitting yourself to God's structure and authority and learning what God has for you to learn.

#### SEC: The Art of Preaching and the Importance of Mentorship

We have a number of young men that I think are really good preachers, and God in the last couple of months has brought in a couple of other guys who are really good preachers already, and I am looking forward, and I have already got, God has already shown me some things that we want to do to really enhance that because I think the worth of any church is not only the men and the women who really know the Bible but the men, anyhow, who are really understanding the concepts and are good preachers.

I try all my life; I have helped young men learn how to preach, and I see this the same way as you looking at the zeal and not according to knowledge. Very few young men are good preachers right out of the gate, and I remember the first time I preached, I listened to myself, and it was terrible. I tell young preachers, "If you want to learn to preach, the first thing you do is tape yourself because we get this idea that we really sound good, but when you play it back, 'Who is that guy?'" I think that helps you.

We got the idea, and young guys get this all the time; they think that if they get more opportunities to preach, they will become better preachers. I told them when we started to deal with our guys, "No, that is not true. Getting more chances to preach does not make you a better preacher; it just gives you more opportunity to preach more bad messages." That is not what you want. There has got to be a process in learning how to preach, just like there is a process of learning grace and truth, and that process is really the key to be able to do that.

I think preaching is an art form. I was talking to William about this this week, and I said, "Preaching is like painting, like an artist painting a picture. It is like a musician composing some great piece of music." When a painter paints a picture, he sees the picture in his mind before he paints it. He just does not get up there and think about the Empire State Building and paint a picture of a bridge. He sees in his mind what he wants to paint. When a man sits down and composes a song or a score or a piece of music, he hears it. He lives it. Many times, it has been rolling around in his head for weeks or months, maybe years, before he finally pens it down.

It is the same way with preaching. Preaching is an art. It is a lost art, by the way. When you preach, you know what you are doing? You are painting a word picture with words. You are taking the words out of the Bible with the Holy Spirit of God working through you, and you are painting a picture. You are painting a picture of what you are trying to convey to them. Of

course, it is the same with teaching the Bible or preaching the Bible that it is with either being a painter or being a music composer. You have to understand what you are seeing. You have to understand yourself what you are trying to teach.

I teach guys all the aspects. I think it is good that not only do you listen to yourself, but you stand in front of a mirror and watch yourself because you do not want, in anything you do for God, you do not want to distract from what you are trying to paint the picture, and you do not want anybody looking at you more than they are looking at what the picture is you are trying to paint. That is why I am interested. I am excited, Bubba, to hear you preach tonight because I found out when you did not come to the thing last night, and I said, "Where is Bubba? We got free food. Bubba never misses free food." Your wife told me you were home working on your message, and when she walked out, she looked around the corner, and there was Bubba standing in front of a full-length mirror practicing, were not you? I am going to have my eye on you tonight.

You see, you have a distinct advantage over me or anybody else that preaches because if you really bomb out, you just got to pick up your guitar and start singing, and they will love you down there. I cannot do that. I only know two songs. One of them is "In the Sweet By and By," and the other one is not. So I do not have that luxury.

Anyway, preaching is an art form. I think in my life, in a lot of ways, I feel so fortunate to be where I am at and to be where I have come from. I came out of a church in Canton, Ohio, called the Canton Baptist Temple. Dr. Harold Heiniger was the pastor there, and he was one of J. Frank Norris's old boys. One of the things that I sat under that church and a pastor there, Mel Sabaca, most of you know him, I sat for almost six years under that man's ministry, letting him teach me everything that he knew. I was smart enough to know that I did not know anything, and I was also smart enough to know that he knew a lot more than I did, so I simply submitted myself. I look back on it all the time, and I look back on what dimension he gave me in my life.

I also remember this: I never had much contact with Harold Heiniger, the pastor there. He did his thing, and I did mine. I was just a young teen, a young guy, just turned 19 or 20, and he was busy doing his thing, and we conversed and talked, and we got along and everything, but we never were pals like I was with Sabaca. But I will tell you one thing that Harold Heiniger did: he had the foresight and the understanding to bring in on Sunday night some of the greatest preachers that you would ever hear in your life, the last of what I call the old Philadelphia age preachers, men who were the last of a dying breed. You talk about a dying art in preaching; these men were the last men who understood what it really meant to be able to preach the Word of God and do it in such a way that it was unbelievable.

I remember hearing guys like, you do not even know most of these guys, probably never heard of them. I remember hearing Fred Brown teach the book of Romans. I mean, absolutely, his command of the book of Romans and his ability to really paint the pictures. Then you had your evangelistic type preachers who could just take the paint off the wall, like A.B.R. Lacon, who was an old Southern guy and who could just let you have it, and his voice sounded like a big crack of thunder when he hit his peak, and he would just devastate the crowd.

I remember hearing Howard Sears and Victor Sears. I remember Alex Dunlap, who was a converted Roman Catholic priest who went around, and his main gear was winning Catholics to Christ, an incredible guy, absolutely incredible, died of cancer back in the early 80s. I remember Harold Seitler, Roy Thompson from the Cleveland Baptist Church, guys like Lester Roloff, Tom Balone from Detroit Mission, Dallas Billington from Akron, Ohio, masters at preaching.

I remember watching those guys. I remember sitting there listening to the way that they opened their sermons, listened to how they would contact with the crowd. I was lucky because I played the trumpet, and I sat in the brass ensemble, so I was on the platform behind the guy, and I could see the crowd. I watched these guys would preach for an hour and 15 minutes, and you look down, and you are watching, and you would say, "Wow, it seemed like it has only been five minutes ago when he started." They had the ability to keep a crowd. They had the ability that when he moved, every eye was on him. They had the ability to move the crowd at will and understanding through the pictures that they were painting with the words from the Bible that absolutely just captivated the crowd like an artist painting some great masterpiece or like sitting there in his symphony and listening to Beethoven or Schubert or Brahms and just sitting there transfixed on everything that you hear. That is what they did with words in preaching.

It is an incredible time in my own life, and I learned a lot of things. I watched those young men, and very frankly, I think that that is the missing element today. I listened to those guys preach, and their messages at the end would weigh about a thousand pounds. There was so much in them. If you wanted to take the cassette, we did not have CDs back then. I grew up in a day of eight tracks. You guys do not even know what eight tracks are. You are laughing. They do not even know what eight tracks are, do they? They do not know, Roy, do we know the Beach Boys down by the bunny farm, do not we, buddy? You betcha. Roy met Don at Woodstock back there 40 years ago.

I listened to those guys, and I would take them home, and it would just take me a week to get through one hour sermon. Why? Because they are loaded. That is what is missing today. That is why when you go to most churches, you need to have a big screen up front there, and you need to have smoke coming out from under the seats. You need to have a hundred thousand dancing girls, and you need to have all of the things. You know why you have to entertain them? Because the pastor has nothing to say when he gets up there. He has nothing. His messages you could carry out in your shirt pocket. There is no depth to them. There is no firmness to them. There is no soundness to them. You listen to them, and you say, "Well, you know what, I, you get discouraged." I know you, I know God's people do, maybe not you, but I hope you do not, but I know what it is like.

I saw that, and I studied those great preachers, and I will tell you, you want to become a good preacher for God? You want to be used of God? Then study the men that God used in their way that they did what they did as you learn the Bible. It is what balances it out. I told you last week, the church teaches, a church should teach both aspects. You ought to get the book. You ought to learn the truth. You ought to have somebody giving you the Bible exactly the way God wants you to have it. But at the same time, you need a structure of accountability where you can let grace work what you learn and put yourself in a man's ministry where you can begin to grow.

I have told you this before, the people in this church that are really involved in the ministry aspect versus maybe somebody that just came and is just still not making any effort at all to learn the Bible, the difference between them is unbelievable because they are actually in the process. The process actually works in their lives, and they allow God to build the grace as they get the truth, and that is an incredible thing. That is why it is so important to do things like the mission. That is why it is so important to do things like the Bible Basics class. That is why it is so important to work one-on-one with somebody in discipleship. In just a short time, we will have the lessons done for the Bible Basics classes, and we will start a whole thing of some of you young men and young ladies teaching other people the Bible, basically what I taught you, the whole concept of it.

In a personal dealing with people, when people come in with marital problems or people come in with issues in their own lives, I give them to you people now, and you take them, and that is how you learn grace. Nothing will teach you grace better than two things that I know: one is having kids, and the other one is working with people in a church. I understand what Mark Twain said when he said, "The more I am around people, the better I like dogs." I understand that. I understand that, except in the ministry, we have to work with people, and you see, this is the importance of getting a zeal but according to knowledge.

SEC: Paul's Pastoral Epistles and the Model of Timothy

I told you also that we see this in the books that Paul writes, and I told you how Paul writes in his writings in two formats. The first format is he writes the churches, and if you study Paul's writings, you will see that he writes the seven churches, and in those writings to those seven churches, he gives them church doctrine that the church needs to understand. He teaches the church how they are to operate, how they are to deal with situations. I do not know of any counseling scenario you will ever find yourself in that is not covered in one of the letters written to the church. You want to learn how to deal with marital issues? First Corinthians chapter 7. I have never found an issue that was not covered somewhere in one of Paul's writings.

Then he writes the second format, and that will be three books that he writes to New Testament individual Christians, and that will be Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. Those three men are pastors. They are men who, just like some of you and some of you ladies, not that you are a pastor, but you come up in the same system. You learn the Bible. You learn the process. You learn the aspect of ministry, and then you become valuable. I think one of the great things that, and there is probably more information given on Timothy than the other two guys, but Timothy is your model. He is your model pastor in the Bible.

When you look at Timothy's life early on, you see all of the things that he had in his life which were so crucial to him getting to the point, and I see many of you like I see Timothy. Many of you come out of the same situation that Timothy did, and I know a lot of times, maybe your home life is not what it should be, and maybe your mom and dad are not what you would like them to be. Maybe they are not even saved. Maybe they are, but they are just really weird people or whatever, and they give you all kinds of problems. Let me tell you something, nobody probably had weirder parents than Timothy because it looks like his mom was saved and his dad

was not, and it is an incredible story to begin to see how God took this young man and brought him up through it.

My point is this: it does not matter what your circumstances are at home. It does not matter what your situation is in life. All it really matters is, are you willing to be taught the Bible and to open up yourself to let God have you? So God will take the worst scenario you are in and make it the best example in your life when God gets the glory out of it.

I want to go through these three books, and this is basically where we stopped last week, and I am very basically, just to show you a concept here, because in all of these three books, in all of these three men's lives, you find exactly where I am going. I am going here before we are done this morning. I am going to give you five absolute concepts that you have to have in your life that Paul taught to Timothy, Philemon, and Titus. These are five concepts that if you are ever going to get to the place as a young man or a young lady where you are ever going to have everything that God wants you to have as far as the balance between grace and truth, and really learn the Bible, but then learn how to use the Bible, you are going to have to get these things down. Five absolute concepts that you have to have to balance your life as to grace and truth and having a zeal but having it according to knowledge.

Let us just very briefly look at First Timothy. When Paul writes to Timothy, it is very obvious that all three of these boys were won to Christ by Paul. Certainly, if they were not won to Christ by Paul, like many of you, God put them in Paul's life, like many of you, God puts you in my life, and Paul adopts them as his own sons, spiritually speaking, and he says very openly that these are my sons in the Lord. He makes no bones about it, much like I look at most of you, male and female.

You are going to find that when he writes to young Timothy, First Timothy takes on a shape that you have to see, and in time, if you are ever going to pastor, you are going to get to the point of real leadership. You have to grasp these points, and we are not going to spend a lot of time with him this morning, but he gives Timothy 12 charges, 12 concepts, 12 things that he gives to him that he holds him accountable to learn. Of course, if you want to look at it this way, your whole book of First Timothy is broken down around these 12 things.

> In 1 Timothy 1:3-20, he talks to young Timothy about the purpose of the Old Testament law. He talks to him about the true nature of the gospel, and then he talks about those people who would pervert it, and he talks to Timothy about things that he is going to have to deal with.

> In 1 Timothy 2:1-8, he talks about how important it is to teach the church the concept of prayer, and basically, if you go through there, and we do not have time to get through this, he shows Timothy that there are four types of prayer that you need to know and understand.

> In 1 Timothy 2:9-15, he shows the true position of women, God's women in the church, and what their true ministry is. We get the idea today that because a

woman cannot pastor, that is some kind of discrimination, but that is not true. A woman's position in the church is unlike any man's position could ever be, and though a woman may not be allowed to pastor under the New Testament guidelines, she certainly has a place in a church that is so relevant, that is absolutely invaluable, just like she does in a marriage. You got guys who grow up, and they get married, and they think that the old thing, "wife being submissive to me," so that means you have to shut your mouth, cannot ever say anything. Let me tell you something, God gave her to you for a reason, and that reason is because she looks at things from a value perspective that we do not have as men, and you can either do one of two things: you can either listen to her or hear about it all the rest of your life. No, you either hear what she says and listen and value it, or you are going to make some mistakes in life, and boy, how true that is.

- In 1 Timothy 3:1-7, he talks about the qualifications of a bishop, and that would be a pastor.
- In 1 Timothy 3:8-13, he shows the qualification of deacons, and those are the two offices you have in a local church. You have the office of a pastor, which is called a bishop in the Bible, and you have the office of a deacon. Those two offices make up your leadership role accountability.
- In 1 Timothy 3:14-16, you have the true nature of the church and what it should stand for.
- In 1 Timothy 4:1-11, you have the warning against false teachers and any heresy that will obviously begin to try to creep into your church.
- In 1 Timothy 4:12-16, a great passage here, he talks about how that you and I should attend to our personal holiness and keep developing spiritually. Boy, that is a great one. That is what gets most of God's people right there. They do not keep developing spiritually, and when you do not look at your Christian life as a constant where you are, and I am going to show you how to do that in just a little bit, but you have always got to look at your own personal relationship with God and realize that you have to keep developing spiritually. In fact, there is a little three-point outline in here that I think is a great message to preach if you are ever preaching someplace. I think it is a great little outline. He says, "Till I come, give attendance," and he says three things: "attendance to reading, attendance to exhortation, and attendance to doctrine." You know how that translates? That is a little three-point outline: until he comes back, you ought to be in attendance to

reading the Word of God, reading, preaching the Word of God, exhortation, and knowing the Word of God, doctrine. That is a great little outline.

- In 1 Timothy 5:1-16, he talks about how to care for the widows and how the church should operate under that scenario.
- In 1 Timothy 5:17-25, he talks about how to deal with the elders and what important part they play in the church.
- In 1 Timothy 6:1-5, he talks about teaching the correct relationship between a servant and a master. Great parallels in there.
- In 1 Timothy 6:6-21, he talks about how to deal with the riches of this world, in particular, how not to be bought or be bullied by people with money that come into your church.

These are great concepts, and it is these 12 charges that basically are the ministry when you go in and develop them fully, and it is these 12 concepts that really helps you get to the point where you not only have truth but these things have to have the grace to be able to deal with these situations as you come through.

Then we have Second Timothy. Second Timothy is a book of reflection. Remember, it is the last thing that Paul writes before he gets killed. I always thought it was absolutely incredible to me, anyhow, that the last thing that he is worried about before he dies is the young man that he trained to fulfill himself once he is gone. Paul understood a great concept. It is a concept that every pastor needs to understand: the first day you take a church, or the first day you start to look and train your replacement. That is what Paul did, and it is a great encouragement to me to know that before he goes home to be with the Lord, his thoughts are toward the young men and probably the young ladies that he invested his life in.

So the theme of Second Timothy is to remember, and it is Paul's last book.

- He says in chapter 1 that Timothy is to remember the gifts and the training.
- He says in chapter 2 that he is going to have to remember to hold to sound words.
- He tells him in chapter 3 that he is to remember that he is living in perilous times and there are perilous people.
- Then in chapter 4, he says, "Remember always to preach the word in season, out of season."

Timothy, First and Second Timothy, is a great book, and it forms not only the truth but also the grace then to be able to use that truth.

Then we come to the book of Titus. Titus lays out the second greatest aspect of ministry leadership, being a pastor, and that is the aspect of stewardship. You know why those churches are not good churches? It is because they do not have good pastors. Now, I am not saying the guys are not nice guys. I am not saying they are out there in the world drinking and running around. I am just saying they do not understand that as a pastor, you have some things you have to be a steward over as far as your church is concerned, and a steward, the Bible says, is somebody that needs to be found faithful.

I would dare say if you take the average pastor, and in your Bible, there are seven things that I, as a Christian, not just a pastor, now, there are seven things that you and I as a Christian need to be stewards over, and if you would ask the average Christian, they would not know. If you ask the average pastor, he would not know. Then we wonder why our Christian lives are in such upheaval and why churches do not get the job done today. It is because that we are not faithful stewards, and he lays seven things out that a pastor has to be a steward of. Paul does not in particular here, but through the book, he does in Titus, talking about being a steward, but all the way through the Bible, you will find these seven things.

➤ The first thing that a pastor or any Christian needs to be a steward of is his own home. You know what? People never see the connection between the ministry and your home life. If you have children living under your roof, you have a stewardship toward those children, and I do not care if they are your direct biological children. I do not care if you are being remarried and you have somebody else's kids you have to raise. That does not negate your ability or your responsibility to be a steward. We have to be stewards of our home. This is why 1 Timothy 4:4-5 says, "If a man does not take care of his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" Of course, the answer is, he will not. He will not because the balance is, the parallels are, you cannot pastor a church if you cannot pastor your family, and if you have children living under your house, under your roof, in your house, in your home, then you have a responsibility to be a steward to them. Of course, last week, I talked to you about the disastrous, we talked about men that I have known over the years that have been unteachable, men who have been lifted up in pride, men who come into a church for a short time, and they get a little bit of knowledge, and then they think they know more than everybody else, and then they are off to go start a church, build a church, unstop deaf ears, raise dead people, and give insight back to the blind, and off they go. Of course, their life always winds up in a disaster. You know why? Because their home life is a disaster. You got guys who get up and talk about the Bible and talk about and can minister to everybody else, but their own kids, their own kids, their own wife gets no ministering from them. I know pastors that were pastoring churches, and their kids have run away because of the abuse that goes on in the family, but the pastor

always presents it here, but it has got to be a double line. You have got to be able to be a steward of your own home.

➤ The second thing we need to be stewards of is our perspective of the second coming of Christ. You will find this in Luke 12:42. You find the concept of the home in Genesis 15:2 with Abraham. Now, that is very important because you understanding where you were at on our chart up there from Thursday nights and all of our Bible Basic classes, you as a child of God, especially, need to know where you are at, where you stand in relationship to Christ coming, and of course, that is why we need to be stewards of the second coming of Christ.

➤ The third thing in Luke 16 is being stewards of our time and the things that God has given us.

➤ The fourth thing to be stewards of is found in 1 Corinthians chapter 4, and these will be the mysteries of God, and you are going to find that the mysteries of God, and there are seven to the church and there are 12 to the nation of Israel, and you will find out that the seven to the church and the 12 to Israel are the keys to understanding your Bible, but we are to be stewards of them. Since we started our church six years ago, I looked it up the other day, I know two times at least, maybe three, I preached on the mysteries of God, and I counted something through the Bible study things that we have listed, something like 14 other times I made reference to it or dealt something in it. Why? Because my job as a pastor is to be a steward of those mysteries, and you are supposed to know those, and if you do not know them, it is because I have not taught them to you.

➤ Then the fifth one, and I love this one, we are to be stewards of the grace of God. 1 Peter 4:10. Now, that is a great one. All these guys run around saying, "Well, you do not have any grace. You do not have any grace. You got truth, but you do not have grace. You need to have grace. You need to have grace." Put them on the spot and ask them to define for you what is the manifold, you know what manifold means, do not you? If you do not, open up your hood, look on your car, manifold grace of God. You are to be a steward of that. Why? They would not even know where the verse is at, let alone be able to explain it to you, but you see, oh, they got grace, they got grace. Well, be careful you do not spell grace and stupidity with the same words. Manifold grace of God.

➤ Then Titus 1:7, steward of blameless. Now, that is always a good one. How does a pastor be blameless when he gets blamed for everything? Kind of like being married, how do you be blameless with your wife when she blames you for

everything? Well, there is a way. We do not have time to get into it this morning, but there is a way for you to be a pastor or be a leader, and even though you do think you have to, you will never make a decision as a leader, I never have, you will never make a decision, you will never do anything as a leader that some people are not going to like what you do. I have never been able to find a way to make a decision everybody is happy with, other than the one time that I gave everybody that came to church a thousand dollars, and then they were not happy when the checks bounced, but my intentions were there. You see, you are going to have to realize that there is a way to stay blameless even though you get blamed for everything. We do not have time to get into it this morning, but you ought to be a steward of that.

➤ Then the last thing is stewardship of Israel. That is where we are at right now, is not it? Matthew 20:8, Romans chapter 9, Romans chapter 10, Romans chapter 11. That is what Paul is teaching the church in his book. He is teaching you and me how to be a steward of the nation of Israel, understanding who they are in the light of God's people.

Then Philemon. Philemon is a great book that shows the attitude of service versus ministry. The story of a runaway slave, and you know, most people think that service for the Lord and ministry for the Lord are the same, but they are not. Ministry is what you do. Service is the attitude by which you do it, and this is a great book to show you the attitude of a servant that we need to have, and of course, it brings us down to having a teachable spirit, accountable spirit, and a disciplined spirit.

Within all these books, they are called the pastoral epistles. You have it all. You have everything that you need, but in particular, here is where we are going now. You have five great concepts that you have to have that produce the grace and the truth and the zeal to have the right knowledge, how to use it, and it is all based on these five things, and as you grow through them, God gives you the truth, but it gives you the grace, and you will wind up having a zeal but a zeal according to knowledge.

It is one of the most tremendous things. I remember being taught this when I was just a very young Christian, and it stayed with me all of these years. In fact, it stayed with me so much that I can actually honestly before God say there is everything that I do. You are all here at different levels. You are all here at different levels spiritually, but whatever I do, no matter what level you are on, I am always looking to build these five things into your life to get you to the point where you need to be. Maybe you will not accept them. Maybe you will not do anything with them, but unconsciously, by design, I am giving you these five concepts and building them into your life if you will let me.

SEC: The Church's Role in Perfecting Saints

Before we get into this, I have to kind of set the stage here. Turn to Ephesians chapter 4. The book of Ephesians is a great book because in that book, Paul defines what the church really is, and before we get into the five things here, and we are going to lay this thing for you down, I have to show you how this thing works because it is very important, and I want you to be able to see this.

Ephesians 4:11-15, and this is really where he is defining what the church does and what the church is right here for you. Here is what he says:

*Ephesians 4:11-15*

*And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;*

*For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:*

*Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:*

*That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;*

*But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:*

This is a great verse. I do not know of another verse in the Bible that in one short little paragraph of verses basically lays out not only my job, the job of the church, but also the process by which you need to work through in your life. This is a great passage, and this illustrates the concept of how God uses the church in your life. You know, we are living in a day and age where most people do not want to go to church, and I have to tell you the truth, I cannot really blame most people because churches are about as dead as can be. But if you find a church that teaches you the Bible, that has its head screwed on and understands where it is at, your obligation is to grow and get everything that God has for you, and we see this illustrated here.

Now look at Ephesians 4:11: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." You note the progress there coming through your Bible: apostles, that would be Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; prophets, that would be the early book of Acts; the evangelist, that would be the middle of Acts, that would be Philip in Acts chapter 7 and 8, and Paul through the rest of it; and then pastors and teachers, there is Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. You see that order.

I do not know if you caught it or not, but look what it says: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." You note that there is no comma between pastors and teachers. You know why? Because every pastor ought to be a teacher. As a pastor or as a leader, you and I will be able to take the paint off the wall when the wall needs painting, but you ought to be able to teach. You know what that is? That is grace and truth. You see, preaching is great because that lays out truth. If I got up here and tore all your

hide off today, that would be the truth. If I said, "You are rotten, you are filthy, and you are vile. We all need to be in hell," that is the truth, but you have to have grace to add to that. That is what you got. It is an incredible passage.

Now look at Ephesians 4:12. Here is the job of the church. Here is my job. Here is what I am supposed to do in your life if you will let me.

1. Perfect the saints. You know what that is? That is the process by which you get the things out of your life that you need to get out so God can do something with you.
2. Work in the ministry. You know what that is? Getting you to buy into what I am doing here, link up with me side by side, help me in the ministry. I mean, I can only work with so many people. I can only deal with so many scenarios. I have to have people that can help me do that, but I cannot put you into the work of ministry until you perfect yourself to the point where God can use you. See how it works? It is a process.
3. Perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ. That is the ultimate goal for you from, for me, my ultimate goal for you is to perfect you for the work of the ministry, that when you get to the point in your life that you are edifying the body of Christ. What does that mean? That means you learn to solve problems instead of cause problems. It means you would like to see a situation that somebody is in as you are working with, and you help grow them. You help heal them. You help edify them. You help put into their life the concepts that they need to have that the body of Christ keeps going forward.

You ever find anybody in any church, in any place, when you sing it again, we need to do a duet sometime, me and you. I will cover your weak areas. I have got a good, anyway, everybody needs to understand, you need to come to the place in your life where you put these things in your life. I do not care if it is any church, any pastor, any ministry. You find somebody in a church that goes around looking to cause problems, you got somebody that is not following with the thing. The job of the people in the church is to solve problems, not cause. Now, given, sometimes you get handed a problem you cannot solve, but most of the problems in churches are problems because either the pastor did not do what he needed to do, or somebody else that was in leadership was not following the protocol of understanding what the ministry is. "Ye that are strong ought to bear the infirmity of the weak, and not to please himself." Romans 15:1. So that is the process I want in your life.

Now, how long do we do that? Look at Ephesians 4:13: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." What is that talking about? That is talking about the day the Lord comes back in a rapture. We get our glorified body. We now become the full measure of Christ, the stature of Christ. We know what He is. All the problems we got are gone.

Look at Ephesians 4:14: "That we henceforth from this point on be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." You see that thing, "be no more children, tossed to and fro"? Run that back to Job chapter 1 when God asked the devil what he was doing, and he

said, "going to and fro on the earth." That is what it is talking about. Notice "wind of doctrine." Remember when Acts chapter 2, Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit of God came, what did it sound like? Wind. You know what you got? You got somebody teaching, somebody coming into a church teaching false doctrine, and people are too stupid to figure out what is right and what is wrong, so they get caught up with these guys right here. Here are your nimrods: "sleight of men, cunning craftiness, waiting to deceive." There are your nimrods of life, and of course, that is exactly what you have got.

God wants you and me, look at this, look at this, Ephesians 4:15: "But speaking the truth in love." There it is, grace and truth. See, speaking the truth but in love, there is God's grace. "Grow up into," not "unto," "grow up into him," not "unto him," but grow up in your life out of your process that every day you are transforming your old self into a new person, and you are growing up to be Him, not like Him, not kind of like Him, growing up every day into Him. That is a process. That process comes from perfecting the saints for the work of the ministry and the edifying of the body of Christ, the process in the church that God has put in place. It is a progression.

I have always been amazed by people who can do woodworking. I have seen someone, I know Marcy's dad does great woodworking, does not he? Incredible. I have seen guys that can take a piece of wood and make a masterpiece out of it. When I was nine years old, I tried to make me a slingshot. First try, pulled that sucker back, and one thing broke, hit me in the eye, almost killed me. I never gave, that was the end of my woodworking skill. I am not very good at it. When I was in high school, I took wood shop. I got the Billy Butcher award. We all had a project, we made lamps. You know how that thing goes in high school, we had to make lamps for your mother, and I made a lamp for my mother. To this day, my mother will not even keep that lamp in the house. It was terrible. I was never good at woodworking. I was never good at metal. I was in a metal shop. I wanted to build a tank. Never got it done. I could not fit it all together. It just would not work.

But I admire people that work with wood. Wood comes from trees. You know there are different types of wood that come from different types of trees. You know that one of the greatest studies in the Bible you ever take is the study of trees in the Bible. Judges 9, Ezekiel 31. You realize in the Garden of Eden there were seven trees back there that you are told about, and Ezekiel 31 and Judges 9, seven trees, and they all mean something. You know, you ever notice that people in the Bible like in the trees? Why? When God wanted to make an ark, that ark is a type of Christ. When God wanted to make an ark, God made it out of gopher wood, and gopher wood, I do not even know if they have gopher wood today, but gopher wood back then was a very enduring wood, very solid to the core, very sound wood, very a dark wood.

Now, I do not know if you know it or not, but the ark and the flood took place 2400 B.C. We are now 2,000 years, that is almost 4,400 years later. You realize from 19, early 1900, right up to the last 30, 40 years, until they blocked it off, they were finding the ark up there in Mount Ararat. I remember the first time they saw the ark up there, and somebody got a picture of it, all the Christians went crazy, "Oh, we found the ark! We found the ark!" Like what? You did not think it was there? Is not God's people weird how you think they have got to find something before they

believe it is real? I see these little T-shirts, were a little strong one time, it was a cute little thing, you know, it says, "How to go," it says, "God said it, I believe it, that settles it for me." You know, "God said it, and I believe it, that settles it for me." You know what? God said it, that settles it. It does not make any difference if you believe it or not. The fact that He said it is all that matters, not whether you believe it or not. Somebody says, "Well, I guess God showed me why He did this. I am not going to get saved then." You are probably going to die and go to hell because God does not owe you anything. You think God is going to run around heaven, say, "Oh, quick, we have got to get him the answer so he does not die and go to hell"? He does not owe you an answer. He told you what to do to get into position to get the answer. You do not want to do that first? You are on your own, pal. Roll the dice. I am not sure what that had to do with the sermon this morning, but I had to get that out of my system. Oh, that is right, there you go, gopher wood. That is right. Gopher wood, that is a type of Christ. It is very sound. It is very enduring.

You know, when you want to study Christ in the Bible, you want to study oak trees. Oaks are very strong. They are very sound wood, very solid, solid to the core. You want to study the crucifixion and find out what was going on? I will give you a little key word: study the oaks of Bashan. You will not find anything on it, but try it. It is a great study. So when you want to study about Christ, you will study gopher wood. You want to study about the crucifixion, you study the oak. You want to study God's people, it is palm trees. Palm trees, palm trees are all in the Bible. They are always a picture of God's people. You find it in Psalm 92:12. Wood in the Bible is very, wood in the Bible is very important, and palm trees, like oak trees, like gopher wood, are very sound wood, enduring, very tough, very stable for building long term. In fact, when you look at a psalm, the palm tree in Psalm 92, and you pick the parallels to a Christian, when you see what a palm tree does, you have to do a little study on it, you will find you are incredible. Palm trees are what Christians ought to be.

You know, palm trees always put their roots in rocks. You know, palm trees are what we call evergreen. They never have a down time of putting fruit out in their life. You know, palm trees have a long life. You know, palm trees, like any other tree, has the ability to repel bugs, and remember, wherever you got light, you will have bugs. You know that palm trees are sound to the core. You know, they figured up one time that a palm tree in the Middle East has over 360 uses that it can be used for. It can be used for rope. It can be used for building material. 360 things that a palm tree can be used for. In other words, almost any circumstance you find yourself in, if you can find a palm tree, you can do what you have got to do. Real palm trees, the way they talk about in the Bible, are scarce anymore. You do not find many of them, just like real Christians are scarce anymore. And then palm trees, when you look at them, they grow tall, but they also grow straight. You see, it does not do you any good as a Christian to grow tall if you do not grow straight. See how that thing works? Wood in the Bible is a great study because a Christian needs to be sound to the core.

#### SEC: Five Concepts for a Sound Christian Life

I want to talk to you about five things that as a Christian should make you strong and make you sound to the core, that you get to the point where you have everything that you need to do

whatever job God has called you to do, and we are going to look at these things and the things that Paul writes to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon.

The first place we want to go is 2 Timothy 4:2-4. Here is what he tells Timothy:

*2 Timothy 4:2-4*

*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.*

*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;*

*And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.*

Now turn over to Titus 1:9-11. He says this:

*Titus 1:9-11*

*Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.*

*For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision:*

*Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.*

You see the importance of sound doctrine? It is the difference between knowing a few things about the Bible and knowing the Bible. I do not want you just to know some things about the Bible. My goal is for you to know the Bible, and to know the Bible, you have to have sound doctrine.

The Bible says in Matthew 7:24 that there are two men, one built his house on the sand, and the other one built it on a rock. The one that built it on the sand, when the rains came and the winds came and everything came, washed the house away, but the other guy who built it on a rock, when the storms came and the wind came, every wind of doctrine, he held fast. You know why? I will tell you why: because he had sound doctrine. He had sound doctrine.

Now, this is called a word study in the Bible, taking the word "sound" and running it through Paul's books to the young man that he, that he could, even though we did not write it into Philemon, you know that Philemon got it in the process. Five things that make you and me a sound Christian.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, and I love this passage:

*2 Timothy 3:16-17*

*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:*

*That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.*

I will get that wrong, possible for, for kumbaya meetings. I am sorry, get that possible and profitable for, for, for having a good time and everybody getting along and holding hands. No, no, no, I read it wrong. Yeah, no, it is profitable for doctrine. The first thing it is profitable for. You know what doctrine is? Doctrine is what the Bible teaches. Doctrine is what is right. Then the next thing he says is profitable for doctrine. That is the first thing your Bible is profitable for.

4. **\*\*Sound Doctrine:\*\*** The second thing is reproof. You know what reproof is? Reproof is what is wrong. The Bible not only shows you what is right, but then the Bible shows you what is wrong. What is the next thing it says? Correction. The Bible not only shows you what is right, not only shows you what is wrong, it shows you how to fix what is wrong. What is the next one? Instruction in righteousness. The Bible not only shows you what is right, not only shows you what is wrong, now I am going to show you how to fix it, but then shows you how to keep it fixed. You know where it starts? Doctrine. Doctrine. Doctrine. Knowing doctrine is the foundation on which you build your Christian life.

The death of Bible doctrine in America started at the turn, I do not mean to bore you with this, but if you want to go back to the turn of the century and trace this thing back and find out where it all went off the track, you can go right back to the last part of the 18th century, or the 19th century, and right into the beginning of the 20th century with the neo-evangelical movement, the neo-orthodox movement, and the charismatic movement. All three of them had one goal, and that is to take the Bible away from you, and take doctrine away from you, and now we live in a Christianity day where everybody wants to get along. Everybody wants to get along today. We do not want any differences between us. You see, my point? You cannot have doctrine and not have differences. If you know what the Bible says and somebody else is teaching it wrong, and the Bible is the number one thing in your life, you know what a mistake we have made today? And this is true in most churches. We think the number one thing, job for a Christian, the number one thing that God cares about is getting people saved. We think that. We think that because you are told that.

Now, I am all for getting people saved. I am. I would win anybody to Christ anytime, anyplace, anywhere. I am all for getting people saved. But I also know that once you make the top priority of God being salvation, that you then are going to be into trouble. Because you are going to find circumstances that you deal with people on that you are going to, what you are going to do if you make the number one thing in your life and you make the number one thing that God cares about

is people getting saved, then you are going to do whatever you have got to do to get people saved. You adopt the mindset that the end justifies the means.

May I suggest to you that God's number one concept that He cares about and the thing that He follows and the number one thing in God's heart is not getting people saved. The number one thing in God's heart is truth. That is number one. Because if you do not have true doctrine, you got nothing. When did you ever see Jesus short-cutting the truth to get somebody saved? When did you ever see in any way, shape or form, Paul ever circumvent the doctrine to get somebody saved? The original coining of the phrase, "my way or the highway," started with Jesus. And He simply says, "You know what, you can come to Him." A rich young ruler came one time, and he had great riches. And he said, "Master, what good thing must I do to be saved?" And you know what, when God was done with him, he walked away very sorrowful. You did not see Jesus running after him. He said, "Well, okay, let us just do this then." It is truth or it is nothing. It is either right or it is wrong. And it says the Bible is profitable for doctrine. And what we got in the world today is a whole bunch of people who want to get along. We want to all believe the same thing. We want to hate this term. We want to agree to disagree. What does that mean? The only time I would agree to disagree if you were a lot bigger than I was and I needed to get out of there. Sound doctrine, sound doctrine, sound doctrine will always separate you and make it impossible for you to get along. It always will.

5. **\*\*Sound Mind:\*\*** You know what sound doctrine produces? 2 Timothy 1:7-8:
6. **\*\*Sound Words:\*\*** When you get a sound doctrine, that produces a sound mind. You know what the sound mind produces? I am going to read 2 Timothy 1:13:
7. **\*\*Sound Speech:\*\*** All right, we got sound doctrine, which produces a sound mind. You know what the sound mind produces? I am going to read 2 Timothy 1:13:
8. **\*\*Sound Faith:\*\*** Sound words produce sound speech, which produces a sound faith. Look at Titus 1:13:

SEC: Conclusion: The Bible as the Ultimate Guide

I told you, I will close with this. Once I understood very early on in my life with a man that God put in my life, and I try to be that to you, and I know I fail miserably, but I try, but I watched the man who I believe loved God and knew the Word of God better than any man on the planet. Now, obviously, he probably did not, but to me, he was the Apostle Paul of my life. I lost my dad when I was 19 years old, and you know what? He stepped in and became the father to me that I needed at that point, and he brought me to the point where he built into me the things that I needed. And my whole life, as I was growing up as a young man, God spoke to me very early

and told me, "I got something for you to do." Now, I was like a lot of you, I did not know what that was, but I realized that it did not matter what it was because I knew no matter what it was, I had to have the same things in my life no matter what I did.

So I went to work for him, and I let him show me, teach me, correct me, yell at me. I mean, he put me under duress much more than I put you under. I told you the story that when I was coming to the point where I had been in there a couple of years now, you know, and feeling my oats, and my zeal was there, my knowledge maybe was not up to par, and I get this chance to preach, and I am preaching at a youth rally, you know, and there are like four or five hundred kids there, and I am up there going to town, you know, and it is big-time Bob, you know, in my debut, and I am up there, and I am preaching, and I was something in Genesis, and I quoted it wrong, and right in the middle of my sermon with four or five hundred people there, he stood up in the front, and he said, "Book, chapter, verse." And I said, "What?" He says, "The verse you just quoted, book, chapter, verse." And I went back there, and when I looked it up, and I said, "Well, here it is," and I read it, I quoted it wrong. Now, in front of four or five hundred people, you know what he did? He pointed that bony finger at me. It was always tough to tell which was more bony, his nose or his finger, but they both were pointing to me at that particular point in time, and he said, "Young man, if you are going to preach the Word of God, then preach it correctly."

Now, if I do that to some of you, you will leave the church and go be a static Mormon someplace. You would be all hurt. You would say, "He is picking on me." Why? You would be embarrassed, and you would be hurt. You would be mad, and you would be this, and you would be that. You know what? Years later, I looked back on that, and I attribute my exactness, as well as I can be, and I miss it too sometimes, but in what I teach and what I do, and my exactness, I attribute to that point right there where a man had the guts to stand up and hold me accountable in the midst of four or five hundred people in my preaching that taught me something. Taught me something. I would not even try to do that today because I know you cannot. The quality is not there. You cannot do it. There may be some examples you could, but I would even feel bad in doing it. I do not think, you know, the joke was that when they do transplants, you know, when Mel died, Jean, his wife, had signed him up for organ donations. We all laughed and said, "Well, he will get his kidneys, they will get his brain, and they will get his maybe his liver, but they will have a tough time finding his heart."

Sound doctrine, sound mind, sound words, sound speech, producing a sound faith. He told me this once. Once he taught me the Bible, once I realized that I had these five things in my life, and nothing could shake my faith, once I knew the Bible, once I knew I had a sound faith, then he told me the thing that you need to do is you need to get your hands on every worldly book that is out there. You need to study science. You need to study history. You need to study everything you can get your hands on and then relate it back to the one book that you now know as the guide by which what is truth and what is error. That was the greatest advice he ever gave me, and I, once I got sound in my faith that nothing was going to shake what I believed, then I started to read every book I could find.

You know, the other night we talked about nuclear structure on a Thursday night. You know where I learned all that? I learned that by reading books on nuclear fission and nuclear structure, already knowing what the Bible said. You have heard me lay out about the universe. You have heard me lay out about the constellations and about the planets and about the stars. You know why? Because I devoured every book I could get my hands on, astrology. You have heard me talk about Perseus and Andromeda and all of the constellations, Aries and Argo, the Ark, and all the mythology. You know why? Because I read every book I could get my hands on on Greek mythology, knowing and then ran it through the book. In other words, once I was firmly ingrained that this book here was the truth and all truth derived from this book, then I read everything I could get my hands on, never now to be shaken in this book, but running everything I read back through this book. And what it does in your life, it gives you the perspective of everything that is out there from God's standpoint, and that is where you need to get to in life.

Once you build this progression, growing up to a perfect man, growing up to the stature and the measure of Christ, growing into Him, be everything God wants you to be, and then learning everything you can and running it through this book. You see, most people learn everything they can around the book. I learn everything I can through the book because I believe that this book is the absolute infallible, perfect, inspired Word of God, God's gift to man, God's mind to man that tells man everything he needs to know that God wants him to know. And my job as pastor is to take you who will let me, and as a pastor and a teacher, perfect you for the work in the ministry to get you ready that everything that you do, the body of Christ gets edified, and you do it putting these five things in your life, becoming sound in everything that you do.

Every head bowed and every eye closed now, Father.