

Romans 14

Sunday 5/23/2010

We will start in Romans 14 today, and then we are going to move around a little bit. We are in Romans 14.

We have now had two messages on what I have told you is probably the greatest single doctrinal teaching that you are ever going to get into the Bible. It will probably impact your life more than anything else that we ever study or do, and that is the great teaching and doctrine on the Judgment Seat of Christ. We have been coming through Romans 14 as we are coming to the end of the Book of Romans. We have seen in Romans 14 how, in this particular chapter, we are talking about how to get along with each other as Christians. Romans 14 and 15 are probably the two key chapters for you and for me as far as how we are to deal with each other. Christianity is like a family, and in every family, you have issues and problems. No brothers and sisters, mothers or fathers, get along all the time. From time to time, you have issues, and Romans 14 and 15 show you how to deal with those issues and lay it all out.

The whole chapter, and Romans 15 too, is built around a concept that I have tried to tell you: if you are saved this morning, you ought to keep it before you every day of your life, 24/7. That is the great concept in Romans 14:10 that says, "we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." We have learned a lot of things about that in the last two lessons. I told you that you hardly hear any messages at all today on the Judgment Seat of Christ, and you now know how to identify it in the Bible. We have identified it as the Day of Jesus Christ or the Day of Christ. We now understand from 1 Corinthians 3 how it works. That was the first definitive passage that we looked at. In that passage, the first week, we looked at all the issues and components and saw the whole thing, how it works, and all the inside pieces that you need to know.

Then last week, we looked at our second definitive passage, which was in 2 Corinthians 5. That was our great reality lesson: the reality of why the Bible calls the Judgment Seat of Christ for you and for me "the terror of the Lord." We looked at it last time as probably the closest time that a saved man or a saved woman is ever going to get to going to hell. It is a time when the fire that judges everything that we do, the motive behind it, will come and take away everything that we have had. We have come so far astray in Bible Christianity today that most of God's people are doing the things they do for the Lord with the wrong motive. They do not even understand the fundamental issues of the attitude of heart of how we do what we do.

I talked to you last week about the fire off the brazen altar, and I laid that out for you. I showed you how everything that you and I do for the Lord needs to go back with the attitude of what Christ did for you on the cross. How many of us in our daily journey and our relationship with God have forgotten or never really learned the price that Christ paid? You can have Christians in any church—and we do not have a lot of them here by the grace of God—but you find Christians all across this country in every church that really do nothing for God. They are going to live their whole lives doing what they want to do and never really ever find out what God wants them to do.

When you look at that, there are all kinds of explanations why a person would be that way and have that attitude. But the single truth of why you and I, as children of God, become lackadaisical in what we do for Him, or do nothing for Him, or never come to the place that we ever really find out what God wants us to do and then take all of our energy and focus it, comes down to one simple concept. That is, we are sitting here today, and as saved men and women, we do not understand the price that He paid for you to be here this morning and on your way to Heaven. The reason why you do not appreciate your Bible, and do not read it and study it, is because you do not understand the price that was paid for you to have it. You do not understand the price that your forefathers paid with their own lives for you to be able to hold that Bible. We are in a peculiar situation in our church age; we are at the end, at the Laodicean church period, where we are a church that has forgotten, for the most part, everything that God is and what He has done for us. That is why it is important for us to take this time and to do what I call a 2010 rendition of the Judgment Seat of Christ. Every year, I try to put it in some way, shape, or form, as I do every Thursday night and in everything that we do.

But today, I want to finish our study in the last part of this great concept: the Judgment Seat of Christ. The Bible says, "the last shall be first and the first shall be last." I know that in the doctrinal content of the Gospels, when He is using that, He is talking about the nation of Israel. I understand that. But also, in the inspirational application, that is a picture of what the Judgment Seat of Christ is really going to be. Very frankly, most of us who think we are doing what we are doing with the right motive probably are not. It is going to be the one out there that struggles and just stays with the stuff and keeps doing what God wants them to do the best they know how. We get so inflated with what we know and all of the things about the Bible that it messes up our attitude of heart. That is the number one thing we all have to guard and take care of.

I. The Pastor's Approach to Scripture and Ministry

I want to talk to you today about a passage in Scripture that God showed me many years ago. I have probably preached this message in my lifetime of 35-plus years of preaching the ministry over 200 times. In reality, it is really what drives me in the ministry to do it the way I do it.

Now, I want you to take your Bibles and turn over to Job 26. I talked to you a while back about throwback messages. I told you that as soon as we finish Romans, we are going to take about four or six weeks between starting the book of 2 Corinthians, which is really the handbook of ministry. That is what we are going to get into next, where we can really learn to fine-tune the aspects of ministry. I told you I was going to take four to six weeks, and we were going to go back and preach messages like they were preached 30 or 40 years ago—messages where you just laid it out the way that it was. Unfortunately or fortunately, however you look at it, this is one of those messages today.

I do not preach messages that have not impacted me myself in some way. Most pastors—and some of you know this to be true—you can get on the Internet and find a sermon already laid out for you that you can get up in front of your people, and they will just say, "Wow, wow, wow." You can get on the Internet to find just about anything you want as far as a sermon already laid out for you, a study already laid out for you. I have many of those guys who just get on there and

copy those things out, go over it a few times, and that is exactly what they do. Personally, I cannot preach something that has not impacted my life. I think that everything has to start with me. I believe, and you have heard me say this many, many times, everything—and I mean everything—rises and falls on leadership. This church will be just like in your marriage: your wife and your family will be a mirrored image of your spiritual relationship with God. In a church, the church's spirituality and where they are at and what they are doing will be a mirrored image of the pastor and his leadership, and what he does or what he does not do, or what he preaches and what he does not preach.

My experience in learning the Bible has been a good one. I believe things about the Bible that a lot of people do not believe today; they once believed it, but they do not believe it anymore. I believe the Bible is the Word of God from cover to cover. I believe that everything in that book was hand-picked by God. One time, I read in John 21:25, and it was a verse that really changed my life toward the Bible, anyhow. I read back there where the Bible says something like this, and I am going to paraphrase it now. It says:

John 21:25

And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

You know, when I read that verse, it just kind of took me back for about a week. It was a verse that just hit me like a freight train, and I had to step back. I already believed the Bible; I already knew it was God's Word. But when I saw that, it refocused everything about me because at that point in time, I realized a great truth. If that is true—and I am not doubting it at all—if that is true that many other things that He said and did, that if they were all written in a book, the world itself could not contain it all, then you know what that tells me? That tells me that He hand-picked everything that He wanted me to have and put it in that book. That means there are no accidents in the Bible, does it not?

I believe the order of the books in the Bible are there for a reason. The reason I believe that is because if you are a Jew and you have an Old Testament Bible, the order of your books in the Old Testament and the Jewish Bible are different than mine. Do you know why? Because the Jewish books in the Bible, in their order, show them the Second Coming of Christ, the Day of the Lord. Your order of books in the Bible shows you a greatest doctrine in the Bible that everybody has messed up on. But who pays attention to that? Nobody. I believe it is a living book. I believe that the Bible says in 1 Thessalonians 2:13:

1 Thessalonians 2:13

For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

You know why the Word of God does not work in many of God's people's lives? Because they do not believe it. The key there was, "effectually worketh also in you that believe." So my approach

to the Bible is different than most people. I have studied over the years some really interesting things that really ignited my fire in the Bible, and then some things that really bothered me in the Bible. I had the advantage—and you have heard me say this many, many times, and I am not going to belabor the point today—God had His hand in my life when I got saved to put the right man in my life that steered my course in life to that Book. My job, as I see it, is to do the same thing for anybody who wants to find the truth of the Word of God. When I started coming through the Bible many years ago, there were some things that just absolutely intrigued me. Then, as I began to get a little deeper in it, and I began to understand some of these things about how it was hand-picked, I realized that everything in there had a purpose to me.

II. God's Questions and Man's Inability to Answer

Then something began to bother me, and I will tell you what began to bother me in the Bible. The first thing I began to see—I do not even remember where this happened, the first thing I saw one time, and it just kind of clicked. I do not even remember when; it has been years ago. But I was reading in the book of Job, and I saw in Job 9:2-3. Did you ever read that? You do not have to turn to it; I will read it to you. It says this:

Job 9:2-3

I know it is so of a truth: but how should man be just with God?

If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.

You know what that verse says? That verse says that man cannot answer one question that God asks, one out of a thousand. I do not know if you know the context of that passage, but the context of that passage is the Great White Throne Judgment. You realize that at the Great White Throne Judgment, whenever an unsaved man and unsaved woman go before God to be judged that day, that is a day that you are going to get your chance to prove God wrong and that you were right. Romans 3:4 says, "That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged." What He is saying there is that somebody is going to stand before God, and they are going to try to make God out to be the bad person and themselves the right person. Of course, it is not going to work at the Great White Throne Judgment, but you are going to get your chance.

Most people have a funny idea in America. They think that when you get to the Great White Throne Judgment, that final judgment where unsaved people are judged, there is a big set of scales there. God puts all your good works in this one and all your bad works in this one, and if your good works outweigh your bad, you go to Heaven, and if your bad ones outweigh your good, you go to hell. That is not the case. You know what He is going to do? He is going to put you in this hand and Jesus Christ in this hand; He is going to weigh you out. He is going to put the most perfect, righteous Man that ever lived on planet Earth in this hand, and He is going to put you and me as guilty sinners in this hand, and He is going to read your meter. The Bible says that we are going to be found wanting in the scales. God is going to ask an unsaved man some questions, and that unsaved man is not going to have any answers. Then I read over in Job 38:3. I got another one; this was starting to get me going on it. He says in that passage:

Job 38:3

Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.

You know what He is saying? God is demanding somebody to answer Him. When I saw that the questions in the Bible meant something, I began to realize that God asks questions, and He wanted answers. As I began to study them, I found a great study throughout the Bible. I learned that if God asks a question in the Bible, He does it for a reason, because He does not do things in the Bible for the sake of filling up space. He does everything in that Bible because it is His book by His design. Everything He does is there for a reason, and every question in there, somebody is going to have to answer.

As I started to come down through that, I got overwhelmed. Do you ever see the first question in the Bible? That is the first place I went once I started to get this concept, because I understand the law of first mention. So I went back, and the law of first mention is the first time you find something in the Bible; it is usually very important. So when I scratched my head, I said, "I wonder what the first question in the Bible was." I thought the first question in the Bible surely would have been asked by God. You would think that, would you not? When I was flipping that through there and got my concordance and was looking up that thing and finding the first question in the Bible, I thought surely that the first question asked in the Bible would have been asked by God. You know that is not true. The first question asked in the Bible was not asked by God. The first question asked in the Bible is found in Genesis 3:1, and it is asked by the devil.

You know what the first question is in the Bible? When I saw this, I was off, man. When I saw this, I started a quest for questions in the Bible—worst thing I ever did. When I got to this point, when I saw that the first question in the Bible was asked by the devil, and then I saw what he asked, you know what he asked? He says:

Genesis 3:1

Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

The first question in the Bible was simply, "Does God know what He is talking about?" He asked after Adam. Do you realize that is the first question you have got to deal with before you can be saved? If you do not believe the Bible is the absolute, insatiable Word of God—I know we live in a weak-style Christianity today where everybody believes everything, and you think you can get saved just because your dog died or your cat died, or you got a nice warm feeling inside and you got emotional stirring—but let me just drop an A-bomb on you: you cannot be saved. You cannot be saved if you do not believe that Bible is the Word of God, because that is the book that saves you. If you look at that Bible like it is just any other book, or man wrote it, or it has mistakes in it, or you do not buy all of it, and there is some good stuff in it, but you have not figured it out, and you do not buy the whole thing, that it is perfect and inerrant, I have a headline for you, pal: you are not saved. The first question the devil asked is the first thing he will do to keep you from getting saved, and that is showing doubt in your mind that that book is the Word of God.

Once I saw that, I had to move this thing on, and I found the second question in the Bible in the same chapter, Genesis 3:9. The second question God asked, and the second question in the Bible, Genesis 3:9, is God calling out to a man in a fallen race who has been deceived by the devil. He calls out, and the second question in the Bible is simply this:

Genesis 3:9

And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

That is a question. Now that may not mean much to you, but for me, who wanted to be a Bible student and still am, I saw immediately that that is the whole gist of the history of man and the history of the Bible, is it not? All the history of man, and all the history of the human race, and all the history of every nation, every king, and every individual that ever lived on this planet is built around those two questions.

1. Did God mean what He said?
2. Where are you this morning?

Now you know that God, when He asked that question, He knew right where they were. You see, Adam and Eve had come to the place where they had fallen now. When the devil came and gave them the idea that God really did not mean what He said, and then changed what God said, like new Bibles do, then she fell for it, like some of you have. Then she got confused, and she could not tell, and the devil used that confusion because God is not the author of confusion. So when God comes to them, what did they do? They hid from God. They cut down some fig leaves, and they covered themselves up, and they are hiding in the garden. When God is coming down there to have Bible study with them, like on Thursday night, He comes down there and He says He does not see them. Usually, they were there with their Bible in their hand, with their notebook and their red pen and their yellow pen and their pigment pen and all the other things, but now they are not there.

He looks over, and the Bible is over in the corner. The pens are scattered everywhere. The notebook is flipping out in the wind, and God comes down and walks through that garden, and He cries out, "Adam, Adam, where art thou?" If you are just a common, ordinary person, you would think that God lost them. "Come out, come out, wherever you are." God knew exactly where they were. He knew what bush they were under. He knew exactly where they were hiding. Somebody said, "Well, why, if God knew where they were, why did God ask where they were?" The same reason that God knows where you are at this morning, but through my preaching, He will ask you where you are at, because God knew where they were at. He wanted to see if Adam would be honest enough to say where he was at. The first two questions in the Bible set up the whole thing for the human race.

Once I saw that, look how I am going, man. I am in this thing. I had a guy tell me one time that he was on a search for God. He said, "I am going to go search for God." He said, "I am going to do an investigation, and I am going to investigate God." I did not say anything to him at the time because it would not do any good, but I thought to myself, "Is not that the stupidest thing you ever heard?" You do not find God through investigation; you find God through revelation. God

reveals Himself to you. John 1:9 says, "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Somebody says, "I am going to search out God. I am going to investigate God." The Bible says, "There is none that seeketh after God; there is none that understandeth." If we were left to ourselves to find God, we would never find Him.

I mean, you can see, I do not know how you investigate God. I guess you get all the episodes of CSI and NCIS or ABC and all these things and find out some good investigating skills, and then go to the crime scene—that would be back in the garden—and then try to trace God through. I do not know. It is always hard for me to understand how somebody says, "I am going to do this with God." If you are what He told you in the world, that is not going to work. You do not find God through investigation; you find God through revelation. He reveals Himself to you. Very frankly, I know a little bit about human nature, being human myself. A man talks like that, he has already been contacted by God and does not want the contact. He wants to forget God and move on and find his own place somewhere. That is the way it works.

Once I got started, it was incredible—this idea of questions in the Bible. Once I started laying it out and paying attention to it, you know what I found? I found questions God is going to ask an unsaved man at the Great White Throne Judgment by every vocation, according to his profession. Romans 1:19-20 says God used Himself as the pattern for everything He has made. So God is in everything. Whether you know it or not, everything you do in life, you are facing every day, 24/7, some pattern that God put in there. He is ready to reveal Himself to you.

When I started coming through the Bible, I started finding questions God is going to ask a philosopher. You will find that in Colossians and Ecclesiastes. I found questions God is going to ask a psychiatrist or a therapist. You will find those in the book of Proverbs. I found questions God is going to ask astronomers, in Psalms 19 and the book of Job. The book of Job is the oldest book in the Bible. I found questions that God is going to ask nurses, doctors, physicists, firemen, scientists, and evolutionists. I found questions God is going to ask a judge, a lawyer, a mathematician, a police officer, a weatherman, electricians, a schoolteacher, and emergency technician people that ride in the ambulances and all those things.

Whether you know it or not, everything you do is some form of a manifestation in your daily work of what God does. You know, by national statistics, who the three biggest alcoholic problems in this country have been for 40 years. The top three drunk alcoholics in this country are three professions that are like God-like professions. In other words, they make decisions on an everyday basis that affect people's lives and people's faith in life. They are faced every day with life-changing decisions that impact somebody's whole life, just like God is. When they are unsaved and they try to do it as unsaved men, it drives them to drink.

Who are they? The first one is judges. The biggest alcoholics in the United States, according to the United States survey, are judges. You know why? Because they sit in judgment, and every day of their lives as they sit in that courtroom, they make decisions in people's lives. They either give mercy or not, or they give judgment on this. Sometimes it is good, sometimes it is bad, sometimes it is bribed, sometimes it is honest. But the bottom line is, they sit in a seat just like God is going to sit when He judges everybody.

You know why, over in England, the judges in courts in the parliament wear white wigs? I have told you this before. They wear—if you see it over there, they do not all dye their hair white—they wear white powdered wigs. They have done that since the 12th century. You know why they do that? Because somebody read in Revelation 1:14 that Jesus Christ's head was like wool. He is a righteous Judge, so they wear that wool wig so that they will remember to make righteous judgments. Somebody said, "How could you fix the judicial system in this country?" By about 60,000 wigs.

You know who the second one is? Psychiatrists. I remember Marshall Safer. He was a psychologist, was on radio for years and years and years. He hated Christians, and people could call in, and he would mock Christianity. He would mock the Bible. He had a following in Kansas City that was unbelievable, and his advice to people was the most godless, perverted stuff you ever found yourself. Marshall Safer wound up blowing his brains out. You know why? Because it did not even work for him. Imagine being in a situation where you are telling people to come at you with problems and issues in their life, and you are telling them something that may alter their life. Let me tell you something: when you deal in somebody's life with the Bible, you better be well-understanding that what you have and what you are doing better be based on truth instead of your opinion.

You know what the third one is? Doctors. We have all heard of the God Syndrome. Doctors make life and death decisions every day. You have to pull the plug on a loved one because they are on a respirator, and they are keeping them alive. There are some compassionate doctors; I mean, there really are. I am not saying all doctors, but I am saying all doctors who do not recognize their relationship to God in the whole concept. I have been in situations where people had to pull the plug, and they had a very hard time with it. A doctor got irritable because they would say, "Do not you understand? They are dead. That is just pumping them out. Pull the plug! I have got to get to my golf game!" Imagine having that kind of power. The only way you can get around that is when he is in a ventilator, go there and hold the plug up and say, "Hey, look." That is not right either. God is a witness in everything that we do. That is why the Bible says in Psalms 14:1:

Psalms 14:1

The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.

You know what? If you are an atheist this morning, or you are somebody who claims to know an atheist, let me tell you something: you were not born an atheist. As a growing up little child, I never saw three, four-year-old kids, six or seven, eight-year-old kids who were atheists. You know what you have got to do to become an atheist? You have got to get educated out of God. You have got to go someplace where somebody teaches you that there is no God, because your heart tells you that there is no God when God is touching you all the time.

I found questions in Job 31:14 that God is going to ask the nation of Israel at the Second Coming of Christ. Wow, they are rough ones. I found the questions—I bet you there are not five Christians in this city today—I found the questions that God asked the devil when He was on the cross. What do you think of that? Do you think that when Jesus was crucified, it was just a bunch

of mad scribes and Pharisees and the Jewish rulers whipping and beating and killing a poor, dumb prophet named Jesus? My friend, I have got some news for you. There was a battle going on between two beings. Do not get caught up in the crucifixion without going back in the Old Testament and seeing what is going on in the crucifixion. There were two beings that were coming face to face at that point, and your soul hung in the balance.

The thing that bothered me about questions is that in each case, God wanted an answer. The book of Acts is supposed to be a hard book. You know the easiest way to understand the book of Acts is that the book of Acts is built around just three questions: one question in Acts 2:38, one question in Acts 9:6, and one question in Acts 16:30. The whole book of Acts just falls in place like it is carved brisket around those three verses and lays itself out around those three verses. Questions, man. Once I saw it, it just got me. It got me.

III. The Six Questions of Job 26 and Their Application to the Church Age

Then I came to Job 26. Boy, that was a bad day in my life. Job 26:1-4. You can go ahead and turn to this one. You know what I found in Job 26? I found six questions. Six questions that God asked somebody. Historically, I know He is asking Job this in this chapter. I understand that. But inspirationally, there is something else going on here.

We talked about this a couple of Thursday nights ago when somebody asked a question about the number six in numerology. We now know that six is the number of man. Man was created on the sixth day. Man was told to work six days. The Giants had six fingers and six toes. Man is on the earth six thousand years before the Lord comes back. Revelation 13:18 says 666 is the mark of a man, the number of a man. It clearly tells you that. So here we are in Job 26, and there are six things. That is 66. There is something going on here.

When I read down through here, I have got to tell you this, and this is where I am just going to be honest with you. What I am about to say, I am sure I have preached this message many, many times. More than once, somebody has come up afterwards and looked me in the eye and said, "You know what, Bob? I think you are stretching that." I looked them right back, and they would say, "Amen, brother. I hope you are right." If you think I want to be—now, I try to be very exact and on the button with everything I preach. I pride myself on the hours that I spend putting that book together so when I come up here, we are not singing "Kumbaya," though that is a nice song right up next to a pine tree. This is one message that I just as soon be dead wrong on. I hope when I get to the Judgment Seat of Christ, the Lord says, "Bob, you were dead on on that one. You had everything else really good. How did you get screwed up on that one? Come on, we are having a party in here." I hope that is the way it is. I hope that is the way it is. So at the end of this message, if you say it in your heart and your mind, "I think Bob was way off on this one," you can already know I am with you. I hope you are right. I hope you are right. I really do.

Now, let me say this. As I read down through here and I saw these questions compared to all the other questions, I came to this stark reality: the only people who could answer these questions were saved people and women from the Church Age. These types of questions, and the style of

questioning, and their doctrinal significance can only fall into the Church Age, and it can only point to you and me. I got a terrible, sick feeling that these six questions are going to show up at the Judgment Seat of Christ because the only ones who can answer them are us. I understand I am telling you, but let me just say this to you and even listen to me: if God has a set of questions for everybody else in that book, brother, you better know He has got a set for you and me.

Let us read this passage, and it is just laying out, and then I will commit suicide. This is going to be rough. But you have only got to hear it once; I have had to preach it 200 times. Six questions that I believe will be asked. We will probably not answer them at the Judgment Seat of Christ. All right. Look at Job 26. Watch how unique this is, and then we are going to explain it.

Job 26:1-4

But Job answered and said,

How hast thou helped him that is without power? how savest thou the arm that hath no strength?

How hast thou counseled him that hath no wisdom? and how hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?

To whom hast thou uttered words? and whose spirit came from thee?

Now Father, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. We ask You now to take this time and to open our hearts and let us, at this last time when we look at the Judgment Seat of Christ today, let You burn into our hearts the great truths that everybody in here will be, to be forewarned is forearmed, and understand the day that is coming in all of our lives if we are saved. If there is somebody here this morning, Lord, that does not know the Lord Jesus Christ as their own personal Savior, then my prayer for them is that they get saved today. But help us, Lord, in all that we do, and we will thank You and praise You. In Jesus' name, for Your sake, we ask it. Amen.

All right. It says, "But Job answered and said." Now Job is talking about this, but we also know that God speaks through the Holy Spirit of God to Job. We know that when Job asked the question, like anybody else asked the question, it is God asking the question. It was not just historically Job, and we can move on from there. There is a reason behind what God does. There is a reason behind what God does.

IV. Question 1: Helping the Powerless (The Unsaved)

I want you to look at the first one. The first one here is, "How hast thou helped him that is without power?" Ladies and gentlemen, from our way of thinking, that would be an unsaved person. You realize an unsaved person has no power in his life whatsoever; he just thinks he does.

If you ever want a good message to preach down at the mission—I always keep about 30 of these in my Bible someplace in case I ever get in a spot where I have to have something—if you ever want a good message that fits right into the mission, it really fits anywhere. If you ever get in a pinch and you want to preach to unsaved people, you can preach a basic four-point outline that

fits right around this thing, because an unsaved man is four things. You know what those four things are?

- He is without God.
- He is without hope.
- He is without excuse.
- He is without power.

The Bible says in Romans 5:6:

Romans 5:6

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

See that thing? An unsaved man has no power in his life whatsoever. He has no power over sin. He has no power over the things in life. You ought to see sometime what the wisest man that ever lived said back in the book of Ecclesiastes about unsaved people. You know what he said? He said they are just like beasts over there in Ecclesiastes 3. He says, "one befalleth one, befalleth the other." Are you an unsaved person here this morning, or an unsaved person out there in life? You have no control over anything; you just think you do.

How many times has somebody started drinking and said, "Well, I know when to quit," and then you wind up an alcoholic? You know why that is? Because you have no control over anything. Somebody says, "Are you smoking again?" "Well, yeah, but I am just doing it temporarily. I can stop whenever I want." Really? Twenty years later, you are still doing it. You know what your answer is then? "Well, I can stop if I want to." Really? Try for 24 hours. Let us see who is really in control of your life. You have no power. An unsaved man or woman has absolutely no power. Drugs, alcohol, gambling, pornography, whatever it is, you have no power on your own to stop those things.

I think that Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous are good organizations. I am not knocking them by any way, shape, or form. I have had people that were into drugs, and I have had people that were on alcohol that have actually used Alcoholics Anonymous to do it. I went through both of their programs, and I have never had an alcohol problem or a drug problem, but I figured if I am going to do this thing, I better know what it is all about. So I signed up and went through both programs; I went to 12 steps. You know, I had a little different deal because when everybody else stands up and they start talking, they give their testimony. They have got to start off by saying, "Well, I am a recovering alcoholic." I had to get up and say, "Well, I am not a recovering alcoholic. I have never drunk in my life, but I am really glad to be here." But I wanted to find out. You know what? They are great organizations, but let me tell you where they fall short. This is not a criticism; this is just the truth, because I am for them. I think they help, but I think they only go so far.

You see, Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous take the position that the rest of your life, you are a recovering alcoholic. The way you stay off the wagon or stay on the wagon is the fact that all of your life you go around convincing yourself you cannot ever go around it. You cannot ever be around it because you are always going to be one. Now I understand their

method, but that is not Bible. The Bible says that when you got saved, you are a new creature in Christ Jesus. All things are passed away; all things become new. The Bible says if you were a drunkard right here when you got saved, you are no longer a drunkard. As long as you have to go through life believing you are a drunkard, you always have the chance of falling back into it. But when you have been set free from alcohol, you have a better alternative.

You know what happens with most people? Preachers stand up and they say you should not drink. Or if you are an alcoholic or you are into drugs, that you ought to get rid of it. And you should. But you know what the problem is? The problem is preachers standing up and telling you to get rid of this in your life, but then the pastor is not giving you anything to replace what they want you to give up with. Now the Bible does something that Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, or anybody else anonymous cannot do for you. The world will conform you. The world will inform you. The world can misinform you. The world can reform you. But God in His Bible and His Holy Spirit can only do one thing for you that nobody else can do: they transform you. When you get saved, you are no longer what you once were. You now have the power, the strength to overcome whatever is in your life. But up to that point, you have nothing.

"How hast thou helped him that is without power?" The Bible says in Matthew 18:18 that Jesus made a statement, and many people look at this. He said to His apostles:

Matthew 18:18

Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Somebody said, "What does that mean? Do you and I have the power to bind somebody to their sins or loose somebody from their sins?" Absolutely. You do not have the power yourself, but you have the power through this Book. Let me tell you something. If you are lost here this morning and you go back there and sit down with me, and I open up this Book, and you are bound to your sins, I will bring you through the Scriptures. I will show you what the Bible says. I will lead you to Christ. You pray the prayer. You believe what you believe, and you know what I have done through the power of this Book—not the power of me, the power of this Book—I have loosed you from your sin through this Book. That is your job and my job. That is why we saw last week in 2 Corinthians 5:18-19, the job of this church and everybody in it: we have been given the ministry of reconciliation, making things right that were wrong. That is the way it is.

You have the power to bind or loose somebody's sins, not because of who you are, but because of the Bible that God has given you, because He wants you and I to help those who have no strength. The only way I can help you is to take you to the Book that gave me my strength: the Word of God. I think the greatest example anywhere in the Bible is in Acts 8. The greatest model in the Bible is that old Ethiopian eunuch out there in the backside of the desert. Somebody gave him a copy of Isaiah 53. He is reading it; he does not know what in the world he is reading. What does God do? God pulls out the main leading evangelist in Samaria, Philip, airlifts him over, and drops him right down by that man's chariot, then for the express purpose of going up and explaining the Scriptures to that guy, reconciling him to God, and giving him the strength through the power of God in his life by winning him to Christ. That is your job and my job. It is

a process of transformation. The Bible says, "be not conformed to this world." Oh, the world will conform you. It will conform you to alcohol, conform you to drugs, conform you to this, conform you to that. "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." That Book. That Book.

V. Question 2: Saving the Arm with No Strength (The Young Christian)

Did you ever look at the second one? These things, I am telling you, the only people who can answer these questions are saved people in the Church Age. Look at number two: "How savest thou the arm that hath no strength?" Now look at that thing. Only one person that can apply to, that is a Christian in the New Testament church. You see, he is an arm; he is part of the body, but he has no strength. He is a baby Christian; he is not matured yet. Ephesians 4:4 says, "we are one body." 1 Corinthians 12:13 says, "by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." This person here is an arm; he is part of the body. You have a question of how we have helped young Christians grow. That is an incredible concept. John 15:16 says:

John 15:16

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

See that thing? "Bring forth fruit and your fruit remain."

In this church right here, you get saved. You can start out with the concept of discipleship. That gives you the basic fundamentals of how to learn to grow. You will get a bit farther down the line; you can go through Bible basics. That starts to put the Bible together for you. Some of you are on Tuesday night—not as many as when we started, but that is the way it goes—you can learn church history. We have a group in Bible Institute that want to learn on a third or fourth level, equivalent to any Bible college or seminary on this planet. You have Sunday morning, Thursday night. God has widened our preaching ministry. We used to be down at the mission alone, and now we are going to Wichita, Warrensburg. The women now have the women's shelter by which they are going to open up an incredible opportunity to minister. I have heard this morning that plans are for the lady that is running the whole thing; she is going to come Thursday night. They have been taking their kids every Sunday morning by van to a church in Blue Springs. I think she is going to bring them here next Sunday morning. That is how it starts. Then we have an Iron Man in our praying ministry, a team ministry. Right now, at this time in the church, there are over nine or ten ways, probably more than that, that you can get everything you need to grow spiritually.

That is the job of this church, the job of any church, to have the things available for you to do it. But you know as well as I do, I could have 65,000 Bibles. I could have 150,000 commentaries and tapes. The bottom line is, if you do not have the desire to change your life and do what you need to do, we are not going anywhere. We are not going anywhere. It all comes back to attitude.

You see, a young Christian is part of the body. He is the arm, but he has no strength. He needs to grow. Did you ever study arms in the Bible? David said in Psalms 18:34:

Psalms 18:34

He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

Hands and arms in the Bible are two of the greatest things you will ever study. It is a picture of your spiritual growth. It is a picture because with your hands and your arms, guys are always walking around showing their muscles. They are in their arms; they are always showing off their arms, and their bodybuilders have got to get the huge arms. As a Christian, you ought to have some incredible biceps spiritually this morning.

I think of the greatest example of that, and this is really what my life and my ministry is all about. It is the example found back in the Old Testament. This is how I look at it; things are very simple for me. You make them more complicated than they are because many times you do not want to do what is right. But to me, it is real simple. 2 Samuel—you do not have to turn back to it—2 Samuel 23. Did you ever read 2 Samuel 23? You know what it is about? It is about David's mighty men of valor. We are going to preach that message in our throwback series. But just to look at it for a short time this morning, that is a great example of what this church ought to be.

You see, you have the nation of Israel. That will be a picture of everybody in Christianity. Then out of that group, David, the type of Christ, had men that were his mighty men of valor. They were men who—He had everybody—but they were men who had distinguished themselves, that they knew who they were. He knew what they were, and you had the power of God in a greater way in their life than the ordinary people. Most of God's people do not like that. We do not like the fact that there may be other people who have the power of God in their life more than we do. But it is a fact; it is the truth. David had all of the nation of Israel, but out of that, he had his mighty men of valor, who were men of distinction, men of renown. We do not have time to get into it today, but we are going to go down in time, and I am going to show you the three or four qualities that they had that made them what they were to David, just what we ought to be to God.

But I want to talk to you about my favorite, and this is what I try to do. The first thing you find in here, when you come down through here, all these men are Gentiles. I heard you preached it one time, and you told me that. I said, I had never seen that. John Christensen said, "These guys are all Gentiles." I started coming down through there, and I thought, "Man, they are Gentile, every one of them." That cemented for me that this is a picture of what you and I are to be. God wants you to be today, male or female, His mighty man of valor. He wants you to be everything that these people were.

But my favorite down here is in verse nine, and I will just read it to you.

2 Samuel 23:9

And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodo the Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David, when they defied the Philistines that were there gathered together to battle, and the men of Israel were gone away:

Now, I cannot—it is D-O-D-O. I do not know if it is "dodo" or "doo-doo." But whatever it was, you better be careful how you say it when you say it to him. I had one Bible scholar at one time say it was "doo-doo." What I said back was, "I bet it was doo-doo, sure." So after him was Eleazar, the son of Doo-doo, Dodo. Either one of them, not very flattering. "Hey, Dodo! Hey, Doo-doo!" The Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David, when they defied the Philistines that were gathered together to battle. And they go—I love this—the men of Israel were going away. You know why they were going away? Because they were afraid, and they ran away. Here is David and three guys taking on all the Philistines.

You know, that is just about true of any church. When it comes down to the real nitty-gritty, and when the real rubber hits the road, and all of the things have to take place, and all of the things that we always like—the nice, shiny, little day clear—but when the clouds come in and issues have to be dealt with, and all of the things, you know what you will find? You will find just what David found. Everybody else was gone, and here comes the onslaught of the Philistine type of the world. David is facing it with three guys. I can relate to that. I have been through these Old Testament passages, pal. He rose and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword, and the Lord wrought a great victory that day, and the people returned after him only to spoil. There was no fighting left. The Bible says that he had a sword in his hand—a picture of the Word of God—and he sliced those Philistines. He ripped them. They were greatly outnumbered. There were only three of them with David, and they fought, and they slashed, and they cut, and they fought all day long. At the end of the battle, because he was in such a tense battle, his muscles in his hand froze to the sword that when he was done, he could not even drop the sword. The sword, my friend, had become part of his arm.

You know what I want for you? I want this sword to become part of your arm. That is my goal. The odds are not really very good, because it only says three of you are going to do it. But that is everything I do: to get you to the place where you understand, to have to grow spiritually, and we have to give an account of how we help others grow spiritually. His muscles cramped around that sword, and he could not drop the sword. In Hebrews 4:12, it says, "the Word of God is a sharp two-edged sword." "How savest thou the arm that hath no strength?" Our job is to help young Christians grow. This is not my job; it is the job of everybody in here. Your job is not to say things that hurt them or cause them to stumble. Romans 14. Your job is to edify them, help them, deal with them, bring them along. When you see they are struggling, help them with where they are struggling.

VI. Question 3: Counseling the Unwise (America's Need)

Then the third one: "How hast thou counseled him that hath no wisdom?" You know, the need in America—every country has its needs. When the great earthquake hit Haiti, the need was incredibly great. People who lived in mud huts anyhow, with no foundations, everything was gone. They needed clothes; they needed water. Some of those dear people down there went for three or four days without any water, while we in Washington decided what we were going to do or how we were going to do it. We were deciding what kind of plane to send while they are starving to death and they need something to drink, but that is the way it works.

I have been in Central America, I have been in Africa, I have been just about every place in the world at some point or the other. I have seen the need. I stood in the Ukraine and also in Romania and Hungary one time when the communists had just—when the wall had just come down. I stood there and I watched out there at a grocery store at three o'clock in the morning, where the people were lining up to get bread, and they were lined up a half a mile. Not half the people in that place got bread. When I finally walked into the store, the cupboards were bare, the shelves were bare. The only thing on those shelves were about four or five canned peaches that looked like they had been there since 1900. They have needs. Every nation, every culture has its needs.

America's needs are not food; it is not clothes. America is an insane asylum run by the inmates. America is an amalgamation of broken marriages, busted homes, broken lives, heartbroken moms and dads, kids without families. There are so many, so many—I have been into marriages and done marriages where there have been so many ex-people in it, I just shut up and sit in the corner because I do not want to offend anybody. I do not know who is who. "Man, I have got four mothers and three fathers and 88 uncles and 97 grandkids, and I do not know who is who." I just say, "Sit wherever you want." "Well, you have got to seat the mother first." I did it one time, and I got the wrong mother, and the real mother was mad. But I fixed her. I left, and nobody married him. I will show you. America is a mess.

You know what it reminds me of? Back in the 1950s—I do not remember the exact date—over in France, they always have the Le Mans race. I bought one of these tapes one time, as morbid as I am, about great car crashes. I mean, we all like it. You want to say, "Can I borrow it?" Did you ever want a gross one? I got one called "Buried in the Sand." Right, Bubba? Bubba has seen that one. Some of you have seen it. Oh, yeah. It is about what Saddam Hussein did to his people over there, and it is all on film. All the people who got their throats cut, cutting fingers off one at a time and making the people eat it. This is really bad stuff, so I will not go there with it. But you know what? Bubba got it; he gave it to me. It was not my call. He said, "You are really going to like this." I think one of the guys in the mission gave it to him for singing down there or whatever. But I bought this tape on car crashes, and it was good. It was a lot of American stuff where, you know, the old Daytona back—I mean, back when they, you know, in the Indianapolis 500 when they really have some splatter crashes, and it was good. It showed a lot of sprint car stuff where they are flipping in the air at nighttime.

But the one that got my attention most of all happened in the 1950s in France at the Le Mans race. The whole thing was caught on film, and it had sound to it. I sat there and I watched that, and I just shut the thing off. I said to myself, "You know what? That is all I need to see today, because that is exactly—I got the impression—this is exactly what it is like in America." What happened was this: in the Le Mans, they race around the city, and they had a starting gate with all the—and they ran in these fast little Lotus alcohol-driven sprint cars. I mean, the little Lotus cars, and the little Jaguars, and they all come out of the starting gate. You know, it is like any race you ever saw; everybody wants to get around the first turn, so they all jam up in the first turn. That is where you have most of your wrecks.

But in this case here, all these cars were trying to get across to get the lead around that first turn. What happened was—I mean, on tape in color—the thing happened when one car flies over this, and another car flies over that; one car explodes. Four or five cars go up into the air. Tires are falling off and soaked with that alcohol stuff on fire. Two or three of those cars go right over the short fence into the grandstand. I mean, I think there were like 50 people killed. People were burned. The tires took one guy's head off. It was absolutely the most incredible carnage you ever saw in your life. When they started out, it was a big celebration, and when they started out, they were playing music over the loudspeaker. When this catastrophe happened, it was so quick that they never shut the music off. The music they were playing was circus music. It was that song, "da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da," you know, real fast circus stuff. What happened was those cars came around and crashed and exploded together. People were screaming, people were yelling, guys were crawling on fire, and people were screaming and wailing and yelling, and cars were rolling and everything. Over the whole thing was circus music.

I saw that thing, and I thought to myself, "That is exactly what America is." America is a bunch of people dying, a bunch of people being killed, a bunch of people wailing and weeping, a bunch of people without any hope, without any strength of what they are going through in life. It does not get any better; it just gets worse. They have busted families, busted marriages, busted everything. Yet all the time, we are playing through the loudspeaker, circus music, like everything is really okay. It is not okay.

I have talked to you for several years now about once we take our last year of institute, that we are going to start our classes on biblical counseling. You know, dealing with people's lives and the struggles that they have, because that is where America's need is. It is something that you do not want to rush into because of the caliber of stuff that you have got to deal with. It has taken four, five, six years just to get many of you on a good, solid base where now you have the ability to move on to that level. I hope to do that sometime next year.

But you know, in reality, we talk about counsel, biblical counseling, and all of the things that go along with that. Counseling, dealing with people, is not hard. We like to make it hard like there is something really special to it. But there are only two types of counsel in the Bible. Men and women have problems for two basic reasons. It is so simple. I would like to put on my PhD hat up here and talk about existentialism and manic-depressive and bipolar and talk about all the different things that people get up with and get all that stuff going and talk about that. But in reality, it is real simple.

People have problems for two reasons. If you are unsaved here this morning, your life is in a mess. Maybe not yet, but it will be. You know why? Because you are unfulfilled. So what you are going to do, when you usually start this when you are 17, 18, or 19 years old, when you think you know more than your parents do, you start hanging out with a crowd that said, "Boy, if you really want to be a man or a woman, this is what you do." Your peer pressure starts smoking this, start drinking this, and you think that is going to fulfill you. They say, "Well, man, you have not really lived until you did this." So you want to really live, so you try to do that. What happens is, in time, by the time you are 20, 30, 40, and 50, you realize that those things did not fulfill anything, but now they ruined your life.

An unsaved man has problems because he is unfulfilled, and he tries to fulfill it with everything in the world that will not fulfill it. So when you deal with an unsaved man, you deal with him on the basis of getting him saved and then getting the things out of his life. But the problem is this: the longer you go, the harder it is. I have the answer to just about everybody's problem in life, not because I am so smart, but because I have the Book that is so smart. But I want to tell you something right now: there are people right now in this world that I know that I will never be able to help, even though I have got the answers. There are men and women that I can solve their problem just like that, not because of me, but because of that Book. But you know what? I will never get to do it. They are going to die in their sins. They are never going to get it right because of the fact they have gone so long and put it off so long and lied to themselves and deceived themselves and went through the process for so long. You are never going to touch them.

Now you take a saved person. You know why a saved person has problems? No, I know the Bible says all that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. I am not talking about that. I am talking about you are saved and yet you are miserable this morning. I am talking about you are saved and your life is upside down this morning. I am talking about that you claim to be a Christian and you do not even know what it is all about. You even wonder, you get up in the morning and say, "God, what is going on?" Your life is a mess. You know why that is? I will tell you why that is. It is because once you got saved, God had a plan for you. That plan God gave you was a plan for you to grow and be what He wants you to be. You know what? Somewhere along the line, you decided not to be what He wanted you to be, and be what you wanted to be. The Bible tells you the Holy Spirit of God is living inside you, and once you get saved, if you do not do what God says, it grieves Him. You have people 20, 30—somebody said one time, "Well, I am really depressed." And I said, "Well, why would not you be? Look at your life. Your life has been a disaster for the last 20 years. I would be depressed. I am depressed. You even tell me what is going on in your life." Somebody said, "Well, I do not feel like myself." And I said, "Well, what do you feel like when you are yourself?" "I do not even know." And that is the problem.

Counseling is really simple. If you are an unsaved man or woman, you have problems because you need to be saved. So the Bible says, counsel you to be saved. If you are a saved person, then I counsel you to get right with God and do what you need to do. That is the deal. Our job is, we are going to meet them all the time. Right now, you are the greatest missionary to people in America with problems. Look around you. There is not anybody in this room, unless you do not work with people, that you do not associate with people who have issues in their life, who have problems in their family. Here you are standing here, sitting here with a Word of God in your hand. You should know the answers. You should be God's ambassador and God's counselor and witness to get them where they are at. I have had people that were only saved two or three weeks that did not know squat about the Bible, but they saw somebody they worked with. They had a need. They said, "Look, I do not know how to help you, but I know who helped me, and bring him to me, and I will deal with him." "How hast thou counseled him? How hast thou counseled him that hath no wisdom?"

VII. Question 4: Declaring the Truth (The Preacher's Accountability)

Then the fourth one. This is a rough one: "How hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?" Boy, I will tell you what, if there is anyone that is going to kill most preachers at the Judgment Seat of Christ, it is going to be this one.

I have been in this business for quite a while. I have seen and I know what influences preachers to preach and what they say and what they do not say. I know preachers that want to have a big crowd, so they will never preach anything offensive to anybody because they do not want to ever offend anybody, and because they think that building a church is a big crowd. My father, Lord, told me one time when we looked at a church that was running 10,000 people, and everybody was going, "Oh, wow, I wish we could have that." I looked at him and I said, "What do you think?" And he looks at me and he said, "Just because you have got a crowd does not mean it is a church." Boy, that is an understatement.

But pastors come to the place where they will cut down their message. They will know that somebody has got a particular issue, and they will not preach on that issue. They will get that they do not want to offend anybody because they know that if you start preaching hard and start preaching sin and start preaching this and start preaching that, you will not get a big crowd. A big crowd never, never, never bothered me. I could care less if five of you show up, and I know that five who would show up would be my own family. So I know that that is all I need. If you want to come, that is fine. If you do not want to come, that is fine, too. I do not get hung up on the crowd deal. I know I told you before, I am old school; I am a dinosaur. I mean, I am. I am out of my time; I am out of my element. I do not really like it, but I am stuck with it. But I do not really care.

I have come to the point where when I first got into the ministry, there were two guys in my life. One of them believed the Book; one of them did. One of them was my mentor and on fire for God. The other one was a Bible college graduate that wanted his doctorate degree and wanted all the things. They were both in my life, and they both had equal influence in my life. I remember when I got called into the ministry, and the old man sat me down and ran me through the questions in the Bible. The other guy had some advice for me, too. He pulled me aside, took me out to lunch one