

Romans 13

Sunday 2/14/2010

Today we are back in Romans chapter 13, and we have been dealing with government. We have been talking about that great chapter that really lays out how we, as God's people, should understand our government, how we should view it, and then how we should interact with it as Christians. I laid out for you the three institutions that God has ordained, and we have talked about those in great length.

I. God's Ordained Institutions: Civil Government

The first one we talked about was civil government. We laid this out and showed you the book of Ecclesiastes and how all forms of government are for one thing: to get around God and His Word. I gave you some great verses. I gave you Proverbs 19:21 that talks about:

Proverbs 19:21

There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.

That is a tremendous verse. I gave you Proverbs 16:25 that says:

Proverbs 16:25

There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

That is an incredible verse. I gave you 2 Corinthians 4:4 and Luke 4:5-6 that actually showed you how, in the world that we live in right now, Satan is called the god of this world, and how Jesus Himself recognized that all governments at this particular point in time, called the times of the Gentiles, are under his control. I took you to Daniel 2 and Daniel 7, and I showed you the setting up of the Gentile nations.

I gave you a tremendous verse in Proverbs 21:1 that talked about, which is a key verse in understanding government in Romans 13, the fact that the heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord. I talked to you about how, no matter whether it is a good king or a bad king, God uses them to accomplish His purpose. I showed you Psalms 9:17 that how the Bible says:

Psalms 9:17

The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

But probably the single greatest verse, and I know this was true for me in my life when I started to put it all together, but I think probably the greatest single verse was the one I gave you in Proverbs 16:4. It simply says:

Proverbs 16:4

The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

I think that single verse right there probably pulls more history together in the last six thousand years of man's history on Earth. It simply tells us that the devil—now he uses the word "the

wicked" here, and we know that is the devil—but when you find the word "the wicked" in the Old Testament, especially in Proverbs, it is always a direct reference to the Antichrist. We know that the devil is the Antichrist, but it is a direct reference to that context because he is "the wicked," and the Bible talks about in the New Testament when "the wicked" is revealed, talking about the Antichrist.

Yet it shows you that the wicked was created for the day of evil. The day of evil will be what we find in Matthew 24, which is commonly called the abomination of desolation. If you do not know what that means, that simply means that in the middle of the tribulation period, the devil, the wicked one, sits on the throne in Jerusalem and claims to be God, and therefore defiling that temple to the place, and that really kicks off the last three and a half years of the tribulation period, which ends with the most important event in the Bible, and that will be the second coming of Christ.

That verse simply says that God created everything for Himself, and even the devil, for the purpose of God establishing His kingdom. We know that that is found in the Bible in the context of the Day of the Lord, the Lord's Day, the second coming of Christ. Over 1,200 times in your Old Testament it talks about that, and it really makes up the theme of the Bible. God allows the devil to do his thing, but everything he does helps shape the world for the second coming of Christ. God, through His church, prepares the souls of men for the coming day when Christ comes to judge all men. Both work toward the same day. One prepares the physical kingdoms on this Earth, and the other one prepares the spiritual kingdom on this Earth for the second coming of Christ. It is just that simple.

You learned that, and then last week—and you should have all that stuff in your Bible now, or at least in your notebook so you can put it into your Bible in Romans 13 with all of those great verses that I gave you.

II. God's Ordained Institutions: The Church

Last week, we laid out the second structure of God's authority system, and that was the church. We saw God's spiritual accountability system laid out for you and me as believers. Last week, if you remember, we defined the church. We looked at the church as God's spiritual accountability structure in our lives, and then we looked at the authority that the church has in your life and my life and put it all together. We talked about accountability and responsibility. We talked about a chain of command that goes down through the New Testament church.

We basically had come up with a conclusion that there are two governments: there is one physical and one spiritual. The physical one is run by the devil to orchestrate all of the nations, physical nations on this Earth, toward the second coming of Christ. The spiritual one is through you and me, through the Holy Spirit of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and we now know that that one operates to bring the whole structure to, again, the second coming of Christ. You should have all that down in your Bible now, especially those of you that are on the third level, because you need to understand how the constitutional structure of a New Testament church works.

III. God's Ordained Institutions: The Family

Now the third one, and I am not going to spend a lot of time on this today, but I told you there were three. I told you there was civil government. I told you that there was the church, and then there was the family. In actuality, in the order that they are in your Bible, it would be the family first, and then of course civil government, and then of course the church. That is how they appear in your Bible.

I want to just touch on it a moment because, for a couple of reasons, I think it is important for you to know it, but I want you to see how it fits into all this too. I am going to talk to you about the importance of the family. Basically, when the family breaks down, everything else falls apart. Most of your kids do not know this, and I do not know that I would threaten them with this or scare them with this, but we all have children who are rebellious at times. I was a rebellious child when I was a kid, and most of you probably were. We all have rebellious children that we have to deal with at some point. Sometimes they go through stages of it and turn out fine. Sometimes they are rebellious all their life, whatever.

The bottom line is this: In the Old Testament, God had a—in today, when you have a rebellious child, you bring him to me, or you take him to a therapist, or you take him to a psychologist, or you take him to some place. In the Old Testament, it was different. They did not have psychologists or therapists. They did not have pastors. In the Old Testament, they dealt with child rebellion differently than we do today. In the Old Testament, they took him to a rock concert. I am not talking about the rock concert that you are thinking of. I am talking about they took them out and they stoned them to death. You will find it all through the Old Testament. Deuteronomy 21:18-21 is probably your best passage. Deuteronomy 5:16. In fact, it says in Ephesians 6:1, and this is a great verse:

Ephesians 6:1-2

Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise;

Now that was not the first commandment. I think the honor thy father and thy mother, if I were to count them up right in my mind, was the fifth commandment. But it says it is the first commandment with promise. Do you know what the promise is? The promise is, as a child, if you do not obey your mom and your dad, you are going to get killed. What happened in the Old Testament if a mom and a dad had a rebellious boy or girl, and they would not listen to them, would not do what they were supposed to do, and were anti-God and anti-whatever, just like kids are today? They took them to the elders, and of course the elders of the nation of Israel, they tried to reason with the boy and tried to work the thing out, or the girl. Of course, if it does not come to that, then you know what the Bible says in Deuteronomy 21:18, they killed them. They took them out and they stoned them.

Now that seems really harsh, but you see, you have got to get the right perspective. There is a great principle unfolding in that. God knew that He was trying to structure a nation, the nation of

Israel. He also knew that the key to the nation of Israel was families. The bottom line is simply this: in the Old Testament, if the family goes, in time the nation of Israel goes in a religious sense, and when the nation of Israel goes away in a religious sense, goes from God, then the structure of the nation as far as a civil government collapses too. My friend, that is exactly what is wrong with America today. That is fundamentally the problem in America.

You will know that when the family goes, which it has, when a family unit is fractured, which it is, when families no longer can control their children, but the children control their families, which is true—and I am not necessarily talking about in Christianity, I am talking about in the overall concept, but it is definitely true in Christianity because we should have the wherewithal to deal with children. But when the family breaks down in any civil government, within the United States or Spain or Germany, wherever it is, the single unit that is the thing, the glue that holds it all together, is the family. When the family goes, the next thing that goes is the church. And when the church goes, the next thing that goes is the country, and that is where we are at today.

That is why you are going to find the model set up for you in Genesis 3 and Genesis 4. Did you ever see the model? The first attack the devil does, the first attack the devil does on the history of mankind, sets forth the model for everything else through the Bible. The first attack the devil does is against the Word of God. He shows up to Eve in Genesis 3 and simply says, "Yea, hath God said?" and then he literally changes what God said. After he attacked and got the Word of God out of the way, do you know the next thing he attacked? He attacked the family. He attacked the family because he knew something that most of us do not know, or if we did know it, we do not follow it, and it is the problem in America today, and that is the fact that when the family unit structure breaks down, everything in time breaks down.

Those are things that you need to understand, and that is not our study today, but that is an incredible concept that helps you understand and get the perspective of what is going on in America today. America in the last 60-70 years has lost their children. Some of us are old enough to remember the hippie movement back in the 60s; most of you do not even know what a hippie is. But the hippie era was back in the 60s, and the hippie era was a lot of young people, young kids, and they had one issue. Do you know what their issue was? Authority. They wanted to rebel against any kind of structured authority. So they wore their hair long, they did not take baths, they wore ugly clothes, they did everything against established society because they were against society. That was 40, 50 years ago, and now we are moving to the point where we see it has eroded in everything in our government.

I told you a couple of weeks ago, the same hippies that were back in the 60s that were against the structure, any kind of authority structure, are now our senators and congressmen and our presidents and everybody just about in office, except the old guys, are part of that mindset. It is a tragedy, but that is just the way that it breaks down.

IV. The Minister of God and Civil Authority

Now, having said that, let us look at Romans 13 again. I have laid out basically now all three of them for you, two of them very well, and we made mention of the third one, and we will talk about that in time more down through there, and we have talked about it before. But let us pick up our study again in verse 1, and we are going to be at verse 4 today, but let us just put it all in a context.

Romans 13:1-8

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

Now, Father, we do thank You and praise You today, and we love You. We thank You for the time we have set aside to study Your Word, for the folks that have come out to hear today. We pray, Lord, and be mindful of all the things that You have given to us that we need to be stewards over. We pray today right now, Lord, I pause and I ask You to give Zach and Jenny and Kyle other words to say down there in Warrensburg. And Lord, You take that and let us be found faithful, and let the men and women in his church see the tremendous opportunity that we have, and we may be able to develop that. And God, I pray that even as I am speaking, it would be Your will that You put in the heart of some young man and some young lady right now that someday, Father, if God honors that and glorifies that and uses that, that we could start a church down there, Father, that would meet the needs, because that is what we are all about. It is foolish for me to stand in a pulpit and ask people to reproduce themselves by winning people to Christ in other people's lives. It is foolish for me first of all to do it and ask them to do it if I am not willing to do it. But it is also foolish, Lord, for me to do it and then ask them to do it but not understand that just as I have to reproduce myself in other people, and these people need to reproduce themselves in other people, that this church needs to reproduce itself. And in time, Lord, help us to do that, and we will be found faithful in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

Now we are going to pick it up in verse 4 today, and verse 4 is a key verse to keep in mind, and it says here, talking about civil government now, back to that, that "he is a minister of God to thee for good." Here again, and this is the problem we get into when it comes to the Bible sometimes, that we get used to the definition of a word, and we do not always know that there are multiple definitions of that same word that do not mean the same thing.

For instance, you take the word "damnation." When I say the word "damnation," you and I think of it as going to hell and being damned. But when you study your Bible, you learn that there is a physical damnation that would be your flesh, and there is a spiritual damnation that would be dying and going to hell. An example of the physical damnation is somebody that lived their life, took drugs and booze and all things all of their life, and then wound up dying at an early age because they burned their body out. That is a physical damnation, and of course there are two kinds of damnation.

There are two kinds of "saved" in the Bible, and we hear the word "saved," we think "born again," but in the Bible, the word "saved," when you find it, is not always talking about being born again. Sometimes the Bible talks about being saved from being deceived. It always is not used that way, and of course the context is what determines that. Then you are going to find words like the word "temptation." Somebody says, "Well, but the Bible says that God tempts no man with temptation." That is true. Then you go someplace else and it says, "And God did tempt Abraham." Contradiction? No, no, there are just two different definitions for the word "temptation," and that is things you have got to learn.

The word "hope" is another one. Paul says, "My hope in Jesus Christ." Oh, you mean Paul hopes he is saved? No. When we think of the word "hope," we think, "Well, I hope you show up." "Well, I hope you pay me the money you owe me." Say that to my kids all the time, "I hope you do this, I hope you do that." So we think when Paul says, "My hope in Jesus Christ and my salvation in Christ," we think that he is saying, "Well, I hope I am really saved." No, no, no, he is saying in that sense that Jesus Christ is his only hope. That is what he is talking about.

Now it takes the word "minister." That is another word that has two definitions. When we talk about the word "minister," we obviously think church, pastor, Bob, he is a minister, he talks about training ministers. Of course, the word "minister" does not always mean in the context of a church. If you go to England, you know what you find? You find a prime minister. In our own country, you will have the minister of foreign affairs, or a minister of this, or minister of the interior. In that case, a minister, as he is talking about here, has nothing to do with God in the sense of the church or being a minister like I am or like some of you are, but it is an aspect of taking care of the details of that particular country, and that is what he is talking about when he is saying that a President Obama, anybody down and through in history, is God's minister, and God through them ministers to take care of things, and even God uses them as a minister in civil affairs.

Let me just throw this out to you, and I am glad this is on tape because somebody would love to take this and use it. You would not think of Adolf Hitler being a minister of God, would you? I mean, come on, Adolf Hitler, a minister of God? But you see, if you lived in 606 BC, you would

not think Nebuchadnezzar was the minister of God. It is just the fact that you do not know anything about Nebuchadnezzar, and because you live in a close proximity to 1940-1945, we know about the atrocities of Adolf Hitler, but we do not understand the atrocities of Nebuchadnezzar. How about 589 BC, Sennacherib, would he be the guy that took the northern tribes into captivity? It is hard for us to realize that he would be a minister of God, and yet in the sense of Romans 13, in the sense of whatever God is doing, civil nations are used of God, and the leaders as ministers, because the heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord, to accomplish what He wants to accomplish to get ready for the second coming of Christ.

Let me show you something. I will show you this thing in action. You do not have to turn back there, but write this down and look it up later sometime. Isaiah 44:28. Isaiah 44:28 is talking about Cyrus, king of Persia. Cyrus, the king of Persia, was a pagan king. Cyrus, the king of Persia, was somebody who died and probably went to hell. There is no record of anything, any time, any place in his life where he ever gave any honor or glory to God. He is a pagan Gentile king in a time that the devil runs the world, and a time that a Gentile, just like everybody else, and yet in Isaiah 44:28, do you know what God says to him? He says, "Cyrus, my shepherd." My shepherd. Well, that is the word for pastor. He says, "Cyrus, my shepherd." Do you know what he says in Isaiah 45:1? He says, "Cyrus, my anointed." My anointed. That is the designation for somebody in a ministry. When we ordained Greg last week, you know what we did? We laid our hands on him, and basically this church, through the Holy Spirit of God, was anointing him for the work of the ministry. And yet here is God calling a pagan king His shepherd and His anointed. So Cyrus was God's minister for right, even though he belonged in the devil's system.

Let me just say this to you. I have got to stop here and say this. If you ever grasp this concept that I am trying to lay out to you, if you ever get your head wrapped around it and you see this thing the way that it is, and I am trying to lay it out for you as best as I may be, if you ever see this thing and you get it into your mind with what we are doing on Tuesday night on church history or in the whole concept of the Bible, brother, look out. I am telling you. Do you know what Cyrus did? He was the wicked king that died and went to hell, that had no reverence for God whatsoever, but he was God's minister for right because do you know what God did? God reached down and put into his heart to send the Jews back, and they go back under Cyrus after the seventy-year captivity, and in that sense he was God's minister. He was God's anointed.

Do you know what Adolf Hitler did by 1940-1945? He got the Jews ready to go back to the land that they did in 1948. If it would not have been for Adolf Hitler in World War II, as wicked and godless and perverted, and he is absolutely probably in hell this morning, but he was God's minister in the space that he was probably one of the wickedest guys in the 20th century, but God used him to get the Jew back in 1948, just like He did Cyrus. When somebody talks like that, you get all nervous because you relate to Adolf Hitler. You relate to Joseph Stalin. You relate to Fidel Castro. You relate to Mussolini. You relate to people like Osama bin Laden. Who would think today that Osama bin Laden is God's minister? He is a Muslim. He hates you. He will kill you in a heartbeat. He lays awake at night thinking about how to destroy America because he hates us, and it would be the farthest thing in our mind to think that he is God's minister, but he is. Do you

know why? Because is God using him to set up the Middle East where the Lord is going to come back?

If you can ever grasp what I am laying out to you, and you can keep that in your mind when you look at history and you realize that nothing, nothing, nothing that any nation does, any king does, and anybody does has anything to do with God's plan other than help it, it goes a whole new meaning to Romans 8:28, which says:

Romans 8:28

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

It gives a whole new idea and concept, and it gives you what I try to get to you all the time. It gives you perspective. It gives you perspective, and it is an incredible concept all down through history. No matter how good they were, no matter how bad they were, they were God's minister, and God uses them in spite of themselves. Pharaoh is another one. God put Israel down in Egypt for 430 years. Put them under the hardest burden and bondage you ever saw in your life. Many of them died down there, but you know what? God used that experience to forge them into a nation, and it is endless. It is endless.

V. The Importance of Fear and Consequences

Alright, now look at verse 4. It says, "For he is the minister of God to thee for good." Whether he is wicked or not, it is immaterial. "If thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."

Now there are a number of things in this passage that we need to comment on, but the first thing I want you to see is found in verse 4, and this concept is totally foreign today, and that is to be afraid. To be afraid. We have in our own country a complete and total breakdown of this concept, not only in civil government but also in God's government. Fear, my friend, no matter what you are told today, fear is probably the healthiest emotion you have got to keep you out of trouble.

When you start to raise your children and you start to deal with your kids, do you not want your kids to love you, but you want them to fear you? You do not want your kids to be afraid of you. You do not want them to crawl in the corner when you walk in the room. You want them to run to you. But you want them to understand that as their parent, if they do wrong, there are consequences that they have to face. That is what the civil government does. It is a structure, and that is why he says, "be afraid," because if you do wrong, you are going to get busted. The problem we have in our country today, the problem we have in our churches, is that nobody is afraid of the consequences anymore. The fear of consequences that go along with breaking the law.

There are certain parts of just about any place in this town you can go. You could have the most intentions, best intentions, and just be out doing your thing and get killed. You could get killed by a drive-by shooting. Why? Because gangs today, you want to get into the gang. See, gangs in

my day, you wanted to get into the gang, you know what you did? You threw a rock through somebody's window, or you cut your wrist, not very bad, and you were blood brothers. It was goofy stuff. As they got on, you know, when they got fraternities and all that, you know, when you wanted to be part of a fraternity, you had to do something. You swallowed goldfish. I remember one time one guy got into an organization and he had to eat 100 whole raw boiled eggs in 10 seconds or something like that. We have come a long way.

Now you want to get in the gang, and you understand, you know what you do? You walk up to somebody and you kill them. You shoot them. You kill them. You do not know them. Know nothing about them. They are totally a victim to it, and the only thing is because we today have no value for life, we walk up, you kill the guy, and now you are part of the club, and he feels nothing about it. There is no consequence. There is no, "Oh, what did I do?" He is now part, in fact, he feels good about it. He is patted on the back. "You made it. You are one of us. You can kill without any remorse," and that is what we are looking for. That is why the abortions are out of control today. That is why abortion is off the page. People will do those things and never have one aspect of anything, any consequences that go along with it, and there are no consequences of wrongdoing anymore. You literally, as O. J. Simpson, get away with murder because you can always find an avenue without, or a slick lawyer that will get you through it. The whole system is backwards and broken.

Now this is one of the things that I face in ministering with so many of you young people, and some of you older folks, you know what I am about to say. I really feel sorry for you younger kids if you are in your 20s or maybe even your 30s. I feel sorry for you. Not in a bad way, but I feel sorry for you because of the fact that in our generation, in our generation, we grew up respecting authority. We always did not do what is right, and there was as much crime and corruption back then as there was today, but there was an attitude in the world and in the country about the fact of authority structure and consequences to what you did, and it is not there anymore.

In my day, there was no divorce. There was no divorce. When I grew up in the 50s and the 60s, nobody got a divorce. Do you know who got divorces? Movie stars. Do you know what it was? It was a scandal back then. How many of you know who Elizabeth Taylor is? Good. Elizabeth Taylor was hot to trot in the 50s and the 60s. She was beautiful, and she was a starlet. I mean, she was absolutely gorgeous. She played a lot of old movies, and I do not know if she is still alive right now or not, but is she? She still is? She was drop-dead gorgeous, and we did not have tabloids back then. Like you go to the thing now and you buy the tabloids and what else, but they had magazines about movie stars. Maybe they still do, but now they did not have tabloids back then. They did not have National Enquirer for inquiring minds. They did not have all of that, but you got movie star magazines, and that was the hot rage for women to read. I remember she was married probably four or five times. I remember the first time she got married, she married a guy by the name of Richard Todd, and then she married some guy after that that was a real dork-looking guy, and then she married somebody else, and then she finally married Richard Burton. How many know who Richard Burton is? Alright. He was married to her, and she had been married three or four times, and the scandals were every time. I mean, it was a scandal. Every

time she left, she left one guy for somebody else, and the only people who did that were rich people and movie stars, and the common ordinary people were incensed or enthralled or enraged one way or the other. It was something that you just did not do. Boy, look at it today. Look at it today.

I told you, in my day, there were no abortions. There was no abortion. I will tell you something else, in my day, there were no drugs. When you went to high school in my era, in 1960, 65, 66, 67, 68, when you went to high school back then, the only people who took drugs were people who were outcast with everybody else. I remember back in the 40s and the 50s, whoever heard of Gene Krupa? Good. Let us go over there. Try this again. Whoever heard of Gene Krupa? Hold him up. I want to see here now. If you know who you are, keep it up. I am taking a survey. Who knows Gene Krupa? Do you know him? Now get your hand up so I can see. It is not hard to follow. Boy, there is a generation gap for us.

Gene Krupa was a drummer, and he was a good drummer. He played with all the big bands back in the big band era. He played with Benny Goodman. He played with Tommy Dorsey. He played with all the great bands back then. Gene Krupa comes to a place where, after he got really famous and he got into all of the stuff, he got smoking marijuana. They called them reefers back then. They did not call them marijuana. They called them reefers. And he got taking pills. Do you know what? He got a drug addiction. So he lost everything that he had as far as no band would touch him. Because the only bands back then that did that were the real seedy ones. That is who he got hooked up to him. But he got him hooked up on it. When he got to the place where he got hooked on it and they were found out about it and he got busted by the cops and it became public, he could not get a job playing anywhere. They would not touch him. They would not have anything to do with him. He went to rehab and he got all squared out. A band took a chance on him. Do you know what he did? In his first performance when he came back, he was playing a bunch of college kids. College kids now. It was one of those sunken floors where the band is down at the bottom, and when they started out, the band kind of starts playing and it raises up the floor and everybody is crushed. When that thing came up and they knew that Gene Krupa was there, they threw things at him. They called him "Doper." They called him everything in the world. Do you know why? Because back then, in my era, only the idiots did it. Well, by the way, only the idiots still do it today. But we just got more idiots now. That is all there is to it.

That is the way it went. That is just swift. You did the crime, you did the time. There were no drive-by shootings. There were no random killings. Do you know what you could do in my day? You could park your car at night and leave your keys in the car. You could go to bed at night and not lock your front door or your back door. My mom still scares me to death when she is in a retirement home now, but when she lived by herself, she never locked her door. She would go to bed at night, and I would say, "Mom, lock your door." She is living in the past. You try that today, man, and you will wind up with your throat cut. But not back then. Do you know what? Back then, you kids could, as a young kid, you could play all through the neighborhood. You could go wherever you want to go. Nobody molested children back then. Oh, they did, but not like today. As a child, you can, a parent, you can let your kids go anywhere with anybody. Try it today.

Do you know what the problem is? Today we have no fear of consequences. We are not afraid. Because the structure, our society, has taken from our generation and the best three or four generations, two key things, and that is responsibility and accountability. Young people today and generations going back, the reason why there is crime, murder, and everything that goes on in our society is simply because our society has taken away the consequences of doing something wrong. You are a 15-year-old kid, and I cannot even imagine a 15 or a 12-year-old kid killing somebody with a gun. I mean, not accidentally, not two kids playing cowboy and did not know it was loaded. I mean, shooting somebody because you did not like them. But do you know why they do it? Because their parents are off to that point, putting no consequences on them. Do you know why they do it? Because they get to the point that they are 15 years old, they go into a juvenile facility until they are 21, and then they go free. No consequences.

If you murder somebody today, you will get your slick lawyer, and he will get you some kind of plea bargain. He will get you a thing where if it is capital murder, they will work a deal, then it is manslaughter. He will get you a deal where, you know what, if you cannot get out of it and it is capital murder, he will say you were temporarily insane or you were driven by some passion. There are no consequences anymore. There is no responsibility for what we do. That is how it is broken down. That is how it is broken down. Somebody killed somebody, and the first thing you hear is, "Well, he had a bad relationship with his parents." Okay? And that has to do with what? Some said, "Well, you know what, he was a kid. He just killed 15 women and probably 60 more we have not found yet." And the defense attorney gives up, and he says, "Well, Your Honor, and gentlemen of the jury, you know, you have got to understand they had a bad home life. He had a bad relationship with his family." Well, everybody else was out there eating sugar frosted flakes and eating Cheerios and all that stuff. All he had was old cold mush, and because he was denied those things, he wound up being a serial killer. That will work. Crazy.

In my day, when you took dope, you were a doper. Today you are a substance abuser. Sounds nice, does it not? Back in my day, you were an alcoholic, you were drunk. Now you are a chronic alcoholic. Back in my day, and I realize a lot of people lose their homes today because there is no reason for themselves, but if you got, we had bums. Today they are called transients. Sounds nice, does it not? Our whole society has taken the dregs of that kind of life and tried to give it some kind of really nice name. You are not a drunk, you are a chronic alcoholic. Sounds almost want to be one with that kind of name. Depression, anxiety, drug abuse, alcoholism, not sin anymore. It is now sickness. You go to somebody with your drug abuse problem or your alcohol problem, and they will tell you, "Well, it is in your genes. It is in your family. You cannot help yourself. It is hereditary." What we have done in our society that adds weight to it is that we have taken sin and made it a sickness.

Now do you know what is wrong with making sickness a sin? Nobody here, if you got a cold today, unless you kissed somebody on the mouth hard who you knew they had a cold, if you got the flu, you did not go out in the morning saying, "I am going to go get the flu today, and I am going to enjoy it." You had no responsibility or accountability to get the cold or the flu. The moment you make sin a sickness, then you take away any responsibility or accountability for it. This is where our whole society is at today. It is broken. It is broken down. There are no

consequences for doing wrong anymore. Do you know what? We come to the point where we have lost the whole system in our civil government.

But yet no responsibility, no accountability, no fear of God. We see it in the Christianity side of the spiritual government, in the people structure. Do you know what? I do not know how many times that you go to most churches in this city, you will not hear any hard preaching. They do not want to chase you off. They have got such big budgets and such big financial things that they have got to do. They will tell you whatever you want to hear and not tell you what you should hear just so they will not offend you and you will leave. There is no hard preaching anymore. There is no hell. There is no judgment. I guarantee you, if you got all the messages and sermons together in this city in the last year that preachers preached hellfire and brimstone on the judgment seat of Christ, I bet you could not fill a notebook with them. Because of that, there is no responsibility and no accountability. In fact, it is just the opposite. I hear it all the time, "Well, in your teaching, you have to uplift, and in your teaching, you have to motivate, and in your teaching, you..." But the bottom line is this, my friend, if you do not fear God and the consequences of doing wrong, what is the point?

Somebody says, "You cannot scare people into hell. You have got to win them with love." Hey, I understand God's love, but do you know what God's love really is defined in the Bible? God's love, somebody says, "Well, he is such a hard preacher. He does not have any love, and he does not have any grace." Do you know what love and grace is defined in the Bible? Love and grace is God pouring out His wrath on His Son on the cross for you and for me. That is God's love and God's grace. We live in a world that we do not want to hear today, Christian world, just like the civil government. We do not want to hear it.

Listen, fear is the healthiest emotion God ever gave you. It is a thing that keeps you from screwing up. Why, if right now somebody ran into this back room back here and had a police uniform on, and policemen came on in here, and firemen were right down the step behind them, and they told us, screamed loud, and some of them had bullhorns, and some of them were running around screaming that somebody just got a phone call and a bomb is going to go off, and it is three minutes to 11. And they said that in three minutes, there is a bomb in here. We do not know where it is at. Everybody has got to get out, and they were screaming and yelling, you know what? You would be out of here so fast you would not know what hit you. I doubt very seriously if somebody was sitting in their seat and crossed their arms and says, "Unless he says it with love, I ain't going. Why does he have to yell? Why can't he talk in a civil tone?" Because there is a bomb going to go off. You see, that is where we are. That is where we are. We sit here and now we look back there, and about a 1,200-pound African lion comes romping into this place. You would be out of here so fast. Some of you would be hanging on these fans, and you would not think you could do it. You would be surprised how you can move when you have to.

The pastors say, the churches say, the people say, the theologians say, "You shouldn't scare people." The Bible says in Hebrews 11:7 that:

Hebrews 11:7

By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

Jude 1:23 says:

Jude 1:23

And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

Hebrews 12:28 says:

Hebrews 12:28

Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

The Bible says in Proverbs 3:7:

Proverbs 3:7

Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.

Somebody said, "Well, you shouldn't scare people in your preaching. You shouldn't talk about hell. You shouldn't talk about judgment." Well, I will tell you what old Bob Jones used to say. He would say, "You are better off to be hell-scared than hell-scorching." We, as God's people today, we are afraid of everything in this life except the one person we should be afraid of: and that is God. Matthew 10:28 says:

Matthew 10:28

And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Now I mean, you know, somebody says, "Well, yeah, but the Bible says that perfect love casteth out fear." "I am not afraid of God. I am not afraid of God. Me and Him are best buddies. We walk together every day." If you cannot see His power evident in my life in this church, then you need to be someplace else. You and Him are walking together as close as I can. I do not fear Him, but I do fear what He can do to me if I screw up because I know there are consequences. Now it has nothing to do with me fearing God, but everything with me doing between walking through the white lines. That is what I am talking about. That is what I am talking about.

Now look at verse 5 there. Here is another aspect. It is not just because you fear the wrath, but for conscience sake. It says, "for conscience sake." Yet the Bible says in 1 Timothy 4:2 that you and I, as God's people, we can sear our conscience. Something that used to bother us does not bother us anymore. There were times that we would not do something or we would do something, it would just put us prostrate on the ground, and we would weep to God. Now we just do it and smile. You are searing your conscience, searing your conscience.

Here is how it breaks down. God sets up the government. They set up laws. They are a minister to God for right, even though it is an ungodly government. We respect them, and we fear what happens if you break the law, because there has to be a structure of accountability in civil society. As an unsaved man, you need to fear the consequences of a holy God and the fact that your life without God will send you screaming into the lake of fire. You need to fear that. As a Christian, you do not need to fear your government. There is no reason to fear your government in the sense of that because you are not planning on doing anything wrong, but you fear them, and it keeps you from doing wrong. For a child of God, the real fear needs to be, 2 Corinthians 5:11 says, the judgment seat of Christ.

I firmly believe, we talked to Mr. Bist about this Thursday night, I firmly believe that you and I, as God's people, as much as we try to learn the Bible, if I have come to any conclusion in my life in over 40, almost 40 years of studying the Bible, I found that I have just scratched the surface of this thing, and I am telling you, the older I get, the more I figure that the things, the way I figured out they were going to work over here, they are not going to work at all. Boy, you take that judgment seat of Christ. You take that judgment seat of Christ. We take that thing and yawn today. Do you know why? No accountability, no responsibility, no fear of the consequences, no fear of standing before God after He died for you and all the things that He did with your whole life and where you are at with the Lord.

Now, I understand in saying that, that there are many of you here today that are just gotten saved, and you are on fire, and you want to do what is right, and you take this the wrong way because you will think you are not doing enough when in actuality you are probably right where you are at. I am talking about us old folks. I am talking about you and me who know better, you and me who have been around for a while, you and me that understand that we take ministry becomes just an annoyance sometimes. We do things because we are expected to do them. But really it is an annoyance. It gets in the way of what you really want to do. That is our problem, you see. The reason we get that way is, Phil, I hope you never get sick. I hope you never get sick. But I am glad you are still here if you are sick. Do you know why? Because if it was not for you, I think I was preaching to nobody else in here. I am just kidding.

Let me tell you something. As a child of God, you and I may never go to hell. But you better realize that the judgment seat of Christ will be the closest you ever get as a child of God to going to hell. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 3:15 and 1 Corinthians 3:13 that the fire is going to try every man's works. That is the same fire of the people tormented in hell. The Bible says that every, the fire is going to make manifest what we did. We are going to stand there and watch the fire of hell, the fire that the damnation of hell, try our works and what we did. That fire is going to take everything from you except your soul. And you just say, "Oh well." "Oh well." I have even had people tell me, "Well, you know what, Bob, that may be true. But at least I will be saved." What a fool you are. What a fool you are.

Why, if you went out tonight someplace or last night someplace and you went out, your wife and your family was there at home, and you went out with a guy someplace or out to somebody's house, and you came back about 11 o'clock and you saw as you come over the hill, red lights flashing, and you got around to your street and looked down there, and there were four or five

fire trucks, police cars, ambulances all over the place, and you drove up in your driveway, and there was once your home, which is now a cinder down to the foundation, and you get out of that car and they tell you, "You lost your wife, you lost your boy, you lost your daughter, you lost your dog, you lost your cat, you lost everything you have got." Would you walk around the street praising God that you are still okay? You better get a perspective and a reality, people. There is a judgment seat of Christ coming. Hey, a thousand times in my life I wanted to do something, but I did not do it because I recognized the consequences of doing it. As a child of God, you may never go to hell, but that same fire is going to take everything you have got. The judgment seat of Christ today, my friend, is the most unknown, misunderstood, and foreign doctrine of the church.

So we have three forms, you see, and we have that for accountability, and we have it for structure, and in both cases, civil and spiritual, we have lost the two aspects that make it work, and that is why Christianity has collapsed just like civil government has collapsed. No accountability for what we do. No responsibility. Your kids do something wrong, you do not hold them accountable, you alibi for them. You fix it for them. You do not make them face the consequences, you work a way out around it so they do not have to deal with it. That is what we do.

VI. Capital Punishment: A Biblical Doctrine

Alright, now look back to verse 4. You can breathe easy now, I am off that. "But if thou do evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."

Now I do not know if you know it or not, but that is one of the greatest, clearest verses in all the Bible on the doctrine of capital punishment. Capital punishment as a Bible doctrine is to be part of the governmental structure, and if you do not carry it out, if you leave people on death row, and there is any way you want to do it, electric chair, hanging, lethal injection, firing squad, guillotine, whatever you want, there are consequences that come along with that.

Now capital punishment, as you obviously already know today, is a very hot topic in our world today. It is a hot topic in Missouri. It is a hot topic in Kansas. The issue that always comes up is an issue that always comes up in a society when they do not, when they take away responsibility and accountability, and nobody has to be accountable for anything. It is hard to execute somebody and take their life when your whole structure is built around the fact that they are not accountable anyhow. See how that thing works?

Of course, personally, I think the most horrific way of being a capital punishment, I think they ought to have it in America. I think capital punishment in America ought to be this form, and it ought to be public. I think the most terrible form, when I think about capital punishment, the most terrible form to me is the guillotine. That was big in France. Louis XIV. The guillotine was one of those things where they had a structure where they laid you down with your hands behind your back. They put your head to a little deal and put a board down on it, and then there was a big thing up here with a big blade on it. That thing was razor sharp, and that guy hit that handle,

and that thing came down and chopped your head off and went into a basket. Now to me that is, I mean, and I have never been executed. But to me that would be the tough way to go.

I saw an old 1930s film one time of a guy being electrocuted, a real guy being electrocuted, back in the 30s or early 40s. I will tell you that that is kind of scary too. I mean this guy was, I mean I had a tough time eating anything deep fried for a while. I am telling you. It was pretty gross. But I cannot imagine anything worse than a guillotine. I mean the very fact that you know you tie your hands behind your back and they lay you on a table and they put you in there and you are just waiting for that blade to go. At least until they give you a lethal injection, they put you to sleep. I mean, you know they knock you out, you know, it is like killing a dog. You know they knock you out and then they put the thing, stops your heart. You do not even know what happened. And the hanging would be tough. I mean you know it would not be the hanging, it would be the drop at the end that really gets you. But a firing squad, I think it would probably be the best. Because you could always, and I guess if you really wanted to overcome it, you could yell and scream something right at the moment, and that would get your mind off of it, and then you would be dead, and you would not have to worry about it. I guess. I do not know. That would not work good with electrocution because that takes 20 minutes sometimes. But guillotine is tough. I have even heard stories where after they cut the guy's head off, they pick up his head and he is still looking around trying to talk. That always bothered me. What if you can see, you know? What is he trying to say? Maybe he is trying to sing, "I ain't got nobody, boom, boom, nobody got me." I do not know. But you know, that is scary to me. I would not want to do it. And then in real bad cases, they turn you around, and you have got to watch the blade come down. That is even tougher. That is tougher.

Do you know what I worry about? I worry about to get a dull blade. Oh, I would. I mean, would it not be a terrible thing? It is something else if it only goes halfway through. I mean, in hanging, if they do not kill you the first time, you get to go free. I guess if it only went down through and cut half your neck, they say, "Where are you going?" "Oh yeah, where are you going?" It is going to spurt blood over everybody. It is scary. Do you know why I do not fear those things? I am not planning on killing anybody. I think it is a terrible way to die. I think that public executions, like they used to have, I think it puts a fear in people. I think your young people see that thing. But today we are afraid of traumatizing our people. So our young kids. Do you know what we do? We let them grow up, and they go out and traumatize somebody else. I mean trauma, trauma everywhere, you just pick where it is going to hit you at.

Now do you know what our statue is for our justice system and the legal system? I told you before that all this stuff is based on the Bible. Have you ever seen the statue for justice? Well, first of all, it is a woman. That would be Proverbs 31. And she has got a blindfold on because justice is blind or supposed to be. Then she has got a scale of balances in her hand, and that is a biblical way of measuring things, fair and balanced. Then on the other hand, do you know what she has got? She has got a sword. Do you know why she has got a sword? Because the word there is "execute." Now look in your Bible for a moment right there. Look at that word "execute." I am going to teach you something about your Bible. Now if you have got a real King James Bible or a real Bible, that word "execute" will be in italics.

Now what do the italic words mean in your Bible? I will tell you what they mean. When you translate from one language to another language, say in this case Hebrew to English, it does not match up exactly. What they call idioms in languages do not add up. So the verse, if you put it in language going for the other straight across, it would not make any sense. So the words in italics, when the King James translators came, when the men put that Bible together who knew their Bible and knew the Bible doctrine probably better—and there were 57 men when they started out. They all did not make it. Some of them died. But the bottom line was they were men who knew that Bible inside and upside down. When they translated that thing from Greek to English, when the idioms did not line up and they had to put words in, they were so honest with their translation that they put the words in italics so you and I would know what words they put in. But they also put those words in based on the Bible doctrine they knew, and they knew in Romans 13 what that sword was for. So they chose the word "execute." Pay me for that later if you want, but that is what they did. That is exactly what they did. They called this woman here, this system is to carry out wrath and execute.

That is why you find capital punishment taught all the way through your Bible, which is taught before the law in Genesis 9:6 where you are told that:

Genesis 9:6

Whoso shedeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.

It is also taught under the law in Numbers 35. It is also taught after the law here in Romans 13:4 where the sword is to execute. Then you find it in Acts 25:11 where Paul was before Felix at Caesarea. Do you know what Paul tells him? Now he is before a civil Roman court. He is not in the church, he is in a civil Roman court before Felix in the city of Caesarea. Do you know what he tells him? Eyeball to eyeball. "Look, Felix, if I have done anything to warrant my death, capital punishment, as a Christian, I refuse not to die." Do you know why? He believed in capital punishment. It is taught before the law, during the law, and after the law because it is part of the structure. It is part of the responsibility and accountability. The problem today is there is no Bible any longer, so there is no absolute authority.

Now I told you that God's form of government was the nation of Israel. That is our model. I also showed you how America was originally set up after that model. Our laws, and we talked about this before, and the Old Testament laws were based on the laws given to the nation of Israel. Now do you know why you have got a controversy today in separation of church and state? They want to take the Ten Commandments out of all the courthouses. Do you know why the Ten Commandments were in the courthouses to begin with? Because originally this country was founded and based on those Ten Commandment principles by which this country was to operate. But in time, when the authority goes, the structure goes, the Ten Commandments have got to go. I mean it is just that simple.

I mean, do you know when you go to a trial, when you go to a trial and you are going to take a trial and you have got to have a jury, how many people on that jury? How many? Twelve.

Twelve. Oh my, my, my. The exact same number of the elders of Israel when they had to deal with a matter. One from each tribe. See? See? See? See?

Now I will show you how God fixed these things. I will show you how God waxed this thing. You go to New York today, you go there down by the river, you know what you will find? You will find the UN building. United Nations. The United Nations was put together early on as the League of Nations after World War I, then after World War II it became the United Nations. Anybody know what verse they put on top of United Nations in 1947 when they put that building in? Anybody know what verse is up there? Anybody know? Come on. Anybody know? Anybody want to know? One. I will tell you guys afterwards, okay then? Because nobody else seems to care. The United Nations is an incredible organization. And up on their top of their building they put Isaiah 2:4.

Isaiah 2:4

And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

Now you want to know how God fixed that thing up? I am telling you. If you are unsaved here this morning or you are a saved person, look for the thing in your life that is right under your nose that God has given you that you are missing, and that is what He is going to judge you with. That is what He is going to judge you with. Could you imagine being a member of the UN for 20 years, walking in and out those front doors with that verse over you that talks about Jesus Christ coming back and the millennial reign of God's government, and everything you do in there is to get around His coming back? Say, "How is God going to judge these people?" He is going to send them right under front steps, lift the verse off, and send them to hell with it every day of their life, every day of your life. You watch and find it. You figure it out for yourself. You can be as slick and smart as you think you want to be as a Christian out of fellowship with God, but the end of the road comes when you stand before Him, and He takes that thing that you have thumbed your nose at and beats you to death with it at the judgment seat of Christ. I am telling you, God has got it fixed, man.

Now you look at the book of Numbers 35. Numbers 35:16 says this:

Numbers 35:16

And if he smite him with an instrument of iron, so that he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death.

1. The murderer shall be put to death.

Numbers 35:17

And if he smite him with a stone of the hand, wherewith he may die, and he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death.

2. The murderer shall be put to death.

Numbers 35:18

Or if he smite him with a hand weapon of wood, wherewith he may die, and he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death.

3. The murderer shall be put to death.

Look at verse 30.

Numbers 35:30

Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die.

4. The murderer shall be put to death.

Look at verse 31.

Numbers 35:31

Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death.

5. The murderer shall be put to death.

Five times. Five is the number of death in the Bible, by the way. He tells you if somebody murders somebody, you kill them. You kill them. In this chapter, and we do not have time to get into it, but in this chapter he lays out the difference between manslaughter, which is accidentally killing somebody, and premeditated murder, which is malice in your heart.

Now look at this. When you come on through these Old Testament passages, you want to add Deuteronomy 19:11, and then you want to flip over to the New Testament in 1 John 3:15. Then it defines for you what murder is. You have got to get these definitions down. It is not enough to say, "Well, the Bible says, 'Thou shalt not kill,' so do not kill anybody." Well, if that is true, how come God is killing everybody? If that is true, how come God told you here to kill the murderer? See, we have got to get this sorted out. You have got to understand this when you go out of here today. The bottom line is real simple. It is real simple. He explains in these chapters what manslaughter is, and he explains in these chapters what premeditated murder is.

Then he put the key in 1 John 3:15, and it says, and for you and for me, oh, this is a good one. This is for you smug people out there that, and God's people all over the world that would not think of picking up a pistol and shooting somebody, would not think of picking up a knife and stabbing somebody, but would not think of going out and killing somebody. But you hate people in your heart for whatever reason, and yet the Bible says in 1 John that if you hate somebody in your heart, you are already a murderer. Do you know why? Murder starts in the heart. If you are digging a hole or cutting wood and the axe head flies off and kills somebody, you did not mean to do it. But if that same person you have something against and you want to get him, and you fix the axe head so it will go off and kill him, now you are a murderer. See, it started in here. Do you know why it starts in here? That is where all sin starts. I say, "How did he get over that?" "Thy

word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee." Try to start with that. Oh, the absolute infallible standard of the Word of God.

Someone says, "I will not go to war because the Bible says, 'Thou shalt not kill.'" Exodus 20:13. Well, first of all, a man in war is never called a murderer. He is called a slayer, but I do not want to get too technical with you. You might have a heart attack. Somebody says, "Capital punishment is against God because the Bible says, 'Thou shalt not kill.'" So we shouldn't kill them just because they killed somebody else and break the commandment." Now watch. Now you are faced with these things. Now I am just going to tell you something. I am going to show you something in your Bible, and this is why I love the Bible. I tell you all the time that the Bible is of no private interpretation. When somebody gets up and he says, "We shouldn't kill people, we shouldn't kill people in the electric chair because it is because they killed somebody else because the Bible says, 'Thou shalt not kill,'" that is a private interpretation. Somebody says, "Well, I am not going to war and fight because the Bible says, 'Thou shalt not kill.'" That is a private interpretation.

I am going to show you how you use your Bible that when you get into these scenarios, the Bible itself tells you exactly what it means. This is incredible, but this Bible is filled with things like this. Now I am going to show you one of the greatest things you are ever going to see in your life. Alright. We have just come through the verse that says, "Spare not the murderer" five times. I showed you where capital punishment was in effect before the law, during the law, and in the New Testament church. Numbers 35 lays out the accidental death of somebody, manslaughter. We call it manslaughter and then premeditated murder. Now we are faced with a dilemma. I mean, I love contradictions in the Bible. Do you know why I love them? Because first of all, there are no contradictions in the Bible that are in there because God wants to show you some great truth if you just get your head out of wherever it is at and study the Word of God and see what God has got for you. Now we are faced with a dilemma, a contradiction of what to do. The Old Testament says, "Thou shalt not kill." Ooh, one of the Ten Commandments. Yet the Bible says, "Kill the murderer, take no satisfaction and kill him." What do we do? What do we do?

Now watch this. Now this is why I am telling you, and I am going to say it again, and I keep saying it over and over and over again. At some point in your life, you have got to make that Bible your final authority for what you do. The way you do that is to learn the principles, use the principles. Now I am going to show you how to use the principles in this complicated, oh, this is a sticky wicket. Now watch. Watch how Jesus Himself solves this thing for you.

VII. Jesus Defines "Murder" in Matthew 19

Turn over to Matthew 19. In Matthew 19, we have got a great story. It starts in verse 16 and goes down through verse 22. Let me just give you a side note on this. So many days, if you guys want a good message to preach, here it is. This is a side note now. We will get back to it, but I want to give you this outline real quick here. This is a great side. This is a great, great message to preach because this story in itself is a great story and makes a great sermon. When you come down through there, the story basically is this. You have a young man who comes to Jesus, and the young man says this. Here is the first thing he says. He says, "Good Master, what good thing

must I do to be saved?" Now that is your first key. There is something wrong here because that is exactly what people do. They think you have got to do something to get to heaven. So he comes to Jesus and said, "What good thing must I do?" Now the Catholics would say, "You have got to be baptized." Somebody else would say, "You have got to live a good life. You have got to do this. You have got to come to church." No, no, it is nothing you do, but it sets up the great study of this story because of the fact that this guy's life, like so many of people's lives, is built around things.

I told you a couple of weeks ago that rich people mostly do not ever get to God. At verse 22 is why.

Matthew 19:22

But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

Do you know what God told him to do? God taught him another great, God was trying to teach him a great principle, and God says, "What do I have to do?" Then he goes down through the law for a little bit. And God said, "Okay, if you really want eternal life and you want to follow Me, go sell all that you have and give it to the poor." Do you know what the principle is God trying to teach you? If you want to keep it, you have got to give it away. Now if that young man would have said, "Okay, Lord, that is what I am going to do," God would have said, "Never mind, you got it." Because it was not about the material things, it was about the man's attitude, his heart, his possessions was his God. You see that thing?

I love verse 20.

Matthew 19:20

The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

I have got a message I have preached on, "Yet thou lackest one thing." I got it from George Whitefield. George Whitefield was a great preacher. He was preaching one time outside of Boston back in the 1700s, and he was staying with some people that they put him up. They were good people, but they were lost. He tried to witness to them, and he tried to lay it out to them, and they just came every night to hear him preach, but they would not get moved. Same thing like this kid here. They had a lot of possessions. They had one of the nicest houses in town. They were high up in the church, and they had everything they could want, and they did not have room for God. Old Whitefield got burdened for him. It was winter time, and it was cold, and the windows had frosted up. George Whitefield was getting ready to leave that morning, and he was so burdened about the fact that that couple did not get saved, and he preached his heart out, was praying for him all week long, and he just did not move. Right before he leaves, he gets his bags packed and gets his stuff ready, walked over that frozen window, and he looked at that frozen window, and God put a thought in his heart. Nobody wrote in that window with his ring. He wrote on that window, the quotation right out of here, "Yet thou lackest one thing." By the time he left and the lady came up to make up his room, the room heated up, and that little scratching on there had melted into a thing that you could not miss it. She walked over and looked at that

window, and immediately the Holy Spirit of God, she called her husband, they came up, and immediately the Holy Spirit of God smote them in their heart. They both fell on their knees and trusted Christ, their own personal Savior. "Yet thou lackest one thing." That is a great story. That is a great story. It is a great passage. There is a great sermon in there. The great concept of that is that God will always hit you with what you love more than Him.

Now, back to where I was. Watch this. Watch Jesus Himself interpret for you what He meant in Exodus 20 when He laid down the sixth commandment. Then He says, "Thou shalt not kill." Now watch this. Watch this.

Matthew 19:16-18

And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,

What does it say in Exodus 20? "Thou shalt not kill." What does it say here? "Thou shalt do no murder." See what Jesus did? He just interpreted through Numbers 35 what He meant in Exodus 20. He was not talking about killing somebody. Back there when He said, "Thou shalt not kill," He was talking about premeditated murder. He defined it for you in Matthew. That is called using the Bible, scripture with scripture, to interpret what the Bible says. The killing in Exodus 20 is the murder of this chapter right here. He told you right there that it was not "Thou shalt not kill" was defined as "Thou shalt not murder" in Matthew 19. Premeditated murder, just like in Numbers 35. Then He set the context. If you murder someone, you die. Killing a convicted murderer is not murder, it is executing God's wrath and vengeance on evil.

VIII. Stoning as a Picture of God's Judgment

Now I will go back to a moment, and I told you that when your kids did what was wrong in the Old Testament, they executed them. Have you ever noticed how they executed them? What was the common model of execution in the Old Testament with the nation of Israel? It was stoning. Have you ever wondered why it was stoning? I mean they all had a sword, they could have cut the guy's head off. No, they cut everybody else's head off. Have you ever noticed they never stoned anybody that was not part of their own group? Everybody else got hacked to pieces with swords. Do you know why? Because they are all unsaved people, nations outside, that is all a picture of the second coming of Christ. No, no, no, no, no. They never killed their own people with swords, they killed their own people with stones. Do you know why? Because stones are God-made in the Bible. Do you not know in Daniel 2 when Jesus Christ comes back and smites the nations, He is called the stone made without hands?

Stoning somebody in the Bible is a picture of what God's judgment is to you right now because those stones are a picture of the Word of God. Do you know what is going to get you as a child

of God? Do you know how you are going to get stoned? Stoning did not go out of style today. You just get stoned with something different than a rock. You get stoned with the principles of the Word of God. Do you know what those rocks did when they hit you? You got about 30 people around, and they just start wailing rocks at you, some of them as big as a brick. They start busting your head, they start busting your shoulders, they start busting your legs, they knock you down, you try to run, you cannot. There are enough people in a circle around you to knock you down, and you cannot get up. Those stones just keep coming, and those stones just keep coming, and you know what? Finally those stones kill you.

Spiritually, do you know what that is? That is a picture of what happens to you and me when we get out of fellowship with God. Those verses just keep coming, those principles just keep coming. You try to run, you cannot get out of God's circle, and those principles, those stones, those rocks, they just keep coming. They are God-made. Do you remember when they made the Tower of Babel? Do you remember when they made the Tower of Babel? They did not make it out of stone, they made it out of slime and mortar and brick. Bricks in the Bible are man-made things. Stones in the Bible are God-made. That is why every altar in the Old Testament that somebody made, had they been made with stones. All those stones coming down on that just rebellious person, you do understand that the Bible says over there in 1 Samuel, I believe it is, that rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft. So they stone them.

For you and for me, it is a picture just like they could not get out from under the stoning, and it finally got them, you cannot get out from under the principles or the Word of God. Except the difference is this: they are under the law, and there was no grace. You are under grace, and God gives you another chance. You may be being pelted this morning by the principles of the Word of God, and it has got you so far down it is about ready to break your back. Do you know what? They had no choice. They could not get out. You, under grace, have a chance. You can get out from under it. Oh, the unsearchable riches. That is why the Bible says in Romans 13:4, "he is a minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." And he says, "be afraid." When you do not do it like in modern-day America, the whole authority structure breaks down, and men do not fear to do evil. And Christians do not fear to do evil.

Edmund Burke was a great, I do not know what he was, he was not a Christian. He was a guy who wrote philosophy things. But he said something one time that I think I have always kept in my mind, and it is probably the closest he ever got to any Christian thing. Many, many worldly principles are based on the Bible anyhow. But do you know what he said? I have kept this in the back of my mind many, many times. I have seen things go on in situations and in families and churches, and go on and on and on, all because either the father or the mother, or in some cases the pastor, did not have enough courage to deal with what needed to be dealt with. I have seen in situations all across the place where it gets worse and worse and worse and worse. I have seen circumstances where somebody did not have the courage to stand up to somebody else and do what was right and hold them accountable in the Word of God. I have seen it in civil government. I have seen it in families, and I have seen it in God's structure of the church. Edmund Burke called it out and laid it out really good when he said this. In one of the greatest

statements he ever made: "Evil triumphs when good men do nothing." That is where we are at today. Evil triumphs when good men do nothing.

IX. Conclusion and Future Opportunities

Well, now you understand how the whole thing lays out. You can see now, as I told you the other week, the book of Romans, in every chapter, the entire book formed for us as New Testament Christians what our perspective should be as a child of God. It goes through every aspect. We are in chapter 13. We are now understanding civil government. We are now understanding why you are to obey it, why you should be afraid, why you should not be afraid. All the aspects, all the elements. We have defined for you capital punishment. We have talked about all of the things that you have to face with. These are issues that you have to live with and deal with every day of your life because you live under the authority of a secular government. We now understand how that they are God's ministers, that God uses them, all of the verses that I gave you to help you better understand how we do it. We go on through chapter 13. We come to even more things that you are going to learn about the government.

Then we come to the last two chapters, the last two chapters in the book of Romans. As we always say, he said as far as I am concerned, the last two chapters are for last. That is no coincidence in my heart, in my mind, that we are going to get into chapter 14 and chapter 15 and chapter 16, really 14 and 15 from where we are at right now and what God has done with us. So if we get into chapter 14 and 15, we see our responsibility as Christians to other Christians. Boy, this is where the rubber meets the road. This is where we are at right now. This is why you have got to understand, like I talked to you when we started our sermon. There is a tendency when everything is going good to let your guard down. There is a tendency to realize, and that is when something will come up, and it will affect your attitude. That is when the devil will sneak in the back door. That is when many times you will be faced with the reality of really, did you really do this because you wanted to serve God or because you were expected to do it? This is where all the reality comes out. This is where you have got to look deep inside yourself with a good pastor, a good leader will lead his people through the good times, just like he leads them through the bad times.

Now, let me just say this to you, and then we are going to close here. We are standing on two incredible opportunities. Obviously, we have talked about them already this morning, and we will find to get a report back from the church down in Warrensburg where that is at. We will keep you up to date on that. But with our volleyball program, if you are a captain and you are going to pick a co-captain, or you are somebody in this church that is on a team, I am telling you right now, quit worrying about playing volleyball and trying how to figure out how to minister. Go into the attitude, "We are going to minister, and we are going to figure out how to play volleyball." You get this thing focused and realize that this is part of it. This is a natural feeder system to some of your prayer groups. Even though I do not want to set them up until a year or so down the line, they are already working that way where you can have somebody on your team, and the avenue is to open it up for prayer requests and bring them in and be part of that, minister to them. It is an incredible opportunity. It is an incredible opportunity.

If you are here and you are not playing on a team, and you are going to come out to help Danny and whatever needs to be done, whether it is judge the lines or whatever, or maybe you are just going to come out to go over to Jason's Deli afterwards, where we get the work done and walk around and meet and introduce yourself, look for people and look for open opportunities. It is something everybody can do. It is just a matter if you want to do it. We have a tremendous opportunity. I do not even want to think about softball. We are going to have to get Royal Stadium or something. I do not know how we are going to do it. But I will tell you what, it is a good problem to have. I want to let you know how proud I am of you for all of you. I know just like anything else, there are glitches. We have got to work out. There always will be. Our next time, by the time we are done with this in two or three cycles, we will have probably redefined.