

I. The Importance of Review and Bible Study

We will be here for a couple of weeks, maybe a month or so, going through this. I hope you have been following through the Book of Romans. Not all of you were here when we started the Book of Romans. Many of you have come in since we started it, but you can do one of two things. You can pick up where we are at because I kind of give a review of it every so often just to kind of bring everybody up to speed.

I think that is one of the things in studying the Bible that we fail to do. I know in my own life, review is such an important part of what I try to do in my Bible. The longer you get in your Bible and the more you study, obviously somebody says the more you learn, and that may be true, but also along with that, the more you forget. It is something that you just have to be able to have some kind of system by which you review. I spend a lot of my week, when I spend studying things, I say probably half my week I spend reviewing the things that I have already learned, just trying to put it all in and keep it in perspective. So, review is very important when it comes to your Bible.

You are going to find that learning your Bible is like a gigantic balancing act. You have got to kind of balance everything with what you are learning, but with what you have already learned. Obviously, it does not do you any good to learn new things, forgetting the old things. You have got to kind of work it out that way.

As we have been coming through the Book of Romans, we have been spending a lot of time explaining a lot of the complicated things. I hope that you are getting them down in your Bible on a weekly basis so that you can kind of stay up with it. This is the book you have to learn. That is all there is to it. We have a lot of people in our church who really have a desire to learn the Bible, and I think that is a great commentary on you and our church. You have always got to remember that when you are learning the Bible and putting the Bible together, you have got to stay with what you are learning and put it in as you go.

II. Israel's Rejection and God's Turn to the Gentiles

In Romans chapter 10 now, we finished Romans chapter 9 last week. In Romans chapter 10 now, we are going to be going and talking about God's call to the Gentiles. You remember last week as we were coming down through the last part of chapter 9, I think it was verse 30 and 31, if I remember, where he is talking about that the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness have now attained the righteousness.

Remember when I told you that and I explained that from the aspect that the Old Testament nation of Israel, they had everything that God wanted them. They were God's nation. God gave them the law. God gave them everything they needed to become the component by which in the Old Testament God was going to reach the world. The Gentiles in the Old Testament, they were not very well thought of. In fact, in the Old Testament, Gentiles are looked at as dogs, and the

Jews wanted nothing to do with them, and they did not have any law. They did not have any righteousness anywhere like that the Jews did. Of course, if a Gentile wanted to get something from God, he had to get it through the nation of Israel, literally become a Jewish proselyte.

So, he was talking about the fact that how in the world did the Jews who had everything, how in the world did they lose that, and then the Gentiles who had nothing suddenly now have become the ones that have attained the grace and the mercy that God has for them? We learned that answer last time, did we? We talked about how that Jesus Christ, God sent Jesus Christ to the nation of Israel. We talked about how that Israel was a building of lively stones, and God had a chief cornerstone, and that chief cornerstone, of course, was the Lord Jesus Christ. He sent that chief cornerstone to the nation of Israel, and of course, they rejected Him.

We saw last week that when they rejected Him, that rock that becomes God became the rock of offense. Once it became a rock of offense, the Bible says then that that stone became a stumbling stone for Israel. That is really why the Jews rejected Jesus Christ. I do not know, some of you in Bible Institute probably know this, or some of you guys that have been, gals have been studying the Bible for a while, but you can actually trace that through the New Testament. You will find in the Book of Matthew that when Christ comes to the nation of Israel, in Matthew chapter 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, He presents to the nation of Israel every credential that He needs to have to show them who He is. I mean, you can literally walk this thing all the way through the Gospel of Matthew and see how it actually happens. In Matthew chapter 1 through chapter 12, He is absolutely in every chapter giving Israel everything that He needs to give them that they should have known who He was.

Of course, in Matthew chapter 12, they make what we commonly call today the unpardonable sin, and a lot of false teachers like to take what Israel did in Matthew chapter 12 and try to put it into your life and my life, so they call it the unpardonable sin. First of all, it is never called the unpardonable sin in the Bible. But here is what Israel did. Israel took a stand against the Lord Jesus Christ, and what they said in Matthew chapter 12 was that the spirit, that the spirit by which Christ was doing all His miracles, was the spirit of Beelzebub, the spirit of the devil. They said that immediately in Matthew chapter 13, everything changes. As long as the nation of Israel held that position that the spirit by which God was doing the miracles that He was doing was the spirit of the devil, the door was shut. That is why in Matthew chapter 13, 14, 15, and right up to the end of the chapter, they go into what we call parables. Parables in the Bible are written that Israel cannot find the truth about what God has come to do. They went into parables because they rejected the truth that God gave them.

If you understand that, you begin to see how that God sent them the chief cornerstone, Jesus Christ. That chief cornerstone to Israel became an offense, the rock of offense. When they took that attitude toward Christ, then it became a stumbling stone, and they tripped over it. Of course, now what we have got in Romans chapter 10, putting it all together now, is Romans chapter 10. We know that once Israel took that position and they crucified the Messiah. We talked about this last week and that great parable in Matthew chapter 21. Once we know that took place and once that transpired, then God puts the nation of Israel on the back burner. He turns His attention to the Gentile nations. That is what we are talking about now in Romans chapter 10.

Here is what I showed you. I showed you that Romans chapter 9 shows you, I told you first of all that Romans 9, Romans 10, and Romans 11 are the three chapters in the Book of Romans when Paul lays out for you and for me what God is doing with the Gentiles. In chapter 9 now, we clearly understand. We understand now how that Christ became a stumbling stone, how that Christ became a rock of offense to the nation of Israel. Once that happened, God took what He had for Israel, and now He is given it to the Gentiles.

Now we know that God is not finished with the nation of Israel. We know because we are Bible students. We know that there is a tribulation period coming, and we know that there is a second coming, and there is a restoration of the nation of Israel. That is Revelation chapter 11. But right now, we are going to enter into probably the single greatest chapter in the Bible that talks about Gentiles. By the way, you and I are Gentiles this morning. It talks about Gentiles receiving Christ as their own personal Savior. It is a great chapter. When Israel stumbled at God's rock, that rock became a rock of offense and became a stumbling stone. Then God takes the Gospel and takes the righteousness which He had for Israel, and then He gives it to you and me in the church.

As we have studied in our Bible Basics class, remember I told you that there are two components that God works through. In the Old Testament, He worked through the nation of Israel, alright? They rejected Him. They are out. Now He turns His attention in the New Testament to the Gentiles, me and you, in the church. When you get saved in your life, if you have not been saved, you need to be saved. But if you are saved this morning, the moment you got saved, you become part of Christ's body, His church. It is a spiritual church. That church now is what God uses to work through and reach people in the New Testament church age.

III. The Significance of Numbers in the Bible

We have looked at some things about numbers in the Bible. There are certain numbers in the Bible, and we have not made a big deal about this, but I have kind of shown them to you as we have come through the Book of Romans. There is a study in the Bible called Bible Numerology. Certain numbers, not every number, but certain numbers always mean certain things in the Bible. It is a way that you determine the context of things.

I have showed you how that God is perfect, right? We know that He is perfect. So everything that He does, He does by a system of sevens. Seven in the Bible is a number of perfection. We talked about number three a couple of weeks ago, being the number of completeness. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, the Lord Jesus Christ. How three is the completeness of everything. God, we talked about this on a Thursday night, how God, I think it was the night we went through the atomic structure, how God made everything after a pattern of Himself.

I have told you before, we have seen it, how the number 40 is the number of testing in the Bible.

- Jesus is tested in the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights without food.
- Moses fasts 40 days and 40 nights.
- Elijah fasts 40 days and 40 nights.
- It rained for 40 days and 40 nights in Noah's day.

All of that worked its way down.

I showed you how that the number of 12 is always dealing with the nation of Israel. I think it was last week or the week before last, I showed you how the number five is always the number of death when you find it in the Bible, or it represents the number of death.

Now when it comes to the Gentiles, the number 10 is your number. Because the number 10 in your Bible will always represent Gentiles.

- You will find that in Genesis chapter 10, you will find a man named Noah. Noah is called the father of the Gentiles, and lo and behold, he is in Genesis chapter 10.
- If you count up the genealogies from Adam up to Noah, you have got 10 generations. 10 is the number of the Gentiles.
- The first Gentile kingdom is found in Genesis chapter 10, verse 10, by the way.
- In Genesis chapter 10, you will find the first Gentile genealogy.
- When Abraham, remember we talked about this a Thursday night a couple of times back, a couple of months back, when Abraham went out and they sent Eliezer out to get a bride for Isaac his son, remember that story? He gets Rebecca. Rebecca is a Gentile. That is a picture, and we talked about that is a picture of God, of the father Abraham sending out Eliezer, the Holy Spirit of God, looking for a bride for his son Isaac, a type of Christ. But Rebecca is a Gentile, see? So it is a beautiful picture of the church age. You know how many camels he took with him? I did not say packs of camels, I said camels. He took 10. He took 10. He took 10.
- John chapter 10 talks about Gentile sheep. The Bible says they are not of this fold.
- The last Gentile kingdom found in Revelation chapter 19 and 20, 18 and 17, 18, all down through there, is represented by 10 kings and 10 toes of Daniel's image.
- In Acts chapter 10, it is where the Gospel officially goes to the Gentiles because the first Gentile in your Bible where it is right there in front of you where the Gospel is clearly went goes to Cornelius, and he is an Italian.

So 10 in your Bible is going to be a number of the Gentiles. So it is no great thing that when we get to Romans chapter 10, we find that that chapter represents salvation going to the Gentiles in the church age after Israel's rejection at the crucifixion, and they make Christ the rock of offense.

IV. The Books of John and Romans: Guides to Salvation

There are two books in the Bible, and you need to know this. My goal in time, I have many goals for you. Building people is something that it takes time and it has a lot of dimensions to it. But I have a lot of plans for many of you, most of you, some of you will not maybe ever realize those plans, but I want you in time to be able to be very confident in dealing with somebody about their soul. You never know when God is going to drop you into a scenario where He wants you to be the person who leads that person to Christ or shows that person how to be saved. Of course, you need to know what you are doing to be able to do that.

There are two basic books in your Bible that really lay out salvation. The first one is the Gospel of John. The Gospel of John is important because the Gospel of John betrays Christ as the Son of

God. It is in Gospel John where we have the story of Nicodemus who He says, "You must be born again." It is in the Gospel of John where it says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life." That is a great verse to give somebody about being saved. It is John chapter 1, it says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men." It all lays itself out.

Now the other book is Romans. These two books are very clearly the two greatest books that talk about salvation. I think the Book of John lays it out and shows you Christ coming as your Savior, and then the Book of Romans shows you how to get saved. That is how I look at it anyhow. You do not hear much anymore. There used to be a tract, and I thought it was one of the greatest tracts, and I have never seen them out here, but there was a tract place that put them out years ago when I lived in Ohio some 35, 40 years ago. It was a standard tract that I used all the time, and it was a little tract, and it simply said, "God's Simple Plan of Salvation," and that tract was based on the Book of Romans, and it basically brings you through.

The people who have been around for a while, we have the little names for things, and we talk about when you win somebody to Christ, we talk about the Romans road, you know, walking down the Romans road. That simply means that you take somebody who is a sinner and needs to be saved and walk them through Romans.

- You start in Romans chapter 3 and you show them that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, there is none that doeth good, no, not one, all of our righteous filthy rags that are Lord God.
- Then you go to Romans 6, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
- Then you go to Romans 10, and in Romans 10, it shows you the two components. Romans 10 shows you the two components of the two aspects it takes for a Gentile to be saved in the church age. He said, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Those are the two aspects, and we are not going to get into that today, but I am showing you, we will get into that as we go.

A little while back, I had some cards printed up that we gave people that held all the verses and a kind of a how-to-win-somebody-to-Christ. I am going to have some more than printed up when we get a little farther into the Book of Romans, and I want you to learn how to be able to do this. We have got some great people in our church, some of the guys and the gals that could really take you, if you want to, in small groups and show you how to do that and really get your expertise up on winning somebody to Christ. But it is something that just comes in time.

V. Israel's Zeal Without Knowledge

Let us read Romans chapter 10 here now that we have got an understanding about it and got a little background on it. We are not going to get far today, probably the first couple of verses here, but let us look at it here in Romans chapter 10. He says this:

Romans 10:1-3

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

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

3 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. Lord, we love You, and we thank You for all that You have done for us, and Lord, we just thank You for everything that You have given us, and Lord, I stand this morning in awe of how good You are to us and all of the things that You have given to us and how good You have taken care of us. Most of all, Father, I thank You for the Bible because without that, we would not have anything. But Lord, beyond that, I thank You for the people that You brought to this church. Lord, many of them, if not most of them, want to know the Bible, and they really want to do what God wants them to do. Lord, I thank You and praise You now for all that You do and all You are going to do today in Jesus' name, for His sake, we ask it. Amen.

This church was paid, I think, a great compliment last week with somebody I talked to that really is not in our church but had been around our church and seen some things, got to know some of you and talk to some of you and kind of looked at what we were doing. They pulled me aside and they said, "You know what the amazing thing about your church that I have seen," he says, "and I have been in churches all my life." He said, "I have been in church all my life, and I do not know one tenth of the Bible that your people know in your church." He said, "The bottom line is," he said, "your people not only know the Bible, but they know how to, they love the Bible. It is not something that they go to church and it is alright, I have got to go because if I do not, the preacher will be on my back, or mom and dad will make me go. They go because they want to." He says, "For the most part," he says, "for people I have seen anyhow, not only do they love it, not only do they know it, but they also seem to live it." I thought to myself, you know, first thought of my mind is, "Well, I am glad you have not met some of them." I am glad the Holy Spirit of God moved you to the right people, but you get that in every church, you know. But the bottom line is that that is a great compliment for you. That is a great compliment for you. That says something about you as an individual who make up this body. Because my goal for you, my goal for you is to help you get to that point in your life where God really uses you in a way that is unique.

I used to hear, you are going to hear a lot of throwback things that I was taught with today as we come through this. Mel Shabaka, my father in the Lord, he used to say this. He used to say that if your Christianity is not contagious, then it is contaminated. Boy, that is so true. That is so true. When I grew up, Zig Ziglar, everybody know who Zig Ziglar is, the great motivational speaker? Zig Ziglar back then was going around and making millions of dollars by holding seminars. He would get up and he would say, he would say this. He would say, "You will be exactly five years from today the same person you are except for the books you read and the people you meet." That was his opening to get people to become people conscious, become to read more. I understand what he is saying. Mel Shabaka took that phrase and brought it back into a biblical

perspective. I remember the Sunday he did it. He got up and he said, "You will be exactly five years from today who you are today except for the book that you read and the person that you know, the Lord Jesus Christ." My whole life was filled growing up with things like that that just always kept my perspective.

So when I come to Romans chapter 10, I look at verse 2, and it says, "having a zeal but not according to knowledge." That is what I want to talk to you about today. What Paul does here is he begins this chapter with showing us what Israel's problem was as a nation. It makes the parallel to what the Gentiles' problems are going to be to find Christ. In verse 2, he makes an incredible statement that every Christian, every pastor needs to see and understand. That is the aspect of having a zeal but not according to knowledge. I am going to talk to you about that today and probably next week too as we kind of work this thing out.

We think of that concept. We think of other false religions. I mean the Jews themselves. I do not know if you know it or not, but the word zeal comes from the word zealots. A zealot back in the Bible time was a group of Jews. They were very nationalistic in their approach to the nation of Israel, not Christ, but the nation of Israel. They hated the Roman Empire. They were kind of like your Randy Weaver's today. Remember Randy Weaver? The guy out there in the place that shot his wife and he held up for the FBI, you know, one of those survivalist type guys. They were a lot like that. They were very nationalistically proud of being Jews, and they hated the Roman Empire. They were called zealots because they had a zeal. They would try to disrupt the Roman Empire any way they could. So they got the word zealot, which we get our word zeal.

When you think of the word, the concept of zeal not according to knowledge, you usually put it in a context of false religions. I mean the Muslim faith is definitely a misguided zeal. Their idea of winning the world to Christ and their way of thinking is killing everybody that is a non-believer. That is good zeal, but it is not according to knowledge in the Bible anyhow. I remember back in the Vietnam days, when over in Vietnam, their primary religion is Buddhism. During that time, the Buddhist monks were very, very, very seriously being persecuted. They had put in a dictator over there. We did. The CIA did. By the name of Diem. Diem was persecuting all of the Buddhist monks in the churches and all of the Buddhist people. You probably were not old enough. Some of you folks are old enough to remember. But the Buddhist monks in protest would go out in the street, sit down in the street, pour gasoline on themselves, and then light themselves off and burn because of the fact they wanted to draw attention to the persecution that they were going through. Now that is definitely a zeal. Not according to knowledge. But that is what we look at.

I mean, we always laugh and make jokes at Jehovah Witnesses. I will tell you what. You will have to look a long time before you find somebody that has got more zeal than they have got. It is wrong zeal, and it is misguided zeal, and it is not doing anything to get them to heaven because they think that they, you know, they have got to knock on a hundred doors a day to go to heaven every day, and that is just the way it works. Mormons are the same way. Every false religion we think of, you know, but the bottom line and the answer to that is in verse 3. It says, "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."

You know what the righteousness of God is in the Bible? Salvation, being saved. What he is saying here is that people who have a zeal according to knowledge, other religions, they develop their own self-righteousness, but they do not submit themselves to God's righteousness. In other words, they try to do something to go to heaven. A Muslim thinks that if he dies in Jihad, he goes to heaven and gets 80 virgins. Well, I get your morale high with the troops, man, if that is the case, you see. I mean, but that is a zeal not according to knowledge.

I mean, you know, Jehovah Witness, you know, you know why you should be nice to Jehovah Witnesses, and I know that, you know, we all, you know, we have a, we like to rag on Jehovah Witnesses, but you know why you ought to be really nice to a Jehovah Witness? Because when you are mean to a Jehovah Witness, I have known Christians that let the dogs out on them, you know. I have known Christians that threw water on them, you know. I would never do that, not that they do not deserve it, but I would not do that. Do you know why I would not do that? Because the Jehovah Witnesses taught from the time he becomes a little JW to a big JW that he is in the Tribulation period. He believes that right now. So when you are mean to him, he just reinforces the fact that he is right because he has been told that he is in the Tribulation period, and he is going to be persecuted, and so he enjoys it. You help him by being mean to him. What you want to do is you want to be nice to him. I mean, as nice as you can be. I mean, you do not want to give him a room upstairs, but you do not want to, you have got to understand what you are dealing with, but it is all the same.

We do not ever think too much about God's people and how this verse applies to us, and I want to talk to you about it today. This church is right now where you need to hear this, even though we do not really have a problem with this, it is something that you need to know and understand.

VI. Paul's Burden for Israel and the Pastor's Burden for God's People

When I read Romans 10:1, it says, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved." I am a lot like Paul in one sense. I wish I could be like Paul in everything in his life. I think he is the model for what a New Testament Christian should be, but I am not. But I am like him in one point, and that point is the fact that I understand his burden that he had for the nation of Israel. It shows me in these opening statements how he was so burdened for the nation of Israel.

You know why? Paul is a unique individual. Paul is a really unique individual. You know why he is such a good picture of you and me? I will tell you why. Because Paul, first of all, when Paul was around, there was no New Testament Bible. We get the idea, you know, that he is walking through the Book of Acts and say, "Okay, you know, it is 8 o'clock, I am going to go to bed to see what am I supposed to do tomorrow. Let us look at Acts 9 and see what I am supposed to do tomorrow." No, he did not have no Bible. He had an Old Testament.

Here is what we know about Paul. The Bible says that nobody probably knew the Old Testament law better than him. He was taught by one of the greatest law teachers of his time. He is a member of the Sanhedrin. He is a Jew, and he was trained in the traditions of the law and the law

of Moses and the Old Testament. There is probably nobody that knows it better than he did. Then on top of that, God took him for, you know, we studied this in Institute. When you come through the Book of Acts, Paul is missing for about 8 or 9 years. During that time, God has got him alone someplace. We know he is 3 1/2 years in Arabia. You know what is in Arabia? Mount Sinai. That is where God met with Moses. You know what God is doing in that time that he is missing? He is filling him in on what his job is and what the New Testament needs to be done and what he needs to do as far as God's calling in his life to take the Gospel to the Gentiles.

You know why Paul represents you and me in such a way? And you know why he is such a good model? Because he is like you and me. You have got the Old Testament. You ought to be an expert in it. You also have got the revelation of God in the New Testament. You ought to be an expert in that. You see how Paul balances it out? He has the Old Testament he is an expert in, and then he has the New Testament, the revelation from God that God gave him personally. He is a balance between the two. He has something that nobody else has on planet earth at that time. He has a complete knowledge of the Old Testament and a complete knowledge of the New Testament revelation as far as God wants him to do to the Gentiles. In that, he is a picture of you and me. You have a Bible there. You have an Old Testament. You have a New Testament. You ought to be an expert in the law of God and how it pertains to the nation of Israel. Then you ought to be an expert on how it pertains to the body of Christ in the New Testament under grace for you and me. See? He is such a great picture of that.

Here is his problem, and this is my problem. His problem is he has such a desire and a burden for the nation of Israel. You know why? Because he knows, knowing what he knows, he knows now the plan of God for Israel. You see, Paul once persecuted the Jews. He arrested them, had them killed. Now in a moment on the road to Damascus, God turned his world around, and now God has given him the calling to take the Gospel to the Gentiles. Now he stands there in his life understanding God's plan for the nation of Israel, understanding God's plan for the church, but also realizing that his own people have missed completely and totally everything that God had for them. He is standing there with a burden knowing that his people, the nation of Israel, have sold their birthright spiritually to what God wanted them to do.

Many times I understand that feeling because as a pastor, you look at people who have the potential. Some of you have great potential to be used of God. You really do. Some of you, I see those things that I look for in people's lives. Not everybody has them. We live in a day and age today where it is really hard to find men and women who really, really want to give their lives to God. Harder yet is finding people who have the character qualities to be able to give their life to God. Because I am going to tell you, we have now in this country been what, four or five generations without a Bible? Four or five generations where moms and dads do not raise their kids toward the Word of God or take them to church at all? Four or five generations where the things of God in our own country and in our own society and our own families have just dissipated into thin air, and we now look at generations of kids that are coming out that have no concept of God.

I was talking to a young teenager the other day, and you know, and we were just talking with him, and I asked him, I said, he went to Raytown South High School, nice kid, about 17 years

old, and we just got in a conversation, and I asked him, I asked him, I asked him if you know, just my own little test, you know. I asked him, I said, "What do you know about history?" He said, "Well, I do not know, I do not know what I learned in school." I asked him, I says, "Who was Mussolini?" He did not have a clue. I mean, we are talking about 60 years ago. He did not know anything about World War II. He hardly knew anything about Vietnam, just the fact that he had an uncle that fought in it at some point. Nothing. Not a thing about what is going on around. I asked him if he knew who the Vice President of the United States was. He got that one right. I asked who Nancy Pelosi was. Had no clue. I am not sure that is a bad thing, but anyway, he had no clue. I thought to myself, this is the problem. I asked him about God. He had no concept about God. He had no inkling of an idea about anything that would be meaningful in knowing about God. God was an abstract concept. You know why? Because he is raised in a family which lives in a city, which is in a country, which is in a world where God is the last thing anybody wants to talk about today. It is a tragedy.

I see so many times the burden that Paul had. I understand that. Because I see God's people today who have the ability to really be used of God, the ability to do something for God. And yet there is absolutely no desire in any way, shape, or form. It is God's people today, many of them, and it is so frustrating, have basically sold their birthright as far as their millennial inheritance is concerned. I understand. I am the, you know, just as Christianity today is not going to change the way the country is, and this country is not going to change the way the world is, I am not going to change Christianity back. I really, I gave up a long time ago thinking that other than working one-on-one with somebody, I learned very early in my ministry that you cannot make somebody do what is right that does not want to. You are wasting your time to try. But oh, I like Paul. I look at God's people. I look at God's people and I think to myself, what a tragedy. What an absolute tragedy to be saved and then to waste your life to be a great ball player or a great this or a great that or a great golfer or a great hunter or a great fisherman or a great businessman or a great career person to have all the success in that and then to lose track of the fundamental concept of why God saved you. And losing the fact of a wasted life in the light of God's plan for your life.

I think that is probably in pastoring, and some of you young guys down the line as you if you move into the pastoring, which I am sure some of you will, I think that you are going to find that that probably is the single most frustrating thing that you have to deal with. Pastoring to me, I have never fed into the mold of being a pastor in the world since all my life. I have been out of sync with what the Christian world would call pastoring. I do not do administrative things very well. I am not a very good administrator, and I do not ever claim to be. Now, you know, I am not the, my only, I might claim the fame is, I am not the smartest guy in the world, but I am the fastest one in the slow class, you see. I learned what my limitations were very early. I do not do administrative things well. So you know what I do? I surround myself with people who do that for me. Then I do not have to do it. I do not, I do not plan events. Well, social events. I mean, I really do not. So what do I do? I surround myself with people who have great ideas about fun things to do. I just, you know, I realize that I have those limitations. I just do. I am not good at keeping books or keeping records, or I never have been. That is not been my thing. It is that. So I find other people that are able to do that.

I found in ministry very early in life and in pastoring. There were two men in my life that really made me what I am today as far as a pastor. You can decide if that is good or bad. But they are, they are, one of them taught me how to do the ministry, right? And the other one taught me how to do the ministry wrong. Now to me, you see, I do not get on this side with the right guy and look at the guy that taught it wrong and and think what a terrible thing. I think it is a tragedy that that is where that had to go. But the bottom line is I am thankful for both of those men in my life because they gave me the balance that I feel that is so lacking today in the ministry.

But I learned very quickly, and I have seen it all. I have seen it all. I have seen the corruption. I have seen the conspiring. I have seen the, in the ministry and in pastoring, you know what, to do it in the system by which the system is, you have to play a certain game. There is a lot of pretend stuff that goes on. A lot of political stuff to get on. A lot of rock the boat. Do not rock the boat kind of stuff. You know what? I have never been good at playing the game. I have gotten in more trouble in my life in the ministry just because of the fact that, and I do not, and I do not, I would like to stand up here and say, "Why will not do it?" I do not know that I would not do it. I just do not know how to do it. It has never come natural for me.

I remember one time, I will give you an example. This has been years ago. One time years ago, Thomas Nelson, who makes the, all the big publishing company. Well, he might be dead by now. I do not know. Back in, this was probably in the early 80s. He came to Kansas City, and they were pushing their new King James Bible, and they called all the pastors of the city, and there was a, there was a, there was a crowd of pastors, probably two, three thousand guys, and you know what, and he is up there, and he is talking about, he is up there, and he is talking about how much he loves the Bible, and how much the word of God is the backbone of Christianity, and da da da da da da da da da, and everybody is down there, they are buying this like, like somebody is cutting off salami and passing it out to a starving man. Now I, again, I did my homework on tell me Thomas Nelson. Thomas Nelson were presenting by printing Bibles for the Jehovah Witnesses at the same time. They were presenting printing Bibles for the Mormons at the same time, and now his pitch is he is up here before these fundamental Baptist preachers, and he is telling them this spiel that how that they Thomas Nelson loves the word of God, and we stand behind the word of God, and and we this is our, we know what went in the Bible, you know, and and then he lays that thing out, and everybody is just rocking and rolling and going crazy, and then he opens up the form, and he says, "Is there any question?" And a guy comes over with a microphone, and he says, "Yes, what is your question?" I said, "I really appreciated what you said today, but I asked you a question, do not you print Jehovah Witness Bibles? Do not you print Mormon Bibles? Do you say the same thing when you go there about their Bibles that you said here about this one?" Now you would have thought everybody would have been happy with me. You would have thought that three thousand pastors would have said, "Yeah, no." You know why? Because I do not play the game well. To me, it is black and white. It either it is or it is not. I do not do well in the in between. I do not do well in the politics. I never have.

I realize it for me, pastoring, and I know I would not pretend to get up there and say, "Well, I am a great pastor." I do not necessarily, as far as the standards concerned, I do not believe that I necessarily am, but I am smart enough to know for what God has called me to do, I need to

pastor because my calling from God. Now we talked a lot about God's call in your life, God's will in your life versus God's call in your life, and you should know the difference now. You hear a lot of people do not know the difference, say, "Well, I feel the will of God my life is to be a pastor, will of my God my life to be a missionary." No, no, we have talked about it before. The will of God in your life is never what you do. The will of God in your life is what you are in your own personal relationship with Christ.

You know God has a plan for every one of you, and this is burdensome to me like it is to Paul, but God has got a plan for every man and every woman that is saved in this church. He has something he wants you to do, but the bottom line is that plan that he wants you to do is different from the will of God because the will of God is never what God wants you to do. The will of God is what God wants you to be. I have never, two people asked me this week, and I love them because it is the sincerity. I love it. I absolutely love it. So if you were one of the two people, obviously this is not a criticism, this is an attaboy, this is, this is what I want to hear. But they came in and they talked this week, and they were worried. They were worried about how do I know that I am doing what God wants me to do? How do I know I am not going to miss God's plan for my life? Now in their life and their mind, they are looking where they are at, and they are coming through the Bible, they are learning some things, but you have got to love that. You have got to love the fact that there is somebody out there on planet earth that is concerned that they do not want to miss what God has got for them, and I love that.

I told them, I said, "You know what, in all the years I have been working with people and been in the ministry, in all the years that I have taught people the Bible and been around people, and I probably to the tune of, I do not know how many tens of thousands, I have never seen a person who became what God wanted them to be, will of God, that ever missed doing what God wanted them to do." You realize when you work at becoming what God wants you to be, you do not have to worry about doing what God wants you to do. It will happen just as natural. If you jump off, if you go downtown and go up to the federal building or the big high building there, the courthouse or whatever it is, City Hall, you go up top of that building and you jump off, you do not have to worry about and ask yourself, "Will gravity take over?" It is going to happen. You step off that roof, you have not got a, well, you do have a care in the world, but gravity will not be one of them. Immediately gravity will. If you do what God wants you to be when you work every day and learning your Bible, building that relationship, getting the things in your life organized and structured the way God wants them to be, you do not have to worry about doing the right things for God. You will just be there. You will just be there.

There are things in life I am not sure about. There are a lot of things in the Bible I am not sure about, and you know if you have been around me long enough, I will tell you on Thursday night when if I am going into an area where I do not fully understand at all, maybe I can give you the concept, but I will be upfront with you. I am in no pretense that I know everything about the Bible. I had a guy one time, little smart aleck guy, said, "Well, you think you know more about the Bible than everybody in the world?" And I said, "No, that is not the case, but I do know more about it than you do." Okay? I do not know any more about the Bible. I really do not. There are lots of things I do not know about the Bible, but I will tell you one thing I do know. I know

complete in my mind what God has called me to do in my life. I know it clearer than anything else in this world. What God has called me to do is not necessarily pastor, but I have to pastor because I do not think I am real good at that, but I have to do it. So I have to put the people in my world that can help me with it to get to the point that I need to do because God has called me to do one thing, and that is to take young men and young ladies, moms and dads, couples, grandmas and grandpas, anybody who wants to learn the Bible and wants to get the Bible down in their life where they can have a little bit of this battle before the Lord comes back. My job, I do it better than anything else I do. It is the only thing I know to do is to teach young men and young ladies the Bible and help them get to the point to take young Christians who have a zeal but they have no knowledge and then turn that into a zeal with knowledge because this concept of having a zeal but not according to knowledge is in the God's people's lives too, maybe not exactly the same way, but it is a damaging thing.

VII. Qualities of a Teachable Spirit

I am always looking, I am always looking, I am always looking for people who God can really use. I think I call it in my own mind, people who have the basic tools. You know, you cannot do anything in life. If you are a mechanic in an automobile place, you will never be a good mechanic until you understand how to use the tools. If you are an electrician, you will never be a good electrician. Trust me, sticking your fingers in a, in a, in a circuit box is not the way to become an electrician. There are certain tools you need to have. There are certain things you need to follow. Just like if I went out and bought you all a piano and you took it home and you put it in your house and you say, "I have got the most beautiful piano in the world. Bob bought me a piano. It is a grand baby piano, and it is a great thing." You know what? That does not make you a piano player, but it does give you the tools to become one. See? My job is not to make you a great Christian because I cannot do that. My job is not to make you a pastor because I cannot do that. My job is not to make you a great soul winner or a great Bible student because I really do not have the ability to do that. My job is to simply to give you the tools, and then you and God have to go from there. See? But that is what I do. That is what I do. That is what I do, and that is what God has called me to do.

I have learned over the years that that, that is not for everybody, and especially in the day and age that we live in. I went to jump school back in 1968, I think it was 69. Jump school was three weeks where you learn to parachute out of airplanes. In our jump class down at Fort Bragg, we had 1,500 guys went in the jump school, and jump school is a rough three weeks. First week, we lost over half the crowd, but at a time we were ready to go in three weeks' time, we were down to 250 guys out of 1,500. Now I am not saying these guys were not good soldiers. They were good soldiers, but for what they wanted us to do, it took somebody that was better than just the average person. You know what? In my ministry, if I always approach it the same way, I do not want anybody here to be just an average Christian because average Christians do not get the job done. Not today.

Down at Fort Bragg, they have the what they call the rapid deploy unit, 82nd Airborne, made up of the 505th, made up of the 507th. Those boys are ready to go in 24 hours' notice. They can be

anywhere in the world, anywhere in the world, dropped in any scenario by land, by the air or sea. They can be anywhere in the world in 24 hours or less to give any crisis in the world situation, and they can, they can be there to do what they need to get done. That is the kind of Christians I am looking for.

I have got a lot of study of military history. I think one of the greatest, when you go back, you know, we, we just celebrated the 60th, 61st or 60th year of D-Day invasion in Normandy in June 6th. That has always been a great, that has always been a great inspiration to me because I have talked to so many of the guys that before the great D-Day battle took place on June 6th in the morning, they dropped in behind the lines about one o'clock in the morning, 12,000 of them jumping into the night in the occupied Europe with Germans everywhere, not knowing where they are going. The problem with that was is the fact that they were, because they, they were, they were misdropped all over the place. They all had specific targets, but most of them never made those targets. But I think one of the greatest things about it is the fact that that it, it was more of a success than it ever could have hoped to be if they followed the plan because these paratroopers out of the 82nd, out of the 101st, they were trained as individual men to do what needed to be done. If there was not a lieutenant around, they would grab a sergeant. If there was not a sergeant around, they would grab a corporal. There was no corporal, a PFC would take over and lead the battle. When they dropped into Normandy behind the lines, the Germans were in disarray, and the airborne guys are all scattered everywhere. They cannot find their captains. They cannot find a, they cannot even find their own units. You had 82nd and 101st airborne guys all coming together, and they were being led by a PFC because they were trained that whenever situation they found that they would do what they had to do and not worry about waiting for orders to get it done. While the Germans on the other hand got whipped because of the fact they would not counter-attack. They would not do anything because they could not get the headquarters for somebody to tell them what to do.

I do not always want to have to be there to tell you what to do. I want to raise some of you up who have a zeal according to knowledge, not a zeal not according to knowledge, that you can get into any scenario you are in, and you do not need to call me on the phone to find out what you need to do. That you can operate independently. That if you find yourself out there someplace where you are hanging out there all by yourself, and God brings up an opportunity for you to get in there and do something for Him, you do not have to look around to see who is behind you. You just get in there and do it. I am always looking for people that have that ability.

I have learned over the years that you probably have got to go through, and this is the truth, this is honest to goodness truth in the ministry today anyhow, you probably have to go through 20 people to find one or two who is going to, who is going to, who is going to do anything. I am just telling you, and there are a number of things that I look for, and I know I am just being honest with you. I look at these things as the missing ingredients of people today going back three or four generations. I just, you know what, I think Bobby and Candy, I think he, I think of your husband, your dad, how old is he? 66. This, he probably has never missed a day of work in his life, has he? Steve Bracken told me that he fell off a roof one day and broke his arm and then went to work the next day. We get a hang there and we take two weeks off. Where is, where is, I

think of your dad, the farmer. He probably worked every day his life, huh? I met him. I love your dad. I love your dad. There are the kind of people that grew up, Doug, in a world where you went to work every day. You paid your bills. You love your family. You raised your family. You worked hard. You did not look for any handout from anybody. I bet you in both of your cases, and there are probably other ones here, but I met his dad and I met your dad. I bet you in, in their cases, if somebody would come up and say, "Here, here is a bailout to pay for your car," he would say, "No thanks, I will pay for it myself." I bet your dad is the same way. Your dad lost a leg, did not he? And he is still farmed, does not he? You see what I am talking about? That element is missing today. It is missing today. I will tell you, it is when I see it, when I see it in a young man or a young lady, boy, that is what I am looking for. Believe me, 35 plus years in this business of doing what I do, I can tell in a heartbeat. I mean, it is so obvious. It is so obvious.

I look for, I look for character. You know, character is a, it is a, it is a hard thing to find today. I look for, I look for integrity. I love giving away, I love giving away my margin Bibles. We originally bought them to sell, but you do not sell very anymore because I keep giving away. But if you want to buy one today, I will give you a deal. I want, but anyway, I think the greatest gift I can give somebody as a pastor is a study Bible because I will tell you, and if you look at them, they are those. Now I know what is going to happen today. Everybody is going to be my best friend today and come up and want a Bible. That is fine. Chris just told me, bought another thousand. We buy them, we buy them like some of you buy cigarettes. We buy them by the case. I love giving a Bible up. I love though, I do not think I could ever give anybody a better starting point than to give you a Bible like the big people use because I am telling you, you can go out and buy Rory's study Bible. You can buy Wycliffe study Bible. You can buy Scofield study Bible. You can buy this guy's study Bible. You can buy everybody's study Bible, but at the end of the day, all you are buying and paying for is somebody else's notes that they got from God. You need to get some of your own. You need to have your own study Bible.

I love when I see somebody come in for a while and you know, or come in and they act like they are really getting into it, you know, and I have seen them over there. I have honestly watched some of you stand over there looking at them, knowing you did not have enough money to buy one, and they are not expensive. They are \$4,000. You can buy four or five of them. You are laughing at me, but if I told you what it costs for that book to be there, there is nobody in this world could pay for it. I have never understood that about pastors or churches. I know some pastors in some churches that if you have a problem in your life, they would come in, they charge you for the counseling. Let me ask you something, how do you charge something to somebody when you got it free yourself? I love giving away. I have watched guys stand over there. I have watched them up say, "How much are those Bibles?" And I say, "Oh, they are \$40." "I need to get me one here, and I am going to save up and get me one." I said, "Really?" And so then I will go, I will get them one, but I always say this to them, "I will give you a Bible," but I always say this to them, I kind of do it like this. I give, take, this is the Bible. I take the Bible, and I say, "Here, you want a Bible? Here, take it. I can take it." I say, "I have got one condition." "What is that?" I say, "You know what? I am going to give it to you. I am giving it to you for the purpose of investing your life in it. If there ever comes a time in your life when you do not love it anymore, and you do not want to use it anymore, and you do not want to get in it anymore, then

you give that back to me." How many have I said that to and here that I gave you a Bible to? Oh yeah, and I am not even here. Everybody I say it to. You know what? You know what? I have done that for probably 15, 20 years. In 20 years, I have only had one person ever bring it back. I guarantee you there are a lot more of them than I gave them out that never used them and never brought them back. Only one person in 20 years brought it back to me, and he said, "You know what? I respect you so much, and you gave me this, and I have got to be honest with you, I am not where I need to be with the Lord, and I have got some problems in my life, so here, you said if I ever did not do what is right, give it back. I am giving it back." I said, "You know what, son?" I said, "To all the people I have met in my life," I said, "that I have given them to, they are out in the world now, they never gave them back. You had the character to tell me that. You keep that Bible." Character, integrity, missing today.

People use the church today. They use God today. I have had people in my ministry that went through a deep time in their life, and they came to church, got involved because they were going through some big deep time in their life, you know, and as soon as they got past that big deep time in their life, and as soon as they were feeling good again, you never saw them again. You know why? Because they got no character. Church was something that they used. It was not something to change their life. It was something that they used. I have had people in my ministry over the years, they came in and looked at the church as a business opportunity. They got some fast slick business that they are going to put out, you know, it is always a Christian deal, and they come in there, you know, and they hook everybody up and suck everybody in, and as soon as they work the deal, you know what they do? They go find another church. Now, oh, you know what, we are going to go over here, you know, it is a little more this, a little more that, you know. No, it is more business opportunities for you. Why do not we just get honest? No character.

I look for character. I look for integrity. I really do. I look for people that will do the job that nobody else wants to do. This is all part of getting to the point of your life where you build yourself to the point where you get a zeal according to knowledge. I watch for young men and young ladies that will do the dirtiest jobs around here. I have to laugh, you know, it has been a year ago, a couple years ago, you know, we all, you always have in any church, we do not have many of them, and I do not think we have any at this point. I do not, I do not see any, but you always have him passing in, passing out. You always get a lot of wannabes. Every Memorial Day, we have a Memorial Day picnic, and you know, Steve is not here. Doug is here. He is here. John Hill is here. He is here. Jimmy is usually out there. We start about six o'clock in the morning. John Reed is out there. We start about six o'clock in the morning, and we cook about 300, 400 pounds of ribs. Now we do it on a little bunsen burner that takes a while, you see. We teach the Bible one person at a time. When we do your ribs, one rib at a time, okay? At least we are consistent. But we just work off of two grills. Now it is a lot of hard work, and it is hot. I have watched them guys lose their eyebrows, okay? I have got my brown arm burned, and we have been on the fires. They are so hot, and they are working. They started there in the morning, and only there, and we just go and go and go. This one year we did it, you know, and and so we get to the park, you know, and everybody is coming up. Now I have got to tell you, you know, for me, Memorial Day picnic, there is a method behind it because we bring so many visitors, and I know that before I can teach you the Bible, the weight of your heart is through your stomach

because I know that most Baptist churches when you go to, they have supper. Well, we are going to have a feast. It is like kind of lot neighborhood, you know, we are going to have a feast. You get a little morsel of bread, you know, or as one pastor says, you get tube steaks. Yeah, right. I have been in churches before when they say, "Come on over here, we are going to have food. We are going to have supper at the church tonight. Everybody come over." You get a dead little hot dog looks like it was in formaldehyde for a week, you know, and you get, you pay four bucks for a hot dog, a bag of potato chips, and Aunt Sally's potato salad that looks like Aunt Sally might have got it from Uncle Jud over here, you know. Hey, I learned this a long time ago, an army will run, an army runs on his stomach. I will tell you what, I love coming down there, and that is why I tell them, I see guy, your visitors come in, you know, and and they come down through there, you know, and I just pile on the rib. It is my way of getting to know them because you get 200 people out there, I cannot get around everybody, but if I am at one thick spot, and everybody has got to come through the food line, I get to talk to them, you know, and I will, and I will, you know, and I know how to play to these guys, man, because they are, they are all big eaters, but they think we are in a church now, we have got it, you know, I just can have one, but I would like to have three, okay? I start with three, and then I say, "You want another one?" "Oh, put it on." Now you are laughing at that, but there is a psychological thing to that because you get a man happy and fat when he is eating, he is going to think good here. I guarantee you, I could put three, four ribs on beans, get that plate up, and and he looked at that, and he said, "Thank you very much." And I say, "You know what? You are going to die in burning hell." And he said, "Yeah, I know, but I am going to eat first." They will take it. They will take it.

One year, I had a guy here, you know, he did not come to help. He always showed up late and always left early, you know, and it always, you know, always wanted to pretend like, you know, and so he comes over, and we are getting ready to do that. We had all worked through the morning, and I let the guys, you know, I follow the Bible, you know, the ox tread about the corn, he gets to eat. You cook ribs, and when we are throwing ribs all over the place, we have rib fights. We throw it over in the air, you know, we dangle them in front of Doug's nose, make him run around the thing over here, you know, and we just have a great time. We eat. We are full by the time we get there. So I come over there, you know, and I am getting it all set up, and I am getting over there, and he comes over there, and he says, he says, "So why do not you let me serve out the rib for you?" Oh yeah, you are not there to cook. You are not there to clean the mess up. You were not there, but now you want to be here so everybody can say, "Oh, look at so-and-so, he is over there passing out." I said, "On your way." You know what? I look for somebody who wants to do the job that nobody else wants to do it. I am not, I am not a general. I am a field commander. I am like Hal Moore. You know anybody knew who Hal Moore is? Yeah, you do. You know who Hal Moore is? Know what his motto was? "My boots are the first one on the ground and the last one off the LZ." That is me. That is me. I am not a general. Generals plan battles. I wage battles. That is my job. I am always looking like the Marines for a few good men and women.

So I am looking for people who have character, people who will do the, do the, do the dirty jobs. I look for people who, who, uh, will get along with other people. I mean, the ministry, Romans 15:1 is simply this: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to

please ourselves." I am always looking for people. You know what? When I said that right now, and I laid that out, I watched 10 of you verbalize it with your own mouth. You know why? Because you have learned that. I look for people the ability to forgive and not hold grudges. People make mistakes. I look for people. Christians ought to be able to, Christians ought to have one goal in mind, that is to solve problems, not cause problems. That is what we ought to be. Now I realize that sometimes you get into circumstances that through no fault of your own, you cannot do it. You cannot solve it. But you know what? In 99% of the cases, that is exactly what your attitude ought to be. Even when you cannot do it.

Then I will tell you something else to look for. I look for courage. You know what? It takes courage for all of us to look in a mirror and face our weaknesses, does not it? Because every one of us have things that are not good about us, and it takes courage to look into that mirror and say, "You know what? I do not like that about me. I am going to fix that." It takes courage then to do what you have got to do. If you have parents, if you are a parent, you have teenagers, you have young kids, you know what? Sometimes your kids have problems. Sometimes you have situations from, from split marriages or whatever, and you have got to deal with situations that maybe you know that it is tougher to deal with than normal. You know what the bottom line is? It takes courage to step up and say, "You know what? I identify this problem. I am going to solve this problem."

I will tell you something else. It takes courage to face your adversaries. Every one of you that decide you are going to make that book the number one thing in their life, and you are going to become what God wants you to be, there is going to be a price that comes along with that. I guarantee I can tell you that right now. Jesus Himself says about the rich young ruler who wanted all this, but he never counted the cost. There is a cost involved, and that cost, if you are not careful, will wear you down. That cost, if you are not careful, will get to the point, and you are not, you are not staying on task, you are not staying focused, that cost will get you to the point where you will just give up, and it will be easier to go do something else and not pay the tab anymore. Let me tell you something, it costs something for you to get saved. There was a price for that. What makes you think that you are going to get saved, come to church, and not have to pay part of that price too? There was a price paid for this church to be here. What makes you think you can sit here and not pay part of that price or not or be exempt? You will not be exempt. If you are going to take a stand for that book and that in God, and you are going to become the man of woman God wants you to be, and you are going to get a zeal according to knowledge, and you are going to get that thing in your life the way it needs to be, let me tell you something, there is going to be a price that you have to pay. People are going to, they are going to assassinate your character. They are going to lie about you. They are going to, they are going to do everything in the world to try to destroy what God has got you doing in your life. The devil's main goal is going to make as much noise in the background as you can, as he can, to get you off focus of what God has got you to do. It takes, takes courage to be able to stay that.

But I think of all of these things, what have I given you, one, two, three, four, five, six of them here, I think. But most of all, of all the things that I look for, and I look for character, I look for integrity, I look for those that will do any job it needs to be done, to get along with people,

forgive, be able to move on, and courage. Those are all the vital things. But I think most of all what I look for, and it is absolutely necessary to build in you and give you that correct zeal, is the aspect of a teachable spirit. If you do not have a spirit that is teachable, you are not going anywhere. You are not going to accomplish nothing because I will tell you what, that is based on the attitude of your heart or where you are at, and if you do not have that aspect, you simply do not have anything to work with.

You know, in the ministry, I see young Christians, especially men, and it is not a bad thing, men have this gung-ho zeal, and I like it. I would rather have you a zeal that needs to be tempered than have no zeal that needs to be made. But Paul said in 1 Timothy chapter 2, verses 5, 6, and 7, he said in verse 6, talking to young Timothy, he said, "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil." Of course, that is the problem right there. You see, that is a novice has a zeal, but he does not have it according to knowledge, and what happens is he gets lifted up with pride, and he falls, and he is because he is unteachable. Let me tell you something, knowledge without experience will always be a disaster.

When I was taught growing up, I always taught that ministry was a sacred, sacred thing. I was just like everybody else. I had a zeal, but I had no knowledge. I was taught that that there is no higher calling than the ministry of teaching people the Bible, and because there is no higher calling, there always has to be a higher standard. I sat under a man for five and a half years before I ever ventured into the ministry, and I did not know what I was doing when I went into it then, but I had some experience under my belt because I had a zeal, but I had no knowledge, and I made myself just as Timothy made himself accountable to Paul. I made myself accountable to him, and he brought me to the point where I got a zeal according to knowledge, and he took away the zeal that I had that was not according to knowledge. You see, zeal is a good thing. I do not want to take your zeal. I really do not. But what I want to do is temper your zeal with the principles of the Word of God that you have a zeal according to the Word of God, not having a zeal based on the knowledge of the Word of God. That is the problem. Ladies and gentlemen, that takes time. That takes time.

VIII. Truth and Grace: The Path to Spiritual Maturity

Now, getting this knowledge along with this zeal, that is what the Bible calls spiritual maturity. I want to give you a great passage here. It goes right along with this, and I want you to turn over to John chapter 1 because if you are going to get a zeal according to knowledge, if you are going to grow to the point where you get to where God wants you to be, and you say to yourself, I cannot say it for you, "I have a teachable spirit. I am going to get whatever I have got to get. I am going to change about me whatever I have got to change. I am going to take whatever I am told it needs to be changed, and I am going to work it through, and I am going to do what I am told till I pay my dues and figure out what God has got for me. I am going to work at being what God wants me to be before I ever worry about what God wants me to do."

Here is the great chapter when I talk about a teachable spirit and the things that I look for. This is what I am talking about, getting a zeal according to knowledge.

John 1:17

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

The verse says that the law came by Moses, that would be the Old Testament, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. That is you and me in the New Testament. Now these are the two absolute ingredients you have to have to be teachable and get a zeal according to knowledge instead of a zeal not according to knowledge. Let us look at them, the two key elements.

The first one is truth. You need to learn the Bible. There is no question about that. You get a lot of people running around saying, "Well, you know what, you get a, you have got a head knowledge about the Bible." Well, you need a head knowledge about the Bible, but it needs to be balanced because the Bible says that when Jesus Christ came, He came grace and truth, both of them. The bottom line is this, you need to learn the Bible. That is truth. You need to learn how to, you need to learn the Bible. You need to know what the Bible says. You need to know how the Bible lays itself out. That is the tools of being the man of the woman God wants you to be. That is truth.

But then there is something else here. He says grace and truth. You see, truth is knowing the Bible, but grace is the ability to know how to use the Bible in any given situation. That is what is lacking. I mean, I know, I mean, there are a lot of wannabes in the ministry. There are a lot of young men out there that want to be pastors but do not want to pay their dues to become pastors. There are a lot of people out there that they have got truth, but they do not know how to use that truth, and that is a very damaging thing because that leads to that pride thing that he talked about, and it leads to the fact that they have a zeal but not according to knowledge. Truth is the fact that you need to know the book, and grace is the ability for you to know how to use the book in any given situation.

There is a great principle in the Bible, and it is, it is so true. It says Revelation chapter 19, verse 17, of the great supper of God, the valley of Armageddon, at the battle that all the birds, and he talks about all the birds that comes down there, and they are all unclean animals out of Leviticus chapter 13 or 17. When you come down through there is a phrase that we use today that it fits right back to that, and it is so true. It is so true. That old phrase is, "Birds of a feather flock together." You ever heard that? It is so true. It is so true. Your job is to not only learn the Bible, the truth, your job is to get the grace to know how to use that truth.

Of course, I have talked, I have talked to people all my life, little, little wannabes that talked about the fact of grace, and I would ask them, I said, "Give me the definitive passage in the Bible on grace." They did not even know it. You see, we get ourselves puffed up, do not we? We get ourselves to the place that we really think, "Wow, look at me," and all the time we forget all the patterns and the principles in the Bible because, well, that is what he says, you know, he says, "For I bear them record that they have a zeal, 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." You see, pride leads to self-righteousness, and when you have pride and you have self-righteousness, I will tell you what the third ingredient you have, you have an unteachable spirit, and you will not be able to be taught.

All my life, there is a guy over here pastoring the church over on the other side of Independence. I have known this guy since he was in high school, and I might as well tell you before I go any farther, he does not like me, and I do not care too much about him. But the bottom line is this, this, this guy grew up in my ministry, and he was the absolute epitome of what I am talking to you about today. He had absolutely no teachable spirit. He was always the odd man out and always doing his own thing, and the bottom line was, and all of these things, and you, you have got to see the bottom line here. The bottom line is the fact that that it is a situation where that they, they have a problem with authority. That is the bottom line in this. Somebody who is unteachable has a problem with any kind of authority. This kid had a problem with every authority there was. He had a problem with his, with his own parents' authority. When he took a girlfriend and and finally married her, he had a problem with her parents' authority. He had been in every church around here. He had a problem in every aspect. He had a problem with authority, and now he is pastoring a church. You know why he is pastoring a church now? Because he had problems in every church he went to and finally came to the mindset, "Well, nobody can teach me the Bible because I know it all, so I will start my own church." If you go downtown certain days of the week, you will see him down there preaching on the street, and if you would go over there and you would talk to him about this, oh, he would lay it out to you. I mean, all the women are dressed right. I mean, they have got long dresses down to their ankles, you know, we all wear little hats, you know, and the bottom line is if you go out and talk to him, he would talk to you about that. He is out there preaching. He has got a church over there probably up in the pulpit right now preaching, and you know what? His own kids hate his guts, and they run away from home about every 15 days, and he cannot because, you know why? Because that all follows the same pattern. Birds of a feather flock together. They all have the same basic fundamental problems. The first problem is terrible situations at home. Oh, they can minister to everybody else out there. They just cannot minister to their own families. It is such a sad state, but that is where it is at. No accountability to anybody.

I have another guy that I have known all for years. In fact, he stayed in my house when he first moved here from Ohio years and years ago, and he was a nice kid, but to be famed very clear that he had an unteachable spirit. Nobody could tell him what to do. He decided he wanted to be a missionary, so he goes to a foreign country to be a missionary and flops right on his face. Comes back to the states about 11, 12, 13 years ago, 14 years ago maybe. He decided that there is no church. In fact, he was going to a friend of mine's church that is over north, and now keep in mind, my guy is running about 200 people in church, doing a good job. This kid has never built anything in his life. He has failed at everything he does, but he goes around telling everybody, "God has showed me things that he has not shown anybody out." And he actually finds stupid people who are dumb enough to believe it. So he goes into my pastor buddy who is running about 200 on Sunday. He has got a good work. This guy, when you, when he has church services, there are two chickens and a duck. I mean, he could call roll call in a phone booth. So he goes into my buddy, and he sits down, and he says, "God has really told me to come and try to help you understand how to really minister to people." My buddy says, "Oh, then I can run three like you do." Arrogant, unteachable. He is having church this morning too. Been at church for 14 years, and you know what? He is running the same nine people today, one 12 years ago. He does not win people to Christ. He goes around saying to people in their churches, "Well, you know,

your pastor really does not teach the Bible, and God showed me many things more than he showed your pastor. Why do not you come here, and I will really show you the great truths of life." Yeah, and then you can be ten unteachable. All my life I have seen them. All my life I have seen them. It all comes down to the fact that a rejection of any authority in their lives, and it is just the way that it goes. We tell you if you find somebody in the last six years been five different churches, and every time they have been there, they cause the problem in those churches, you have got somebody who has got an authority problem.

You see, in your life, I not only want you to know the truth, the book, but I also want you to have the grace to be able to know how to use it in any situation. I do not want you just to be somebody who can spit out a lot of facts and figures. I do not want you to be somebody who can just get up and give all the genealogies and all the aologies of all the things that go on. I want you to be somebody that is sensitive not only because you have the truth, but you have the grace of God that enables you to use the truth that God has given you that in any given situation you are in, just like the 82nd Airborne drop anywhere in this world in 24 hours, and they can fix the problem. I want to be able to have God be able to drop you anytime, any place, anywhere.

I think probably in all of our lives, the most tragic thing of last week, and all of our lives, the single greatest tragedy in your life and my life last week, if what I am saying is true and what the Bible is saying is true, then the greatest single tragedy in your life and my life last week was simply going through life's week without the ability of God dropping you in a scenario where He needed you. Let me ask you a question, do you actually think in the world we are living in today that you went through a week last week that God did not want you someplace, but you were just too busy doing your thing, you did not have time to see His thing? That is us. That is us. I not only want you to know the book, but I want you to have the grace to know how to use the truth in any given situation, and dear people, that takes some time and getting some experience.

It works real simple. You go through a process to learn the Bible truth. You get into a man's ministry who will develop you and put you with people in an accountable situation where you, you learn to use the truth with grace in a structured place, in a structured situation, and you stay with it, and you learn from it, and you take it from there, and you go to the point where God actually just molds you and brings you through what you are doing, and that is exactly what God wants you to do, and that is how He does it, learning grace and learning truth.

IX. Paul as a Model of Grace and Truth

This lesson is absolutely vital for you to reach that level in your life to ability to use grace and truth, and whether you know it or not, the model for this, and this is where we are going to kind of stop today, and we are going to pick it up next week, but the model for this is Paul. Last Thursday night, we talked about models. In fact, we have talked about in the last couple Thursday nights, we have talked about models and how that models really work to the point throughout the Bible to teach you how to do things, and we showed in question that about eternity how that is the very models of the Bible answer the questions. But for you and for me of learning how to be grace and truth, to be how to come the man that God wants you to be and the

woman God wants you to be, that you not only get the truth, but then you have the grace to be able to use the truth in any given situation, the model was Paul here.

Notice Paul's writings. If you ever notice Paul's writings, Paul writes two components. He writes the seven churches, and in those writings of the seven churches, he gives them instructions as a church for what they are supposed to be doing. Then Paul writes three books to individuals. He writes a book to Timothy, 1 and 2 Timothy. He writes a book to Titus, and he writes the book to Philemon. Sometime long before I ever showed up on planet earth, great men who taught the Bible and help people learn the Bible, they figured out a lot before I ever figured it out. But somebody a long time ago when they looked at Paul's writings, they looked at Paul's writings or the books to the churches, and they said to themselves, "These books are to the churches because every one of them starts out with the exception of Romans, every one of them starts out to the churches, to the churches, so these books contain church doctrine." Then somebody else said, "Well, look over here, you have got 1 and 2 Timothy. You have got Philemon, and you have got Titus, or Titus, then you have got Philemon." Somebody said, "Well, those are three boys that Paul went to the Lord, and all three of those boys, if you study the context, are pastoring. So what are we going to call these? I know what we will call them. We will call them the Pastoral Epistles." They are the books written to people who want to pastor, and maybe you will never pastor a church, but within this church, you ought to be pastoring somebody. You ought to be discipling somebody in time. You ought to be working with somebody in time. You ought to be using your pastoring skills at some point in time is what God wants you to do. Of course, as you develop that, and you realize that, you realize that these three books are invaluable, absolutely invaluable, absolutely invaluable.

You are going to find that in Timothy, the whole book of 1 Timothy, the whole book of 1 Timothy is built around 12 charges that Paul gives Timothy. I am not going to give them to you today. I am going to give them to you next week, but the whole book of 1 Timothy is built around 12 concepts that Paul says, "Get it."

Then you come to 2 Timothy. The whole book of 2 Timothy is built around one verse. I think it is verse 4 and verse 6, and it talks about where he is to remember. The whole book of 2 Timothy carries that line of sight and that line of reasoning that he is supposed to remember.

- In chapter 1, he is to remember the gifts that God has given him and the training that he has got from Paul.
- In chapter 2, he is to remember to hold the strong, excuse me, the sound words.
- In chapter 3, he is to remember that he is living in perilous times, and he is dealing with perilous people.
- In chapter 4, he is told to remember to preach the word in season and out of season.

Danny preached a great message a couple of weeks ago when I was in Ohio and that very thing, and I could not add anything to it. But the bottom line is that means be ready anytime, any place, anywhere. Get you an 82nd Airborne patch and slap it on your Bible cover or on your sleeve and say to yourself every day, "God, drop me today wherever You want me to be. Put me in that big old spiritual C-130 and haul me up there and let me hook up and drop me wherever You want.

Put me, have enough confidence in me to put me wherever You want me to be that I can do whatever God wants me to do." Grace and truth. Grace and truth.

Then he comes to the fact in Titus, and in Titus, he lays out the second greatest aspect of ministry because in Titus, the theme is stewardship, and you find out from Titus that there are seven things that you and I as a child of God are to be stewards of. You know what one of them is? The grace of God. In fact, the word is manifold grace of God. Go ask your wannabe friend what that means when he is so big and high on grace. Ask him what it means to be a steward of the manifold grace of God. These are the things that we learn. These are the things that when you get into a church and you get committed to the point that you say to God, "I am going to be that person who You can use. I am going to have the courage. I am going to have the integrity. I am going to have that teachable spirit. God, teach me how to deal with people. Teach me how to have a relationship with You so I can go do whatever God has called me to do. Give me the ability to use grace and truth." Seven things that a Christian has to be a steward of.

Then you get into Philemon. Philemon is a story very basically about a runaway slave. Philemon is a pastor, and Paul is in the hoosegow someplace, and he is locked up down there in a jail someplace, and he meets a guy by the name of Onesimus. Onesimus is a slave. You know Paul is a member of the 82nd Airborne 505th. So he has realized he has been dropped in a scenario. He is in a jail with a guy named Onesimus, and he thinks Paul is going to do trade recipes with him. Paul goes to work on him. He says, "Hey son, let me ask you a question. You are in jail. So I have got a captive audience. Let me ask you a question. You died today, do you know you go to heaven?" Onesimus says, "Well, I am a runaway slave." "Runaway slave, what did you run away for?" "Well, my master has given me all kind of problems." "Your master, who is your master?" "My master is a guy named Philemon." "Philemon, I won Philemon to the Lord. He has got a church down here." "You Philemon's servant? Yeah, you ran away from him." You know what Paul did? Paul went into Christ. Right in jail, went into Christ. Then he told him to set up one of the greatest studies you will ever find in your Bible. He told Philemon, he said, "You know what? I am going to, you go back to Philemon, and you become the best servant you can be." I will tell you why. Because real freedom does not mean whether you are a bond slave or not. Real freedom is the fact that your soul has been set free from the sin of this world, and whatever state you are in there with, to be content.

You know what that tells me? That tells me that that is a great story. You know why? Because you and I, if you are saved this morning, what rights do you have? What rights do I have? Who are you to decide what you do or what you do with your life? The day you got saved, the Bible says what? "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." You were knocked out on a slave block, and you were bought and sold at Calvary, and you do not have any rights. Those rights belong to Him. Why? Maybe somebody should have told you that before you got saved. Maybe you would have just not gotten saved and been a lousy Christian and just been a good sinner. But that is what happens to God's people. We get saved because nobody blazes it all. We have these things where, you know, we will just raise your hand and ask Jesus in your heart. Oh, now you are saved. Oh, yeah, right. In the world that we live in today, right.

You have got somebody back there works up in Buddha, and you know, and I had a situation a while back where a gal was of another faith and another religion, and she comes to the place where, you know, somebody wanted a Christ and did not take the time to get into where she, where she was, and she was a far-easter and whatever, and the thing was, she got saved, and then, and I talked to her the next day, you know, two weeks later, you know what she said? She says, I said, "Did you get saved?" She says, "I got saved. Now I have just added Jesus Christ to, to Buddha and Confucius and Muhammad and everybody else." And I thought, "Oh boy, that was good. That was good." I am telling you, you have got to have the truth, but you have got to have the grace to use it. Boy, I will tell you what, you and I are slaves. We do not have any rights. The day you got saved, you gave up your right. The day you got saved, you basically signed the contract, "Okay, You are going to take me to heaven. I am going to get into plan of God. I am going to understand the plan of God. I am going to give my life to You, and whatever You need for me to do, You have got it for the rest of, to the duration, I am Yours." And then a lot of us got saved and said, "Oh, second thought, You did not read my fine print. I run down there only on Sundays. The rest of the week, I am to myself." Well, it does not work that way.

You have got three of the greatest books ever written because you and I all have a problem. The moment we get saved, we get a zeal, but that zeal is not according to knowledge, and the way you get that zeal turned around that it is with knowledge, you get grace and truth. You get the truth of God's Word, and then you get the grace to be able to use the Bible in any given situation you are in, and that is how God brings you to the point where you can do it. Then you get into a church. You learn everything you can. You get everything that you can grasp. You build it into your life, and you work in your own personal relationship of working out your own relationship with God to be what God wants you to be. You never have to worry about doing what God wants you to do.

Everything that I do, everything that I do is built on those two aspects. I give you the Thursday night Bible study. I give you a Bible basis. I give you the Institute class. I give you a one-on-one time. I give you everything that you need and put you in discipleship. All of those things teach you the Bible. All those things teach you the Bible. All those things teach you the truth, the truth, the truth, the truth, the truth. You will not learn grace from those things right there. You learn the truth, and when you get to a certain point, you know what I do? I pick you up and I put you with somebody else. I will take you up as a couple and put you with another couple. I will put you over here with somebody who is having some heartache, having some problems, and having said this, that is where you have got to have the grace and use the grace with the truth to deal with them. That is how it works. You think you just come down and I stamp on your forehead, "Grace, grace, grace, grace, grace, grace, grace, grace, grace." I am not going to give you grace. You are the woman everybody wants to sit next to on an airplane. That is how it works. There is a process. The process is you learn the book, and then through the ministry, you get involved in somebody else's life, and God requires you to use the truth in grace to deal with them. You cannot just, you cannot just deal with them like you do your own family. You say your own family has a problem, get over it. Your only plan, your wife, your kids have an issue, you know what? Do you deal with it? But oh, everybody else, I am here to solve your problem. You cannot. You have got to use grace, and you have got to take truth, and then learn grace in dealing with

people's lives. You have to take their phone calls at 11 o'clock. You have to sit there for an hour and a half and listen to them go on about how their life is upside down. You need to take them through the little baby steps, and that takes grace. Grace and truth. You do not get truth and get the Bible, and then grace shows up someday. You get that grace by what you do in the ministry with the Bible God has given you.

That is why you have in every church, every church, you have people who know the Bible, but they have no grace. They will not go past the point. You have a lot who have an unteachable spirit. You have a lot that go for a while, and he said, "You know what? I do not, I do not care about those things anymore. I have got my own life now. I have got things going over here. I have got all this. I am going on and get all kinds of people." But in a Bible New Testament ministry, what it takes is men and women who focus and stay focused and realize there is a job to do. When they get saved, they get trained. They give their life to God, and they focus on two things: learning the truth of God, and then getting grace to how to use that truth.

I have one rule when it comes to the Bible. It is really in life. I am the most open-minded person you ever meet in your life. My problem is I know too much Bible, but I am open to anything people say. You are closed-minded. No, I just have been there long before you got there and found out it was an empty street. When you look as closed-minded, I am saying I have already been there, walked the street, bought the T-shirt, and it was empty. So to me, it, I cannot believe, to me, it, I follow one rule. Whatever I believe about the Bible, whatever I believe about God, whatever I believe about anything related to the Word of God, I will change it in 20 seconds, 10 seconds, five seconds. There is nothing in the Bible that I say, "I just have got to believe this." If somebody came down here and said, "I am going to show you to speaking in tongues for now, and you ought to have them." I thank God I speak in more tongues than all of you. If somebody said, "Well, I am going to show you the gift of healing, and I am going to give you the gift of healing, and you are going to have the gift of healing, and now you preached all these years, wrote a book against the charismatic movement, and now you are going to come to the place where you are going to have to recant all that because healing is true." You know what? I would be out of here so fast, and I would say to you, "I was wrong. I am telling you, healing is right, but I cannot stay longer because you know what? I am going to the funeral homes. I am going to the hospital. I am going to spend the rest of my day raising dead people, giving eyesight back to the blind, and I am stopping deaf ears." I would not go get a tent someplace and make you give me money if I had the power to raise dead people. I would be out there raising them today. I would be getting me a newspaper, going down this funeral home, that funeral home. Three o'clock, I would walk in at quarter to three, standing in the back, let that soft soap preacher spew it out, and just as everybody is there, and he says, "Amen," and the music comes up, you know, and the, and the preacher stands at the head of that casket, and the funeral directors go down, you know, and they are going to everybody out, and the family gets one last look. I would be high stepping down that aisle. "Happy days are here again." Nut that up. They say, "Folks, do not despair. Do not cry. Do not weep. Watch this young man arise." I said, "Young man, right?" You know, you are like a lawnmower. "Come on, start." You show me something that is real based on that book, I will take it. I do not care what I have taught, what I believe. I will dump it in five seconds when

you show me the truth. Problem is, I know what the truth says. Well, I am not a guy you want to try to sell the Brooklyn Bridge to. I bought it enough.

But you have got to learn. You have got to understand God saved you for a purpose. You are sitting here for a reason that God has one thing he wants to do. He wants to impart His truth into your life. He wants to give you truth, and He wants to give you grace to use that truth. He wants you to learn it through a New Testament local church by a pastor who understands the New Testament principles. He wants you to learn it in a section, a system that He designed and set up and said, "This is the way you do it." Nobody, nobody, nobody ever goes out to start a church. You are sent out to start a church, and the reason why you are sent out is because there are some requirements that need to be there, need to be addressed, and one of them is not sending you out with a zeal but not according to knowledge. And there lies my burden. There lies my burden.

You know, this probably is wrong, and I am probably going to say this wrong, so I will just tell you now so you do not have to take it wrong, but I am more burdened for God's people than I probably am for lost people. That is a sad thing to say, but the truth of the matter is, if I get God's people get their head out of the rear end and start doing what is right, there will be a lot more saved people saved. But oh no, it is about us, is not it? It is about our problem. It is about my problem. It is about what I have got going. It is about who I am. It is about how busy I am. All my things I have got to do. One of these days, my friend, that judgment seat of Christ is going to crack the eastern sky, and we are going to stand there before Him, and we are going to give an account of what we did with the truth and grace.

It is alright to have a zeal not according to knowledge. Everybody was there. I would not even begin to tell you some of the absolutely asinine and dumb things I did when I was a young Christian. I broke into certain churches, put tracts in certain places. I would never do that now. I mean, we had a little combat teams that dropped into places and did little things and and all for the glory of God, you know, and put tracts here that when the preacher or whoever opened it up, "Whoa, he got the Gospel of Jesus Christ." You know what? And that was cute back then, but it was stupid. That is how God works. See, I was too young out of the military. I thought you still ran night commando operations against the other churches. That was a zeal not according to knowledge. I have matured just a little bit.

I have done every dumb thing there is to do. I was a guy in my life that is probably going to die and go to hell, causing me, I think about him every day of my life, and he was a kid I went to high school with, and he looked up to me in high school, and I was not a Christian in high school, and years later, I run into him, and I was this hot zealot for God. Now I had a zeal, but I had no knowledge. I knew all the Bible, you know, I had been, I had been to, I had been to, you know, through the Bible now and learned all the things about the Romans road, and I knew all the, this kid knew nothing, and for 45 minutes, I beat this kid senseless. I did not want him to get saved. I wanted to show him how much I knew, and that boy probably walked away from there, and he is probably going to, if he is not dead already, he is probably on his way to dying and burning in eternity, all because one guy with a Bible with a zeal but not according to knowledge. But I learned. I told you, I am not the smartest guy in the world. I am the fastest one in the slow class.

Now God fixed me with that. Every year at the Stark County Fair, our church would have a little booth, and we would stand there, and we would ask people to take a survey, and it was a kind of a trap survey where you get in behind there and ask some general questions, and you ask them if they are saved, you know, and I was feeling, I was feeling my oats. I had already won two people to Christ last night. I was an expert. But you talk about ego and pride being involved, boy, I was there. And I walked in that night after working, okay, my Bible into the into the fairgrounds, and I am saying to myself, "Boy, I will tell you what, get me some more notches on my pistol tonight," you know. So I am out there, you know, and here comes two guys walking down the thing there, you know, and I look like, "Oh, I can handle these dudes." I walk out there, and I say, "Hey, would you like to take a survey here? We are taking a Christian survey. Would you like to come back here and take it?" And they said, "Absolutely." So I go back there, you know, and I am saying, "Oh boy, here we go, two more. I can just see it now up in heaven," you know. So I start to tell them, I said, I go down to the little list, you know, how old you are, did I, that where you are born, what do you think it is, where they think that, and finally I had to come down to the clincher question, "If you would have died today, do you know you go to heaven?" And what I had mistakenly gotten a hold of, or God orchestrating His events in my life because He knew I needed a good whacking, and can I just say this, and then I will not cuss anymore, uh, through the rest of the service, sometime when you have a zeal and an honor card, the best thing for you is a good butt kicking. I was not really cussing. Yeah, I spelled it. It is not B-U-T-T, it is B-U-T. But getting a kicking. See how it works that way?

Anyway, so I had two, all of a sudden when I am got my Bible open to Romans 3, and this time I am smart. I know the Romans road, the Matthew turnpike, and the Collisions highway. I have got it all, man. Except I got a hold of two Jehovah Witnesses. For the next hour, they beat me senseless. They ripped me to shreds. When I said, "You know for sure you have been here saved?" The guy says, "Saved from what?" And I said, "Saved from hell." He says, "What is hell mean in the Greek?" Hell. You know, for the next hour and a half, they ripped me to pieces. I was way into good year blimp. I came out deflated, broken, and I am walking back to my car just as clear as I am standing here this morning, and God said to me, "Feel like you are still a big boy now?" He said, "You know what, son, you better learn something. You are doing alright, and you are a good kid, and you have got some things I can probably use, but you better get one thing straight. You better not just know how to Paul parrot what somebody else says. You better learn why things are the way they are in the Bible." And that night I went home, and I made up my mind that will never happen to me again. I was arrogant. I was wrong. I was prideful. I had a zeal but no knowledge, and what God did with me, He put me in a dog fight with two Jap zeros that turned inside of me, turned up over me, and come out of the sun at me and shot my tail feathers off. That was 35 years ago. Every time I go home from Ohio, in fact, just a couple weeks ago, I go looking for him. "Where are you at now? Come on, I will show you where I am at. Come on, where you? I want a dog fight again."

Hey, the greatest lesson I ever learned in my life. God wants to use you. We have the greatest people in the world. I have never seen more people who have more ability to be the right kind of men and women, moms and dads, grandmas and grandpas, to be used of God in these last days. But I am telling you, you have got to take that zeal according to knowledge without knowledge

and turn that around to a zeal with knowledge. You have got to understand if I teach you the truth, but in ministry, you learn grace to use that truth. The reason why people go around and say, "Well, that church is all about truth," all that is because you never stuck around long enough to get in the ministry to see how grace was used because you do not want to be, and you do not, you do not want that. I do not want that.

The greatest burden in my heart is for you people who were saved sitting here this morning, be everything God wants you to be, just like Paul. You know why? Because Paul knew what was coming for Israel, and I know what is coming for the church, the judgment seat of Christ. Next week, I am going to walk you through five things that he gave these two, three boys, five things that he gave them that if you get them down, you are on your way.

Father, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. We love You.